

0482. LEOPOLD MOZART TO HIS SON, PARIS

*À Monsieur / Monsieur Le Chevalier Wolfgang / Amadé Mozart Maître
de / musique / à / Paris / chez Mr le Baron / de Grimm Rue / de la
chaussée d'Antin / près le Boulevard.*¹

My dear son!

Salzb., 3rd September, 1778

[5] I hope you have received all my letters² safely. I wrote to you on the 3rd Aug, – the 13th Aug, the 27th Aug, and finally sent a small enclosure³ for you in a letter to Herr von Grimm.⁴ – On the other hand, I have not seen a single word from you since your letter of 31st July,⁵ which has left my heart, already apprehensive enough, even more uneasy. There was too little time to explain everything to you clearly in my last, short letter, [10] but if you have read all the preceding letters thoughtfully you will appreciate that I wish to get nearer to your final aim, as you had expressed it in writing, and thus to bring peace of mind to us all. You do not like Paris. – If, now, no-one could find any way of getting you out, you would of course have to hold out there, accept the plague and toil of pupils, [15] run around until you get them – run around once you have them, and then, tired and vexed from this unpleasant work, sit down at home to compose, put your health in danger, make sure daily of money not only for necessary maintenance, but also of money in reserve,⁷ which one must have to keep oneself supplied with underwear, items of clothing and a hundred necessities [20] about which one does not think until one needs them, and about which you are not accustomed to anticipating; and must one not have a reserve of money in the bank so as to be able to look after oneself in the event of illness without, like a beggar, depending on the alms of kindhearted people? Or, if God in His mercy also grants you good health, [25] do you want to live in Paris haphazardly from one day to the next? In a place where you do not enjoy living? I believe that is the last thought in your mind. If you wished to set off and leave Paris now, – who would give you the money for the journey? Me perhaps? – who, then, pays what you currently owe? You are apparently willing to run the risk [30] of disregarding the certainty that you can have here, – of disdaining what you can enjoy here, in peace and well provided for, and enabling you to pursue your business in the vicinity, only so that you can run around your hated Paris in the sweat of your brow and worrying day and night – Bach⁸ promised⁹ to write to you from England and perhaps to get hold of something for you. There you would have to work at the same craft, [35] and pursue it at

¹ = “To Monsieur Wolfgang Amadé Mozart, Knight, Music Director in Paris, c/o Baron von Grimm, Rue de la Chaussée d’Antin, near the Boulevard.”

² BD: Nos. 0473, 0476, 0478.

³ BD: No. 0480.

⁴ BD: 462/40: 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. He was living with the Marquise d’Epinay. His relationship with Mozart broke down in 1778 during the latter’s stay in Paris. After his mother’s death, Mozart moved into accommodation in the house shared by Grimm and Madame d’Epinay. Cf. No. 0462/40.

⁵ BD: No. 0471.

⁶ BD: Taking up themes of previous letters: Cf. Nos. 0469/180 ff.; 0471/176 ff.

⁷ BD: Already mentioned in No. 0478/203.

⁸ BD: Johann Christian Bach. Came to Paris from London in August, 1778, with the castrato Ferdinando Tenducci. Cf. No. 0458/41 ff. Mozart had met him in London in 1764 (cf. No. 1212/118). They met again in St. Germain in August, 1778 (cf. No. 0479/4 ff.).

⁹ BD: There is no mention of this in No. 0479.

even greater risk, because there people are put under arrest for debts of 3 or 4 guineas.¹⁰ That is absolutely out of the question. At the moment I can still help you, – wish to, and must, help. But if the matter were to continue, you would rob me of my last strength with expectations for your empty hopes, due to which you miss the right path, make beggars of me and your sister, [40] I would no longer be in a position to help you and, in the moment where you are occupied with the most elevated thoughts, you would sink down unnoticed into the most extreme penury and only become aware of it when neither I nor you yourself can help you. As your father, loving you from the bottom of my heart, I must reflect that if you remain, or have to remain, in Paris for the winter, this must happen only out of necessity, if one cannot come up with any other remedy. You must wait for the business with the Elector.¹¹ In Paris you are too far away to pursue the matter. Here they were constantly circling around me without my giving any answer. Finally, *Lolli*¹² died. At that it got more serious. They started giving me hopes that now my circumstances [50] could be improved too, and I thought that was the right time to bring you nearer to your goals. For since the entire Electoral court is expected in Munich on 15th September, you can speak to your friends,¹³ Count Seau,¹⁴ and perhaps the Elector himself, – you can say¹⁵ that your father wishes to see you back in Salzb., [55] since the Prince¹⁶ has remuneration of |: here one tops it up by 2 or 300 florins :| 7 or 800 florins as *concertmaster*, that you have accepted this out of filial respect for your father, although he would have wished to see you in Electoral service, N.B. but nothing more! Then you can hope to write an opera in Munich – and the latter must, and can always, be carried out from here, [60] and that will and must work because there is a lack of masters in composing German operas. *Schweitzer*¹⁷ and *Holzbauer*¹⁸ will not write one every year, and if *Michel*¹⁹ should write one, he will soon reach the end of his *Michelling*. If there should be people who try to hinder it by doubt and play-acting of that kind, you then have *professori* as friends who will take your side, [65] and this court also occasionally has something performed during the

