

Man[n]heim, 17th
January, 1778

My dear husband,

Today I had the pleasure of receiving your letter² dated the 12th. I am sorry that so many people are sick,³ it is simply due to the bad weather. [5] Here we have had much rain, and now it is fairly warm for this time, and very unhealthy. Nothing new is to be heard here, everything is so quiet.⁴ There has already been talk that the <Imperial⁵ forces have apparently marched into Bavaria, but no-one knows with certainty. I think that if the Emperor⁶ had some action against the Elector⁷ in mind, the Elector would not stop so long in Munich, but> [10] once again <travel back to Man[n]heim>. That <Baran Lehrbach is the Emperor's ambassador:⁸> we already know that and know him very well. <He is a fine gentleman and was here>, we had a letter for him from the Salzburg Baron <Lehrbach⁹>, Wolfgang handed it to him here in our inn.¹⁰ [15] May God only grant that everything stays quiet; my journey home would not be fun at all if there were <soldiers in the land.> God preserve me from that, I should have to die of fear. In the meantime, I live in hope that it must soon become clear where everything is going.

MOZART'S POSTSCRIPT:

Next Wednesday,¹¹ I will go to Kircheim Poland,¹² [20] to the Princess of Orange,¹³ for some days; they have spoken so well of her here that I have finally settled on it. A Dutch officer,¹⁴ who is my good friend, was told off by her shockingly when he went across to her with New Year wishes and did not take me with him. At the very least I can be assured of 8 Louis d'or,¹⁵ [25] for since she is an exceptional lover of singing, I have had 4

¹ This letter contains passages in "family code"; these are marked with angle brackets < >.

² BD: No. 0403.

³ BD: Numerous illnesses were mentioned in 0403/9 ff.

⁴ BD: Cf. No. 0401/41.

⁵ "die Kaiserlichen".

⁶ "Kaiser". BD: Joseph II (1741-1790), Holy Roman Emperor [Kaiser] 1765-1790.

⁷ BD: Karl Theodor (1724-1799). Studied in Leyden and Leuven. From 1742 Elector [Kurfürst] of the Palatinate, where he encouraged the arts in Mannheim, and from 30th December, 1777, Elector of Bavaria. Cf. No. 0363/30. When he succeeded the childless Maximilian III Joseph of Bavaria in December, 1777, the lands of Bavaria and the Palatinate were re-united for the first time since the Treaty of Pavia in 1329.

⁸ "baran lehrbach Kasierlicher gesander". BD: Cf. No. 0401/150. Franz Siegmund Adalbert, Count [Graf] Lehrbach, uncle of the "Salzburg Lehrbach" Franz Christoph. Cf. Nos. 0379/67; 0403/13-15; 0405/10 ff.

⁹ BD: Franz Christoph, Baron [Freiherr] (later Graf) von Lehrbach, Imperial Senior Master of the Hunt, Imperial Senior forestry master; later Court War Councillor [Hofkriegsrat]; gave Mozart a letter of recommendation to his uncle in Mannheim in 1777. Cf. Nos. 0379/67; 0401/150; 0403/13-15.

¹⁰ BD: The inn "im Pfälzischen Hof" ["at the Palatine Court"]. Cf. No. 0360/33.

¹¹ BD: 21st January, 1778.

¹² BD: Kirchheimbolanden. The plan outlined in No. 0379/35 ff. (commented on by Leopold in No. 0385/27 ff.) is now being realised.

¹³ BD: Princess [Prinzessin] Caroline von Nassau-Weilburg (1743-1787), daughter of Wilhelm IV. Very musical, praised by Schubart (1739-1791) ["She was previously an outstanding singer, certain physical reasons led her to abandon singing and devote herself entirely to the clavier. She immediately plays difficult concertos by Schobert, Bach, Vogler, Beecké and others with ease. She is always successful in the Allegro and Presto, but never in the Adagio and Largo: for, because of the excessive susceptibility of her nerves, she abhors everything sad. She has good people in her orchestra."]. The piano/violin sonatas KV 26-31 were dedicated to her. Cf. No. 0102/24 etc.

¹⁴ BD: Ferdinand Guillaume Duval de la Pottrie, from Lausanne; cf. Nos. 0394/44; 0398/27.

