

0491.¹ LEOPOLD MOZART TO HIS SON, PARIS

*À Monsieur / Monsieur Wolfgang Amadé Mozart / Maître de Musique /
à / Paris / chez M.^r Le Baron / de Grimm / Rue de la chaussée / d'Antin /
près le Boulevard.*²

My dear son!

Salzb., 24th Sept., 1778

[5] I read your letter of the 11th inst.³ with the greatest pleasure, everything you write to me about <that certain person⁴ does not amaze me in any way because his letters were always suspect⁵ to me>, and you would have done very well to have said all this to me earlier. <I will not write to him anymore because I have already written⁶ to him second but last post-day>. [10] You will also have received my letter⁷ of the 17th. Now, you should be aware that *Baron von Grimm* had written⁸ to me saying he will take care of your journey to Strasburg.⁹ I noticed from his letter that he must have advanced money to you, – so I wrote that I wished to pay everything, he should only give me a letter of credit for Augspurg. [15] In God's name! I had to write that, how could I leave you in trouble? But he gave me this reply:¹⁰ – *je ne veux pas entendre parler de remboursement dans ce moment ci, quand vous serez plus à votre aise, nous solderons nos comptes. Je vous l'ai dit, je voudrais être en état de faire une pension à votre fils*¹¹ etc. My dear son, this is indeed very courteous, [20] and you see that he has great faith in us. Continuing: – *ne vous inquiétez pas de m'envoyer de l'argent, mais tracez à votre fils tout ce qu'il doit faire pendant sa route. je vous le livrerai jusqu'à Strasbourg; si vous lui faites trouver là de l'argent pour continuer sa route par augsp: et Salzbourg*¹² etc. This in fact shows no distrust, but rather every confidence regarding me. [25] This furthermore calms me greatly because he, who has travelled much, must know the safest and most comfortable way to get from Paris to Strasburg without incurring great costs because he knows the way, whereas I do not, and wishes to take the costs of the journey on himself. Is this not great trust? – Reflect on it! Is this not the greatest relief for me that I could conceivably wish for? – [30] For where else am I to get enough money from? – He wishes to be of service to me – N.B. when we are at such a distance from each other, and when he furthermore knows how <many debts I already have to pay>, for I had sent it all to him in writing a long time ago – and yet he is willing to give me this

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

² = "To Monsieur Wolfgang Amadé Mozart, Knight, Music Director in Paris, c/o Baron von Grimm, Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, near the Boulevard."

³ BD: No.0487.

⁴ 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. He was living with the Marquise d'Epinau just mentioned. 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'Epinau. Cf. lines 97; No. 0462/40.

⁵ BD: Surely not true: as late as No. 0482/170, Leopold wrote, in a letter urging Wolfgang to take Grimm's advice, "I commend myself most obediently to Baron von Grimm."

⁶ BD: No. 0486a, lost.

⁷ BD: No. 0490.

⁸ BD: No. 0486, lost.

⁹ BD: Cf. No. 0490/52-53.

¹⁰ BD: No. 0486b, lost.

¹¹ = "I do not want to hear any talk of reimbursement at this moment; when you are in an easier situation we will settle our accounts. I told you that I wish to be in a position to give your son an allowance."

¹² = "Do not trouble yourself about sending me money, but outline to your son everything that he must do during his journey. I will get him to Strasburg for you; if you could arrange for him to collect money there to continue his journey via Augsburg and Salzburg."