¹⁰ Klimpert, *Lexikon der Münzen, Maße und Gewichte usw.*, Leipzig, 2/1896, indicates a rough equivalence at this time of the gold coins guinea (p. 137 f.) and louis d'or (p. 205 f.). BD usually takes 1 louis d'or as 11 florins.

¹¹ “Churf.”: 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.

¹² BD: Giuseppe Francesco Lolli (1701-1778), from Bologna, initially employed as a tenor, mentioned as such in the *Salzburger Hofkalender* of 1741. 1752-1763 deputy music director in Salzburg; from 1763 music director. Composed some oratorios, masses and vesper psalms as well as music for a stage play.

¹³ BD: The musicians who had in the meantime move from Mannheim to Munich with Elector Karl Theodor, in particular the Weber family.

¹⁴ “Graf Seau”. BD: Josef Anton, Count [Graf] Seeau († 1799), from 1753 supervisor of the Palace Theatre [Residenztheater] in Munich. One of his relatives, Ferdinand, Count [Graf] Seeau, († 1768) was Senior Stable Master [Oberstallmeister] in Salzburg.

¹⁵ BD: Leopold makes a different suggestion in No. 0490/73 ff.

¹⁶ “Fürst”. BD: Hieronymus Joseph Franz de Paula, Count [Graf] Colloredo (1732-1812), Prince-Archbishop [Fürst-Erzbischof] 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.

¹⁷ BD: Anton Schweitzer (1735-1787), composer. Mozart met him in Mannheim, cf. Nos. 0074/15; 0907/51;

¹⁸ 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.

¹⁹ BD: Joseph Christian Willibald Michl (1745 – after 1815); received musical training at the wish of the Palatine Elector, became court composer. The next Elector, Karl Theodor, gave him a pension and later the privilege of publishing music. He continued as a composer and music teacher in various monasteries. After Napoleon's secularisation, he returned to his birthplace, Neumarkt in the Upper Palatinate.

year. – In short! Here you are close by, our incomes are as in my letter to you; your manner of life here will not hinder you in your practice and deliberations; you do not need to play the violin at court, but have all the authority of a director at the keyboard, by the same token the entire body of musicians – [70] all the Prince's scores, and the inspectorate of the Capellhaus²⁰ have now been handed over to me. Our debts²¹ may be large, but they are to people here who are so kind as not to press me, and the incomes of the two of us, as you have gathered from my letter before last, are then such that we can pay off a couple of hundred guldens²² and more every year and yet afford some entertainments; [75] where, at the same time, you can make sure Munich is constantly reminded of you. There is one further thing you must not forget. You must take with you the names and addresses of the best music sellers who buy things to engrave, especially the one who bought your keyboard sonatas,²³ so that you can correspond with them. This way it will be just as good as if you were in Paris, one can negotiate with them, then send the composition to a merchant or friend who delivers it to the publisher for a cash payment, and thus you can obtain 15 or 20 *louis d'or*²⁴ every year from Paris and on the one hand get your name known everywhere, on the other hand keep up the acquaintanceships already made. – [85] Ask *Baron von Grimm* if I am right? Here you will certainly find enough entertainment; as long as one does not have to watch every kreuzer,²⁵ life is good. Now we can go to all the carnival balls here in the town hall. The players²⁶ from Munich come at the end of *Sept.* and stay here the whole winter until Lent with plays and *operettas*. [90] There is now airgun-shooting²⁷ every Sunday, and if we want to go out among society it depends only on us; when one has a better income everything changes.

