

0440. MARIA ANNA MOZART TO HER HUSBAND, SALZBURG; POSTSCRIPT BY MOZART

<sup>1</sup>À / Monsieur / Monsieur Leopold Mozart / maitre de la Chapelle de  
S:A:R: / L'archeveque de et à / Salzbourg.<sup>2</sup>

Paris, the 5<sup>th</sup>  
April, 1778

My dear husband,

[5] We are both well, praise and thanks be to God, and hope that you and Nannerl are enjoying good health: then, with God's help, everything will turn out well. Wolfgang has a great deal to do: for Holy Week he has to write a *Misære*<sup>3</sup> for the *Consert Spirituell*<sup>4</sup> which has to include three choruses and a fugue and a duet and everything, with a great deal of instruments. [10] It must already be finished by the coming Wednesday<sup>5</sup> so that it can be rehearsed. He is writing it in the home of *Monsieur le gro*,<sup>6</sup> who is director of the *Consert*, where he dines most of the time; he can also dine daily at *Noverre's*<sup>7</sup> as well as at *Madame Depine's*<sup>8</sup>. After that, he has to write two concertos<sup>9</sup> for a duke,<sup>10</sup> one for the *flauto traverso*, and one for the harp. [15] For the French Theatre he has to write one act of an opera.<sup>11</sup> He also has a pupil<sup>12</sup> who pays him 6 *livres*<sup>13</sup> for each lesson, which equals 3 *louis d'or*<sup>14</sup> for 12 lessons. But we do not receive payment until everything is finished, and not a single kreuzer will come in before Easter. But our money has already dwindled somewhat and will not go very far because we have to take other lodgings<sup>15</sup> because [20] it is so far out of the way for going on foot, we have already spent a lot of money on coaches. I am very sorry to leave this house,<sup>16</sup> they are solid people with whom I can speak German. *Madame de Pine*<sup>17</sup> has been looking around for another one for us. The letters which you

---

<sup>1</sup> Address in Mozart's hand.

<sup>2</sup> = "To Monsieur Leopold Mozart, music director to His Royal Highness the Archbishop of and in Salzburg."

<sup>3</sup> BD: Cf. line 66 ff.

<sup>4</sup> BD: The *Concert spirituel*, the first commercial concert series in Paris, was founded by Anne Danican-Philidor in 1725. It featured a chorus and orchestra and performed in *Les Tuileries*.

<sup>5</sup> BD: 8<sup>th</sup> April, 1778.

<sup>6</sup> BD: Joseph le Gros, originally a singer, who made his debut at the Paris Opera in 1764, was director of the *Concert spirituel* 1777-1791.

<sup>7</sup> BD: Jean Georges Noverre (1727-1810), internationally active (Stuttgart, Milan), ballet master in Vienna 1755-1774. The Mozarts met him in Vienna in 1773. He became composer and master of ballet at the *Académie royale de Musique* and director of festivities ["*Directeur des Fêtes de Trianon*"] in Paris in 1776. His memoirs mention Mozart aged 12; they certainly met in 1778 in Paris, where Mozart wrote part of the music for *Les petits riens* KV Anh. 10 (299b). Cf. Nos. 0293/51; 0430/182.

<sup>8</sup> BD: Louise-Florence-Pétronille Tardieu d'Esclavelles, Marquise d'Épinay (1726-1783), divorced since 1749. Had a liaison with Grimm from 1755. Her guests included J.J. Rousseau and Diderot. Visited Voltaire several times. Showed favour to Mozart, cf. Nos. 0420/109-110, 128-129; 0487/67-68, 101 ff.

<sup>9</sup> BD: Only one, for both instruments: KV 299 (297c) – Nannerl perpetuated this erroneous nomenclature in 1792, cf. No. 1212/348-349. Father and daughter (see following note) were excellent players of flute and harp respectively (cf. No. 0449/58-59).

<sup>10</sup> BD: Adrien-Louis Bonnières de Souastre, Comte de Guines (1735-1806). Deutsch Bild No. 306. French representative in Berlin in 1769 and in London 1770-1776. In 1778 governor of the county of Artois. Pierre Vachon dedicated his Op. VII (six string quartets) to Guines. His daughter received composition lessons from Mozart; she is probably the pupil mentioned in line 15. Johann Baptist Krumpholtz (c. 1745-1790) dedicated a collection of compositions for the harp (*Recueil de douze preludes et petits airs...*, Sieber, Paris) to her.