further credit? – – Since he closes his letter with these words: *Employez donc l'argent, que vous voulez m'envoyer, à son* [35] *Voyage depuis Strasbourg à Salzbourg*¹³ etc., you will be able to judge from this whether you were perhaps too hasty in your suspicions on this point. This was also the reason that I was quite happy to make the arrangement via Herr Hafner¹⁴ and enclosed a note¹⁵ to you for Herr Johann Scherz¹⁶ in Strasburg, who should give you the necessary money as far as Augspurg and be at your side with advice and effective action. [40] But why only as far as Augspurg? – because one has to pay the merchants *aggio*,¹⁷ and I can provide money for you in Augsp. without paying the *aggio*, in which regard I will certainly make out an order to my brother.¹⁸ So now, as far as the journey to Strasburg is concerned, you must in the natural order of things depend on the sensible advice of those who have more experience than you. There are often hired coachmen from Strasburg here, *ritorni*¹⁹ – who lodge in certain inns, whereby one can travel to Strasb. comfortably and for less money. One must of course enquire persistently. This is how Dr. Prex²⁰ travelled from Paris to Strasb. *Baron Grimm* must surely also have had an idea about how he wants to get you there. One must not reject something outright out of prejudice. [50] You could, you write, allow someone to present you with a pretty *capriolet*.²¹ My dear Wolfg., that will remain a wish, and has also appears to me to go against saving money, for one does not so readily give away something genuinely good. And if the *capriolet* is ramshackle or has something wrong with the wheels or perhaps the axle etc., [55] something breaks all the time, one is left standing on the road, uses up one's money, one has to have repairs done on it, and if the stops and repairs cost more than the whole bag of tricks is worse; furthermore, there is perhaps no-one, or only a few, in Paris who drives as a hired coachman, and if one has one's own carriage so that they only need to harness the horses, one has to pay higher charges for them because they will not get [60] people for the return journey and cannot earn anything as a *ritorno* and must travel back with unloaded horses without a coach. Then, a coachman of this kind should be someone known to you, because one is completely alone with him. With the post-coach it would cost an astonishing amount of money, since there are 55-and-a-half post-stages between Paris and Strasb., [65] for each horse 25 *sols*,²² thus for 2 horses 50 *sols*, which is 2 *livres*²³ and 10 *sols* to pay – without tips. In brief, I cannot advise on this matter, I am too far away, and it depends on circumstances and calculation and especially on the good advice of those who have knowledge and experience. Herr Gschwendner,²⁴ too, has travelled from Strasburg to Paris. [70] You need leave nothing behind: that is not, nor was it, my idea, but if you can, buy some music at once. It is better not to make known things that bring you no honour, therefore I have not parted with any of your *symphonies*, because I knew in advance that in riper years, when insight deepens, you will be happy that no-one has them, [75] even

¹³ = “Do therefore use the money which you want to send me for his journey from Strasbourg to Salzburg.”

¹⁴ BD: Siegmund Haffner the Elder (1699-1772), Salzburg merchant and public figure. Mozart's Haffner Symphony KV 385 was written for his son from his second marriage, Siegmund Haffner the Younger (1756-1787).

¹⁵ BD: Cf. No. 0490/56.

¹⁶ BD: Strasbourg correspondent for the Salzburg mercantile firm Haffner, cf. No. 0490/56-57, 68, 70.

¹⁷ BD: [*aggio*] = “deposit, advance payment”.

¹⁸ BD: Leopold's brother Franz Alois Mozart (1727-1791), bookbinder in Augsburg; cf. No. 0006/7.

¹⁹ BD: Driving regular return journeys from Strasbourg to Paris.

²⁰ BD: Dr. Johann Nepomuk Prex (1733-1809), physician in Salzburg, first met the Mozarts in Paris in 1766.

²¹ BD: Cabriolet, a light two-wheeled, one-horse carriage.

²² BD: 60 *sols* = 60 *kreuzers* = 1 florin.

²³ BD: 1 *livre* = 20 *sols* = 20 *kreuzers*.

²⁴ 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). The forename “Vital” was probably taken from his uncle, who assumed this name on taking vows in the Benedictine monastery in Niederaltaich.

though you were satisfied with them at the time you wrote them. One becomes ever more critical. The idea²⁵ of travelling to Mannheim is off because everyone who is not already there is already coming to Munich at the end of the month. Your wish²⁶ for 1000 florins per annum for the Weber²⁷ family has been fulfilled, for news²⁸ from Munich dated the 15th September has already informed me that Count Seau²⁹ has engaged [80] *Ms.^{le} Weber*³⁰ for the German Theatre³¹ at 600 florins. The father's 400 florins on top of that make 1000 florins. ³²Now I must quite roundly ask you to put aside all the refined ideas which are too exaggerated for our Salzb. music. You think I should have demanded a written assurance³³ regarding the post of music director for you? – – Do you then think that I attach so much importance to this post for you? [85] – – By no means! Does one not always retain, at such a small court, one's natural freedom to leave? – – You furthermore say³⁴ –: on no account am I prepared to act the violinist anymore. – You were previously really nothing other than a *violinist*, and that was as *concertmaster*; now you are *concert-master* and court *organist*, and the main thing is accompanying³⁵ at the keyboard. [90] You will no doubt not consider it to your shame, for example, to play *violin* in the first *symphony*, even if just like an amateur, like the Archbishop³⁶ himself and all the court people who now play in it. Herr Haydn³⁷ is surely a man whose merits as a musician you will not deny. As *concert-master*, therefore, is he a court viola fiddler because he plays the viola in the smaller concerts? [95] – – that is something one does for entertainment; and I assure you that since the music is now so short and consists of only 4 pieces, something like that serves as entertainment because otherwise one does not know what to do in the evening. If you have something on, *eh bien!*³⁸ one stays away, – as others have done. And I bet that before you let them saw through your *composition*, [100] you will take up the instrument yourself. But this does not mean that one is seen as a violinist, giving others the glory and playing their *trios* and *quartetti*. Not at all! My main satisfaction lies in the fact that with your and my improved salaries, we have been translated into secure circumstances in which we are able to pay our <debts> and live in comfort. [105] You come back with honour <because> everyone knows <that they begged you to>, and the whole town praises your decision to come back, now

²⁵ BD: Wolfgang had asked Leopold to approve the idea, cf. No. 0487/166 ff.