As far as *Mdss.^{le} Weber*²⁸ is concerned, you should not think that I have anything against this acquaintanceship. All young people have to be led around on a clown's lead. You can, as at the moment, continue your exchange of letters, I will not even ask you about it, [95] much less demand a sample to read. And even more! I will give you some advice myself: you have enough people you know here, you can have the Weber letters addressed to someone else and receive them surreptitiously if you do not believe you are safe from my curiosity.

It seems to me, however, that you will not think up many advantageous things for Herr Weber,²⁹ [100] nor he for himself, unless someone else helps. Do you know why I

²⁰ BD: A boarding school training young people for the cathedral music. Leopold taught violin here.

²¹ BD: Leopold calculates these in No. 0505/73 as 863 florins.

²² BD: Guldens and florins are roughly equivalent.

²³ BD: The clavier/violin sonatas KV 301 (293a); 302 (293b); 303 (293c); 304 (300c); 305 (293d); 306 (300l) dedicated to the Palatine Electress, Elizabeth Maria Aloisia Auguste (1721-1794), were published in Paris by J.G. Sieber.

²⁴ BD: = 165 or 220 florins.

²⁵ 60 kreuzers = 1 florin.

²⁶ BD: The name of the actor/manager is not known. The main actors were Franz Xaver Heigel and his wife Caroline († 1804). Their final performance in Munich on 15th September was *Romeo and Juliet*. They became established actors in Munich.

²⁷ BD: The shooting of airguns at humorously decorated targets was practised in the apartments of the members of the "marksmen's company" or club. A member would donate the first prize and pay for all food and drinks consumed during the meeting. Cf. No. 0330/5.

²⁸ BD: Leopold is doing everything to make the idea of returning to Salzburg attractive. Having offered accommodation (cf. No. 0480/37), he now has nothing against Mozart's continued correspondence with Aloisia. 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.

²⁹ BD: Father of Aloisia. 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; they had 5 daughters and 1 surviving

wrote³⁰ to you that I think Herr Weber is not right in the head? That becomes clear if you think about it. – To the question put to the court retinue, Who wishes to follow us to Munich etc.?, he gave this written answer:³¹ In my disrupted circumstances I am not capable, much as I might wish to, of following his most gracious lordship³² to Munich. [105] Now, I may be too hasty because I do not know how deep in debt this man is, but in his place, when he had 4 days time, I would have gone to my creditors and said to them that it now all depends on whether I can follow the court to Munich or not; if I can follow the court, there are sure hopes for me [110] of improving my fortune by means of my daughter,³³ and I am at court, where there are better hopes of earnings on the side and I therefore have better-founded hopes of satisfying my creditors. If, however, I have to stay in Manheim because of the burden of my debts, the court will lose sight of my daughter, Manheim will become a desert and I will have less earnings on the side; [115] you may then after my death collect a room full of children instead of solid coin; if I move to Munich I will still be under the same sovereign, you could find me just as easily as if I were in Manheim. – I cannot judge the matter definitively because detailed knowledge of the immediate circumstances is necessary for that, and then I will advise and help as well as I can. [120] In Paris you will not be of help to them. Here people will soon speak to you about *Mds^{le}* Weber; I have praised her far too often, and I will think out everything necessary so that she can be heard here. – Now I must come to the *Duc d'Eguine's* unsettled debt.³⁴ You will hopefully have demanded it or will demand it? – You are certainly not going to leave something like that behind you? – – [125] Baron von Grimm will advise you. Has the *concerto*³⁵ not been paid for either? – That is too sordid. I had a case like that in Vienna:³⁶ at the time I wrote to the chambermaid of the Princess von Ulefeld³⁷ saying that we had received no token of recognition from the Princess and must assume that, although such provision had been made, the one who had presumably received the order had forgotten it, [130] I was sure that it would be very unpleasant to the Princess if I were to leave Vienna without without mentioning the matter and without praising the native generosity of the princely house³⁸ of Ulefeld at all opportunities that might arise. The Princess sent me 20 *ducats*³⁹ and thanked me for letting her know, with the excuse that regrettably it had been forgotten. [135] Ask *Baron von Grimm* |: if the Prince⁴⁰ does not grant you a hearing |: if it could be done in such a way. Now I must say to you once again – and I swear to you as your father and friend – that you do not have to play *violin* at court, but need only, like Adlgasser⁴¹ of blessed memory, accompany vocal pieces; that you need play the organ in the cathedral only on the principal feast days, the rest has to be done by Paris;⁴² [140] that there is nothing that I desire less than to tie you down here, but rather, if

son. Forced to leave his position in 1763, was then employed at the court in Mannheim as a bass, prompter and music copyist.