<sup>11</sup> BD: Cf. line 91.

<sup>12</sup> BD: Guines' daughter, who took composition lessons from Mozart.

<sup>13</sup> BD: 6 livres = 2 florins 24 kreuzers. (1 florin = 60 kreuzers).

<sup>14</sup> BD: 3 louis d'or = 28 fl. 48 kr. at a typical exchange rate of 1 louis d'or = 9 fl. 36 kr. (cf. No. 0433/76).

<sup>15</sup> BD: Cf. lines 54-55.

<sup>16</sup> BD: Mayer's house, cf. No. 0433/25 ff. and line 24.

<sup>17</sup> BD: d'Épinay, cf. line 13.

write to us should be addressed to Herr Mayer<sup>18</sup> alone, we will receive them from him reliably until I send you another address. [25] We have not yet paid a visit to Herr Geschwendner,<sup>19</sup> but when we need money because ours no longer suffices, we will certainly ask him to advance us something. If we need none at all, it would be all the more to our liking and also better. Wolfgang is again so famous and popular here that it is indescribable. [30] Herr Wendling<sup>20</sup> had already built up a great reputation for him before he arrived and has introduced him to his whole circle of friends, he is indeed a true philanthropist, and *Monsieur* von Grim<sup>21</sup> has also promised Wendling,<sup>22</sup> because he has a greater reputation as a music scholar than he does, to do his best so that he soon becomes known.

[35] As for the manner of my daily life, it is not at all pleasant. I sit alone in my room the whole day, as if under arrest, and it is furthermore so dark and leads into such a tiny courtyard that one cannot see the sun the whole day, and one does not even know how the weather is. With great effort, I can knit some little things where the light falls into the room, [40] and for this room we have to pay 30 *livres*<sup>23</sup> per month. The entrance and the stair is so narrow that it would be impossible to bring a *clavier* up here. So Wolfgang has to compose out of the house at *Monsieur le Gro's* because there is a *clavier* there, so I do not see him the whole day, and will completely forget how to speak. My food from the caterer is likewise superb, [45] for 15 *sols*<sup>24</sup> I get 3 dishes at midday, namely first of all a soup with herbs which I do not like, 2<sup>ndly</sup> a morsel of bad meat, 3<sup>rdly</sup> parts of a calf's foot in a dirty stock, or a stone-hard liver, but in the evening we do not send for any food, but Frau Mayer<sup>25</sup> buys a couple of  $\text{£}$ <sup>26</sup> of veal, which she sends to be baked at the baker's. [50] This way we have it hotter the first time and afterwards cold as long as it lasts, as is the custom in England, but we do not on any account have a soup in the evenings. Lent is completely indescribable and unbearable. Everything costs half as much again as it did 12 years ago when we were here the last time. Today, the 10<sup>th</sup>, I have been packing the whole day before we move to other lodgings [55] where we need pay only one *louis d'or*<sup>27</sup> per month and have two rooms looking out onto the street and nearer<sup>28</sup> to the nobility and by the theatre. I would have sent this letter off earlier, but we wanted to wait for one from you so that we could have replied to it, for we have to pay 17 *sols* on each letter that we post [60] and 24 *sols*<sup>29</sup> when we receive one. Yesterday *Baron* von Grimm was here and visited me, he asked me to say to you that you should not upset yourself so much, it will all turn out perfectly well. One should only have a little patience, he will certainly reply to your letter, he has a huge amount to do at the moment.

---

<sup>18</sup> BD: Paris agent for the Augsburg/Frankfurt merchant Arbauer (cf. No. 0422/181). Mozart and his mother stayed with him after their arrival in Paris in 1778 (cf. Nos. 0422/183; 0425/65; 0439/95).

<sup>19</sup> BD: Joseph Franz Xaver Geschwendtner (1740-1800), city councillor and merchant in Salzburg.

<sup>20</sup> BD: Johann Baptist Wendling, flautist from Mannheim.

<sup>21</sup> BD: Friedrich Melchior von Grimm (1723-1807), 1748 private secretary to the Saxon Count [Graf] Friese, with whom he moved to Paris, where he was in contact with the Encyclopaedists. Various publications, one of which, in 1763, mentioned the Mozart children. His relationship with Mozart broke down in 1778 during the latter's stay in Paris.

<sup>22</sup> BD: Already in Paris since February: the flautist Johann Baptist Wendling (1723-1797); his brother was the violinist Franz Anton Wendling (1729-1786). For the various members of the family Mozart wrote KV 487a (295a), KV 307 (284d) and perhaps KV 368; he also wrote an instrumentation of a flute concerto by Wendling.