²⁶ BD: Mentioned in Wolfgang's letter No. 0471/252-253.

²⁷ BD: The family of 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 son. Forced to leave his position in 1763, was then employed at the court in Mannheim as a bass, prompter and music copyist.

²⁸ BD: Almost certainly from Becke, No. 0489a, lost. Johann Baptist Becké (1743-1817), flautist in the court music in Munich, kept the Mozarts informed about developments there.

²⁹ “gr: 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.

³⁰ 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.

³¹ “zum Teutschen Theater”.

³² BD: Leopold fears that Wolfgang's statements about improving the Salzburg court music (No. 0487/29-31) might involve too many refined innovations.

³³ BD: Wolfgang mentioned this in No. 0487/36-37.

³⁴ BD: Cf. No. 0487/34-35.

³⁵ BD: Leopold had promised that Wolfgang would no longer need to play the violin in his new position. Cf. No. 0482/136-138.

³⁶ 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.

³⁷ BD: Johann Michael Haydn (1737-1806), brother of Joseph. Employed at court in Salzburg from 1763.

³⁸ = “Ah well”.

that your father has lost his wife, to help him and give him the support necessary at his age. May God keep you well and give you a favourable journey! It is a hard journey! Take care of your health! Do not make particular friends with anyone on the journey, [110] trust no-one! For emergencies, keep your medicines in your night bag. Pay attention to your baggage when mounting and alighting. Do not show anyone your money. And consider carefully whether you are going to call on Prince von Fürstenberg in Donauöschingen,³⁹ or whether you can go there in advance from Strasburg and wait for the *dilligence*⁴⁰ there? – or if you want to miss him out? In Augsp: [115] go immediately to Holy Cross,⁴¹ the Prelate⁴² had someone write to me about it 3 times, you can rest and recover there. Give my compliments to esteemed *Baron von Grimm*, <and do not play any discourteous pranks on me >. I will write to him once I hear that you have left. We are counting the days until we embrace you. Our domestic, Tresel,⁴³ the clown, has bought 6 capons yet again, and yesterday [120] Nannerl negotiated her way to a wonderful pair of lace cuffs for you. *Mad:me de Follard*⁴⁴ will soon see from a letter sent in reply by the Prince in Chiemsee⁴⁵ that I have completed the commission entrusted to me. Herr Bullinger,⁴⁶ Herr Deibl,⁴⁷ Miss Mitzerl⁴⁸ and 1000 others send compliments, I and Nannerl kiss you 1000 times, and I, hopeful of seeing you soon, [125] am your father

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³⁹ “Fürst von Fürstenberg”. BD: His residence was in Donaueschingen. Mentioned in Nos. 0082/37-38; 0485/62; 0490/65.

⁴⁰ BD: Large coach used for scheduled mail journeys and offering seats for private passengers.

⁴¹ BD: A monastery in Augsburg familiar to Wolfgang from his visit on the outward leg of his journey to Paris; a stop there had already been recommended in No. 0490/60-61.

⁴² BD: Cf. No. 0355/11. Bartholomäus Christa (1714-1778), took vows in 1739; from 1760 provost and then abbot in Augsburg.

⁴³ BD: Therese Pänckl, servant in the Mozart household in Salzburg for many years. In No. 0490/60-61, Leopold reported that she had already bought 13 capons Wolfgang's return.

⁴⁴ BD: Wife of Huber, Chevalier de Folard, French ambassador to Bavaria between 1756 and 1776; cf. No. 0479/53.

⁴⁵ “Fürsten in Chiemsee”. BD: Ferdinand Christoph, Count [Graf] Waldburg-Zeil (1719-1786), from 1772 Prince-Bishop [Fürst-Bischof] of Chiemsee, a life-long supporter of Mozart. Cf. Nos. 0138/48; 0261/6.

⁴⁶ 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. Amateur viola player. Mozart called him “his best of all friends” (cf. Nos. 0331/5; 0459/1).

⁴⁷ BD: Franz de Paula Deibl (? 1698-1783), oboist, also violinist, in Salzburg.

⁴⁸ “Jfr: Mitzerl”. BD: Maria Anna Raab († 1788, aged 78), along with “Joly Sallerl” (cf. No. 0062/41) one of the most faithful friends of the family. Rented out the first floor of her house, the “Tanzmeisterhaus” [“Dancing Master’s House”] to the Mozarts from 1773 until Leopold’s death in 1787.