³⁰ BD: No. 0480/37 ff.

³¹ BD: Cf. No. 0471/233 ff.

³² “gnädigster Herrschaft”.

³³ BD: Aloisia Weber, see above.

³⁴ BD: The Duke of Guines’ unilateral halving of the payment due to Mozart; cf. No. 0471/149 ff.

³⁵ BD: The concerto for flute and harp KV 299 (297a), written for the Duke of Guines and his daughter.

³⁶ BD: Presumably linked to a concert given by Mozart and his sister on 14th October, 1762, for Royal High Steward [Obersthofmeister] Corfiz Anton, Imperial Count [Reichsgraf] Ulfeld (cf. No. 0034/90).

³⁷ BD: Maria Elisabeth, Princess [Pinzessin] Ulfeld, née Princess Lobkowitz (1726-1786).

³⁸ “Fürstl: Hauses”.

³⁹ BD: = 90 florins.

⁴⁰ “der Fürst”. BD: Actually the Duke of Guines.

⁴¹ BD: Anton Cajetan Adlgasser (1729-1777), pupil of Eberlin. Salzburg court organist and composer. He married three times; Leopold was a witness at two of the weddings. Cf. No. 0041/17. He died on 22nd December, 1777.

⁴² BD: Anton Paris (1739-1809), third court organist in Salzburg.

you wish, that you can and should seek your fortune at the court in Munich by means of your friends, which you can do immeasurably more advantageously from here, since you can write twice and reply twice every week, and hear of and make use of every advantageous opportunity. [145] On the contrary, I wish you to commend yourself to the Imperial Ambassador, *Baron Lörbach*⁴³ |: who will be in Munich :, that you should make an offer of an *opera* simply in order to show yourself. For heaven's sake, how can the Elector reach a decision to take you as a court composer if he has heard nothing you have written? – You have to pursue the matter from here; [150] you will get an *opera* to write more easily now because the Italians cannot push in, and then the matter will run on its own. And finally I swear to you solemnly and resolutely that, as you know yourself, I only tied myself to Salzburg for the sake of your blessed mother so that I could make sure of a pension for her, whatever happened. That is now all over, I no longer need it, [155] therefore let us not accept vexation of any kind, otherwise we are gone. In your last letter you write⁴⁴ – my heart laughs within me when I think of the happy day when I shall have the pleasure of seeing you again and embracing you with my whole heart. Now that day is coming, my dear son, my wish is that God should allow me to see it, you will hardly recognise your poor father; [160] the Archbishop⁴⁵ was so shocked to see me when I was called to him twice that he told everybody about it. I was ill when you left me, it will be a year ago now – and what do you think I have had to go through in this year? – My constitution is iron, otherwise I would already be dead, but if you do not take the heavy stone from my heart with your presence it will crush me; [165] all strengthening remedies for the chest are in vain for healing an illness of the mind. No one but you can rescue me from death – and no-one will be more faithful to you and help with all humanly possible efforts towards your contentment than your father, who blesses, lives and kisses you and hopes to embrace you wholeheartedly –

– Mozart

[170] I commend myself most obediently to *Baron von Grimm*. I wrote⁴⁶ that the Archbp. is in Lauffen,⁴⁷ and that you should not leave until I have the signed *decree* in my hands. Because of heavy rain no-one has travelled down there so far – but today some left, and on the 7th inst. I will write the last letter and at the same time [175] make arrangements with *Strasburg*⁴⁸ and give you the information in the same letter. I beg you, dear son, preserve your health for me and thus my life too; believe that I have thought out everything sensibly in your best interest. You will see it, and discover that I am leading you on the most direct path to your contentment, if God will! Your sister kisses you a million times. [180] Once again, dearest Wolfgang! Have pity on your old father and look after your health!

⁴³ BD: Franz Sigmund Adalbert, Baron [Freiherr] von und zu Lehrbach, from 1777 Imperial Ambassador in Munich. Cf. No. 0403/13 ff.

⁴⁴ BD: Cf. No. 0471/273 ff.

⁴⁵ BD: Hieronymus, cf. note on line 55.

⁴⁶ BD: Cf. No. 0480/35-36.

⁴⁷ BD: The Archbishop's autumn palace in Laufen near Salzburg.

⁴⁸ BD: Where Mozart would stop on the journey back from Paris.