<sup>23</sup> BD: = 12 florins.

<sup>24</sup> BD: = 15 kreuzers.

<sup>25</sup> BD: Wife of the Mayer already mentioned, the Mozarts' host.

<sup>26</sup> BD: Symbol for a pound weight (lb).

<sup>27</sup> BD: = 11 florins, one less than the present accommodation.

<sup>28</sup> BD: The new accommodation was indeed a little nearer to the theatre.

<sup>29</sup> BD: 17/24 sols = 17/24 kreuzers.

## MOZART'S POSTSCRIPT:

[65] Now I must explain more clearly what my Mama has written too obscurely. Music director Holzbauer<sup>30</sup> sent a *Miserere*<sup>31</sup> here. But because the chorus in Mannheim is weak and bad but the one here is strong and good, his choruses would have had no effect. Accordingly, *M<sup>sr</sup>: le gros |: directeur of the Concert spirituel :|* asked me to write other choruses. [70] The opening chorus is still by Holzbauer. *Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cognosco* is the first one by me. *Allegro*. The 2<sup>nd</sup> *Adagio: Ecce enim in iniquitatibus*. Then *All.<sup>o</sup> Ecce enim veritatem dilexisti up to ossa humiliata*. Then an *Andante* for sop., tenor and bass *solī*, *Cor mundum crea* and *Redde mihi laetitiam*, but *All.<sup>o</sup> until ad te convertentur*. Then I wrote a recitative [75] for a bass, *libera me de sanguinibus*, because a bass aria by Holzbauer comes after it: *Domine, labia mea*. Now, because *sacrificium Deo spiritus* is an andante aria for Raff<sup>32</sup> with oboe and bassoon solo, I have written a little recitative, *quoniam si voluisses*, to go with it, also with *concertante* oboe and bassoon, for now people love recitative here. [80] *Benignè fac*, as far as *Muri Jerusalem*, *Andante moderato*. Chorus, then *Tunc acceptabis*, as far as *super altare tuo vitulos*, *allegro*, and tenor solo | le Gros | and chorus at the same time. *Finis*.

I can say that I am extremely glad that I am finished with all this writing, for if one cannot write at home,<sup>33</sup> and one is furthermore under pressure, it is a curse. [85] Now, praise and thanks be to God, I am finished with it, and hope it will have its effect. *M:<sup>sr</sup> Gossec*,<sup>34</sup> whom you must know, said to *M:<sup>sr</sup> le gros |: I was not there :|*, after he had seen my first chorus,<sup>35</sup> that it is charming and will certainly make a good impression, that the words have been so well arranged, and it has been set outstandingly in every way. [90] He is my very good friend, and a very dry man. I will not write one act of an opera,<sup>36</sup> but an opera entirely by myself, *en deux acts*.<sup>37</sup> The poet is already finished with the first *act. Noverre |: with whom I dine as often as I wish :|* has assumed responsibility for it, and provided the idea for it. I believe it is to be *Allexandre* and *Roxane*. *Mad:<sup>me</sup> Jenomè*<sup>38</sup> is also here. [95] Now I will write a *sinfonia concertante*<sup>39</sup> for *flauto* Wendling, *oboe* Ramm,<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> BD: Ignaz Jakob Holzbauer (1711-1783), from 1753 senior music director [Oberkapellmeister] in Mannheim, composer. Stayed in Mannheim rather than moving to Munich with the Elector in 1778. Mozart was positively impressed by his singspiel *Günther von Schwarzburg* in 1777 (première 5 January 1777), cf. No. 0373/52; No. 0377/59 ff.

<sup>31</sup> BD: Psalm 51 (Vulgate: 50).

<sup>32</sup> BD: Anton Raaff (1714-1797), son of a shepherd, originally intended for the priesthood, appeared as a singer in Bonn, Vienna, Paris, Lisbon, Madrid and Naples before a longer period of service in Mannheim and Munich. Cf. No. 0120/54.

<sup>33</sup> BD: As described in lines 42-43.

<sup>34</sup> BD: François-Joseph Gossec (1734-1829). Cf. Deutsch Bild No. 305. Between 1769 and 1773, he directed the *Concert des Amateurs* in Paris (cf. No. 0383/66). From end of 1774 responsible for theatre music at the *Académie Royale*; from 1778 chorus director. There is no proof that he knew Leopold Mozart.