¹⁵ BD: = 88 florins.

arias¹⁶ copied out for her and I will also give her a symphony,¹⁷ for she has a quite dainty orchestra, and gives concerts every day. The copying of the arias will not cost me much either, for a certain Herr Weber,¹⁸ who will go across with me, wrote them out for me. [30] I don't know whether I have already written to you about his daughter¹⁹ or not – she sings quite outstandingly indeed, and has a beautiful, pure voice. The only thing she lacks are the gestures, then she could be a *prima donna* in any theatre. She is only 16 years old. Her father is a solidly honest German who raises his children well and this is precisely the reason why the girl is pursued here. [35] He has 6 children: 5 girls and one son. For himself |: with wife and children :| he has had to be happy with 200 florins for 14 years and, because he has always performed his services well and has provided the Elector²⁰ with a very skilful, 16-year-old singer, he now has – all of 400 florins.²¹ She sings my aria²² for de Amicis,²³ with the gruesome passage work, outstandingly; [40] she will also sing it in Kircheim Poland. She is capable of teaching herself. She accompanies herself very well and also plays *galanterie* pieces passably. The greatest fortune she has in Manheim is that she is praised by all honest and well-thinking people; the Elector and Electress²⁴ themselves, as long as it does not cost anything, love to have her. She can go to the Elector whenever she wants, every day, [45] and she owes this to her good comportment.

Do you know what I would like to ask you? – that you would send me, at your convenience, yet as soon as possible, bit by bit, the 2 sonatas for 4 hands,²⁵ and the variations on Fischer!²⁶ – I would be able to make good use of them in Paris.

[50] I think we will leave here on the 15 *feb:ro* at the latest, for there is no opera²⁷ here. Now for something else. Last Wednesday,²⁸ there was grand entertainment in our house,²⁹ and I was also invited to attend; there were 15 guests, and in the evening the Mad.^{lle} of the house was to play the concerto³⁰ which I had taught her. [55] At 11 o'clock forenoon, the

¹⁶ BD: Not identified.

¹⁷ BD: Not identified.

¹⁸ BD: Franz Fridolin Weber (1733-1779): after two years studying law, became a high administrative official [Amtmann in Zell zu Wiesental und Stetten]. Married Maria Caecilia Stamm (1727-1793), daughter of Otto Stamm, secretary to the Palatine government. Forced to leave his position in 1763, was then employed at the court in Mannheim as a bass, prompter and music copyist. Moved to Munich with the court in 1778, then to Vienna when Aloisia was engaged there as a singer in 1779. He died shortly afterwards on 23rd October, 1779. His younger brother was Franz Anton Weber, father of the composer Carl Maria von Weber.

¹⁹ BD: Aloisia Weber (c. 1760-1839 [not 1830, see BD VIII]), came to Mannheim with the family in about 1765. She was 17 when Mozart met first her; it seemed she was presented to him as being 16 (line 33). She is already singing at court (cf. No. 0469/56). The family moved to Munich in 1778 with many of the other court musicians; Aloisia was employed there at the “German Theatre” [“zum deutschen Theater”]. In September, 1779, she was given a leading position at the German Opera in Vienna [Deutsche Oper].

²⁰ BD: Karl Theodor, cf. line 9.

²¹ BD: Cf. No. 0423/83, where the figure is 450 florins.

²² BD: No. 11 from *Lucio Silla* KV 135.

²³ BD: Anna Lucia de Amicis, singer. Met the Mozarts in Mainz and Naples, cf. Nos. 0060/29-31 and 0188/54. Wolfgang reports that she sang in Venice when he was there, cf. No. 0232/33.

²⁴ “Chur:stin”. BD: Cf. No. 0363/84-85.

²⁵ BD: KV 358 (186c) and 381 (123a).

²⁶ BD: KV 179 (189a).

²⁷ BD: The opera *Rosemunde* by Anton Schweitzer (1735-1787), text by Christoph Martin Wieland (1733-1795), but the première, in Mannheim, was delayed until 20th January, 1780, following the death of the Bavarian Elector Maximilian III Joseph. Cf. Nos. 0377/62; 0385/55.

²⁸ BD: 14th January, 1778.

²⁹ BD: Cf. No. 0388/53. The house of Court Chamber Councillor [Hofkammerrat] Serrarius. Wolfgang and his mother moved there at the end of 1777. Cf. No. 0390/4 ff. His step-daughter, Therese Pierron, became Mozart's pupil (cf. No. 0390/7-8). He wrote for her the sonata for clavier and violin KV 296 (dated 11th March, 1778).

³⁰ BD: KV 246.

