

0480. LEOPOLD MOZART TO HIS SON, PARIS

À Monsieur / Monsieur Wolfgang / Amadé Mozart.

My dear son,

Salzb., 31st Aug., 1778

Since the 2 letters¹ which I received simultaneously, of which the last was of the 31st July, and having also written to you twice² in the meantime, I have not received a single word from you. [5] You are not enjoying being in *Paris*, and I find that you are not entirely wrong in this. Until now my heart and mind were anxious about you and I had to play a very ticklish role, better than a minister, since, for all the anxiety of my heart, I had to put on a show of good spirits to make everyone think that you were in the best of circumstances and had gold in superfluity, [10] although I knew it was the opposite. I almost despaired of winning through to my goal as I wished to because, as you know, there was little to hope for from the haughtiness of the Prince³ after the step we had taken, and your quitting his service so quickly was too much of a blow to his heart. ⁴But, with my courageous perseverance, I have not only won through, [15] the Archbishop has not only agreed⁵ to everything for me⁶ and for you, you have 500 florins,⁷ but he has also apologised that he cannot possibly make you a music director now, but you are to move into my position if it becomes too toilsome for me or if I am no longer capable; he said he had always planned to give you a better salary etc. In a word, to my amazement, the most courteous apologies. [20] Yet more! He has given Paris⁸ a rise of 5 florins so that he has to carry out the increased duties and you will be appointed as *concertmaster* as before. We now amount, on the payroll, to 1000 florins per annum, as I have already written to you.⁹ Now it all depends on whether you believe that I still have a brain and whether you believe I provide as is best for you – [25] and whether you want to keep me dead or alive. I have thought it all out. The Archbishop has declared that if you want to write an *opera* he will let you travel to wherever it is; to excuse denying us the journey a year ago, he said that he could not tolerate it when people become beggars travelling around. Now, in Salzb., you are in the centre between Munich, Vienna and Italy. [30] It is easier for you to get an *opera* to write in Munich than to enter service there, for where are they, the German *opera* composers, and how many are there? – After the death of the Elector,¹⁰ everyone is dismissed from service, and a new war develops. The Duke von Zweybrücken¹¹ is no great lover of music. Now, I do not however want you to leave *Paris* [35] until I have the signed decree in my hands

¹ BD: Nos. 0466 and 0471, received on 11th August, 1778. (Cf. Nos. 0476/5-6; 0485/5)

² BD: Nos. 0476 and 0478.

³ “Fürsten”. BD: Hieronymus Joseph Franz de Paula, Count [Graf] Colloredo (1732-1812), Prince-Archbishop [Fürst-Erbischof] of Salzburg from 1772. Employer of Leopold and, for a time, of Wolfgang. Cf. No. 0263/9. At one point he dismissed both Leopold and Wolfgang, although Leopold was later reinstated. Cf. No. 0328.

⁴ BD: Leopold informs Wolfgang in the following lines of his success in obtaining employment for Wolfgang at the Salzburg court.

⁵ BD: An interim decree, cf. No. 0515/22-23.

⁶ BD: Leopold's extended tasks are listed in No. 0482/69-70.

⁷ BD: According to the decree of 17th January, 1779, Mozart received a salary of 450 florins. Did Leopold apply his method of No. 0482/55 here to “improve” the offer?

⁸ BD: Anton Paris (1739-1809), third court organist in Salzburg.

⁹ BD: As predicted by Leopold in No. 0478/157.

¹⁰ “Churf.”. BD: Leopold is anticipating events after the death of the present Elector, Karl Theodor, who has no legitimate children. 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.

¹¹ “Herzog von zweybrücken”. BD: Maximilian Joseph von Pfalz-Zweibrücken-Birkenfeld (1756-1825), succeeded Karl Theodor as Elector of Bavaria in 1799.

because the Prince left for Lauffen¹² this morning. *M^{ssle}*. Weber¹³ will enrapture the Prince and everybody quite astonishingly, they will certainly want to hear her, they should stay with us. It seems to me her father is not right in the head; I will get the matter on the right path for them better if they are willing to follow me. You must speak the right word here, [40] for alongside the *castrato*¹⁴ he also wants another female singer in order to perform an *opera*. Meanwhile pack our blessed Mama's things well and add to them what you do not need and speak to Herr Gschwendner¹⁵ so that you can send it off at once at the most favourably priced opportunity, I do not want anything to be sold, one does not even get half the money for it, [45] I would rather pay. Copied *symphonies* etc., for which we have the score, you can [leave there,]¹⁶ we can have them written out again here at the expense of the court etc. – Here they have always made a point of speaking to me about why we live alone as 2 persons¹⁷ in such spacious accommodation where we had to pay so much. But I have always thought that either I will leave or you will come, and then things must go better, [50] we have a stable in the house, I can keep a horse there. If I want to buy a neat little chaise or a wüerstl,¹⁸ I will give the big carriage away for it. My next letter will tell you that you should leave. I and your sister are already kissing and embracing you in our thoughts. Take care of your health, we can hardly wait for the hour and moment that we see you again, [55] I revive again with your presence and am until my dying breath
your sincere father Mzt.

Stay close to esteemed *Baron von Grimm*,¹⁹ he will take care of the journey. I am writing in haste, for it all²⁰ happened only this afternoon.

¹² BD: To his autumn residence at Laufen near Salzburg. Cf. No. 0040/42.

¹³ BD: Aloisia Weber (c. 1760-1839) was 17 when Mozart met first her. She was already singing at court in Mannheim. She became a focus of Mozart's romantic aspirations. The family moved to Munich in 1778. In 1779 she was given a leading position at the German Opera in Vienna [Deutsche Oper]. Cf. No. 0405/30.

¹⁴ BD: Francesco Ceccarelli (1752-1814), castrato, employed in Salzburg and then, from 1795, in Dresden; often a guest in the Mozarts' house. Mozart wrote for him KV 374, cf. No. 0587/19; he also sang in Mozart's concert in Frankfurt in 1790. Cf. No. 0357/22, 42.

¹⁵ BD: Karl Gallus Gschwendtner (1751-1818), younger brother of Franz Xaver Gschwendtner (cf. No. 0102/144-145). He dealt in iron in Salzburg, but was often away on business (cf. No. 0467/35-36).

¹⁶ BD: Faulty due to page end. BD V suggests supplying "leave there".

¹⁷ BD: Leopold and Nannerl.

¹⁸ "Little sausage". BD: An open, narrow, four-wheeled vehicle. Not the carriage bought in Bratislava in 1762 (cf. No. 0046/25) and used on the grand tour 1763-64, as this had been sold in Mannheim (cf. No. 0436/62-63).

¹⁹ "H: B. von Grimm". BD: At this point Wolfgang was staying with Grimm: 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.

²⁰ BD: The agreement described in lines 14 ff.