<sup>35</sup> BD: Cf. lines 70-71.

<sup>36</sup> BD: Wolfgang's mother had written of one act, cf. lines 4-15.

<sup>37</sup> = "In two acts". BD: The subject matter of *Alexandre et Roxane*, cf. line 94, was determined by Noverre. The text of act one was supposedly finished at the end of April, and Mozart was expecting the text "soon" (0449/96-97), but in July the poet was still out of town (cf. No. 0458/96). Wherever the fault may lie, it seems that none of the text was set at all.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Ulrich Konrad, introduction to facsimile edition of *Piano Concerto "Jenamy" E<sup>b</sup> Major KV 271*, Laaber, 2017: Noverre's daughter Victoire, married name Jenamy, was a noted pianist for whom KV 271 was written.

<sup>39</sup> BD: KV Anh. 9 (297b), a version for oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon solo instruments. More recently (KV<sup>6</sup>, p. 866), this form has been categorised as not deriving from Mozart. In its main catalogue, KV<sup>6</sup> now lists, under KV 297B, the lost version for flute, oboe, horn and bassoon. The planned performance in Paris was thwarted, cf. Nos. 0447/74 ff.; 0462/157-158. In No. 0494/66-67, Mozart mentions that Legros has purchased the work from him.

*Punto*<sup>41</sup> hunting horn, and *Ritter*<sup>42</sup> bassoon. *Punto* plays magnificently. I have just come back from the *Concert spirituel*. *Baron Grimm* and I often let our musical wrath loose on the music here, N.B. between ourselves, for in public the motto is *bravo, bravissimo*, and one claps so much [100] that one's fingers burn. Now live well in every way, sir, I kiss your hands 100 times and remain your  
Wolfgang Amadè Mozart

ON THE INSIDE OF THE ENVELOPE:

*M.<sup>sr</sup>* Raff is here, and is lodging with *M.<sup>sr</sup>* Legros, so we are together almost daily.<sup>43</sup> Now I must go on to ask you, my dearest Papa, not to worry all too much and be anxious, [105] since you now have no reason for it, for I am now in a place where one can quite certainly make money, it only costs quite horrifying efforts and work, but I am prepared to do everything to please you. What most angers me in the matter is that the fine French gentleman has only improved their *goût*<sup>44</sup> only in as much as they can now listen to the good as well. [110] But realising that their music is bad, or at least noticing a difference – Ay, there you have it! – and the singing! – *oimè!*<sup>45</sup> – As long as a Frenchwoman<sup>46</sup> did not sing Italian arias, I would still forgive her French whining, but to ruin good music! – that is intolerable. Now our new address.

[115] *Rue Gros Chenet, vis-à-vis celle du Croissant.  
à l'hôtel des 4 fils emont.*<sup>47</sup>

The number must be 4, for that is also what is on the house.

---

<sup>40</sup> BD: Friedrich Ramm (1744 – after 1808), oboist, joined the court music in Mannheim aged 14, was in Paris with Mozart, went to Munich with the court in 1778. Mozart met him in Mannheim in 1777 and wrote the oboe quartet KV 370 (368b) for him in 1781. Cf. No. 0363/18.

<sup>41</sup> BD: Jan Václav (Johann Wenzel) (1746-1803), one of the most important horn virtuosos of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He was a serf on the estate of Count [Graf] Johann Joseph Thun (“the old Count Thun”, cf. No. 0766/20), and arranged music lessons for him; he was then one of the Count's musicians 1763-1766. At this point he led and changed his name, to avoid being traced by the Count, to Giovanni Punto. 1769-1774 he played at the Elector's court in Mainz. In 1778 he gave concerts in Paris.

<sup>42</sup> BD: Georg Wenzel Ritter (1748-1808), from 1764 bassoonist in Mannheim. Went to Munich with the Elector in 1778. In 1788 he went to Berlin. Cf. No. 0057/9.

<sup>43</sup> BD: Cf. lines 42-43.

<sup>44</sup> = “Taste/style”.

<sup>45</sup> = “Woe is me”.

<sup>46</sup> BD: Antoinette-Cécile Clavel Saint-Huberty (1756-1812) was the first, on 4<sup>th</sup> April, 1778, to sing an Italian aria (by Gluck) in the *Concert Spirituel*.

<sup>47</sup> = “*Rue Gros Chenet, opposite the house of the Crescent. At the hotel of the 4 Sons of Aymon*”.