Chamber Councillor³¹ called on me with Herr Vogler.³² Herr Vogler simply and *absoulument*³³ desired to become thoroughly acquainted with me. There is no way of describing how often he has already plagued me to visit him. Finally, he has indeed overcome his pride and paid the first visit to me; everyone tells me that he is now completely different [60] because he is not admired so much now, for the people initially idolised him. So I went up with him at once; the guests arrived gradually and there was nothing but chatter. After the meal, however, he had 2 claviers of his, which were tuned to each other, brought across, along with his engraved, boring sonatas.³⁴ I had to play them, and he accompanied me on the other clavier. [65] In the face of such urgent requests on his part, I had to have my sonatas³⁵ brought as well. N.B. before the meal, he bungled his way through my concerto |: which the Mad^{selle} of the house had played and which is the one for Litzau³⁶ :| *prima vista*.³⁷ The first piece went *prestissimo*, the Andante *allegro* and the Rondeau truly *prestississimo*. He played the bass mostly differently from what was written, [70] and occasionally created a completely different harmony and even melody. Nor is anything else possible at that speed. The eyes cannot see it, and the hands cannot find the keys. Yes, what purpose did this have? – for me, playing *prima vista* like that and shitting are one and the same. The listeners |: I mean those who are worthy to be called so :| cannot say anything [75] except that they – – have seen music and the clavier being played. They hear, think – and feel as little during this – as he does. You can easily imagine that this was unbearable because I couldn't find a way to say to him, Much too fast. By the way, it is also much easier to play something fast than slowly. [80] In passage work one can abandon sundry notes to their fate without anyone noticing, but is it beautiful? – – At speed one can change things with the right and left hands without anyone seeing or hearing it, but is it beautiful? – – and in what does the art of *prima vista* reading consist? In this: to play the piece at the right speed as it should be; to express all the notes, grace notes etc. as they are written, with the necessary expression and *gusto*,³⁸ [85] so that people think that the one playing had composed it himself. His hand position is also miserable, the left thumb is as with Adlgasser³⁹ of blessed memory, and he does all descending runs in the right hand with the first finger and thumb. With the next letter I will speak more of this, for since then he has invited me to a concert. [90] Despite everything, I am simply in his favour. *Addio*. I kiss your hands 100 000 times and embrace my sister from the bottom of my heart. Our

³¹ BD: Serrarius.

³² BD: Georg Joseph Vogler (1749-1814). After studying law and theology he became a court chaplain in Mannheim. He was sent to study in Italy for two years, returning to become spiritual adviser and deputy music director. Also active as teacher and theorist. Mozart usually spoke disparagingly of him.

³³ = “Absolutely”.

³⁴ BD: Possibly the *6 Sonates pour deux clavecins* by Vogler, later published by Heinrich Philipp Bossler, Darmstadt.

³⁵ BD: KV 279 (189d), 280 (189e), 281 (189f), 282 (189g), 283 (189h), 284 (205b), Mozart's repertoire pieces on this journey, cf. No. 0363/27. In 1784, Leopold offered them to the Prince [Fürst] von Fürstemberg via Sebastian Winter.

³⁶ BD: Antonie, Countess [Gräfin] Lützwow, nee Komtesse Czernin von Chudenitz, (1738-1780), a niece of Salzburg Archbishop Hieronymus and wife of Johann Nepomuk Gottfried, Count [Graf] Lützwow, commander of the fortress in Salzburg, vice-president of the Council of War [Kriegsrat]. Mozart wrote the clavier concerto KV 246 for her in 1776. Cf. No. 0319/37, 39.

³⁷ = “At sight”.

³⁸ = “Style”, “taste”.

³⁹ = “At sight”.

compliments to all good friends, both gentlemen and ladies, especially to M.^{sr} Bullinger⁴⁰ and Mad^{lle} Salel.⁴¹

Wolfgang Amadè Mozart.

[95] Please write out for me, I beg you, a fine abc with capital and small letters⁴² and send it to me.

⁴⁰ BD: Maria Anna Rosalia Walburga Joly [Joli] (1723-1788), usually referred to in the correspondence as “Sallerl”, was for many years a friend of the Mozart family, especially Nannerl and Wolfgang, with whom she exchanged humorous poems (cf. Nos. 0391/75 ff.; 0394/64 ff.). She was the daughter of the Salzburg Royal Confectioner [Konfektmeister] Mathias Joly.

⁴¹ BD: Abbé Franz Joseph Johann Nepomuk Bullinger (1744-1810), Jesuit, private tutor, friend of the Mozart family in Salzburg, where he seems to have arrived between 1774 and 1776. House tutor to Count [Graf] Leopold Ferdinand Arco, later to Count [Graf] Sigmund (“Sigerl”) Lodron. Mozart called him “his best of all friends” (cf. Nos. 0331/5; 0459/1).

⁴² BD: Wolfgang obviously intended to do some writing exercises. He repeated the request in No. 0436/48-49; Leopold sent it in No. 0446/181 ff.