

0547. MARIA ANNA (NANNERL)¹ MOZART TO HER BROTHER, MUNICH; POSTSCRIPT
BY LEOPOLD

Dearest brother!

[Salzburg,] 30th Nov., 1780

I thank you for remembering about my health, I have not quite recovered yet, but with God's help everything will be restored little by little. And you, dearest brother! How is the situation with your catarrh? [5] Will you soon be free of it? My hope and wish is that it should not be as persistent as mine is and that this letter finds you completely well. You want to know the theatre performances that have taken place since you have been away: they follow here in order. You left on the 5th October,² [10] consequently on the 5th there was the 30th performance, the *operetta Le diable à quatre*: and the *ballet, a trio: Maresquelle, Spozzi and Herman*[n].³

The 6th the 31st performance, a play in three acts, *Hipsipille*⁴ as an *opera*; the way *Metastasio*⁵ has done it may be good, but as a play it is too empty. The *ballet of The Madhouse at St Mark's in Vienna*.

[15] The 8th the 32nd performance, *The Adjutant*⁶ repeated, a new *ballet: The Gypsy's Journey, or the Donkey as Deserter*, an entertaining ballet.

The 10th the 33rd performance, a comedy in 5 acts, *The Count von Olsbach*. The *ballet: The Gypsy's Journey* repeated, a good piece.

The 12th the 34th performance, *The Dutchmen*. Not so well performed by a long way as with Böhm.⁷ [20] *Mlle Müller* as the Dutch *M.^{lle} Sara*: she did well, Herr Schikaneder⁸ as Dutchman: did it far less well than Herr Stierle: and Herr Kopp has the role which Bilau took. Not at all suitable, one could very obviously see how he forced himself. The ballet was the tercet.

[25] The 11th two poor sinners beheaded.

The 12th the new worthy Senior Equerry⁹ arrived here. I do not yet know what his name is, but that he has two beautiful daughters. I have heard that reliably.

The 13th the 35th performance, a comedy in 5 acts. [30] *The Events on the March*,¹⁰ or *Alcade of Zalamea*. An exceedingly good and special play, with the content completely new and strange.

The 15th the 36th performance in one act, *The Grateful Son*.¹¹ An *operetta, The Merchant of Smyrna*,¹² in which the female singer sang an *aria di bravura*, in which she overstrained her

¹ BD: Mozart's sister, Maria Anna Walburga Ignatia ("Nannerl"), (1751-1829).

² BD: Actually 5th November. BD VI (p. 27f) prints the list of performances from the 5th November on.

³ BD: Dancers in Schikaneder's troupe.

⁴ BD: Metastasio's *Hypsipile*.

⁵ BD: Pietro Metastasio (1698-1782). Came to the Vienna court in 1730; Apostolo Zeno (1668-1750) had suggested him as his own successor. He remained there until the end of its life. He met Mozart at least once, cf. No. 135/60-61. Mozart set several of his libretti (KV 118/74c; 126; 208; 362) and numerous arias (KV 21 (19c); 369; 23; 78 (73b); 79 (73d); 88 (73c); 71; 74b; 77 (73e); 82 (73 o); 83 (73p); 368; 440 (383h); 294; 512; 468a (295a); 432 (421a); 538; KV Anh. 2; KV⁶: 73 A (lost)).

⁶ BD: *Der Adjutant* by Wilhelm Heinrich Brömel.

⁷ BD: Johann Friedrich Böhm (1740/50 – 1792), director of a well-known touring troupe of actors.

⁸ BD: Emanuel Schikaneder (1751-1812), actor and theatre director. He took over the Moser troupe in 1778, which he took to Ulm, Stuttgart, Augsburg, Neuburg an der Donau, Nuremberg, Erlangen, Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Laibach, Klagenfurt and Linz 1780. They were in Salzburg 1780/81. He soon got to know the Mozart family, gave them free entry to the theatre every evening, and participated in the air-rifle club. He was important in giving Mozart familiarity with stage practice. In 1786 they performed operas ten times and plays three times in Salzburg.

⁹ "Unterbreitter". BD: Jakob Lindert, mentioned again in No. 0975/60.

¹⁰ BD: *Die Begebenheiten auf dem Marsch*, after Calderon.

¹¹ BD: *Der Dankbare Sohn* by Johann Jakob Engel.

¹² BD: *Der Kaufmann von Smyrna* by Georg Joseph Vogler (1749-1814).

voice and did not do the runs clearly enough. [35] A ballet *The Grape Harvest*.¹³ A very nicely done ballet.

The 17th the 37th performance. A dramatic heroic poem. In 5 acts. *The Romans in Germany*¹⁴ or *Prince Hatto*, a passable piece. Herr Schikaneder dedicated it to the Archbishop, although 3 characters are killed off in this piece.

40 The 19th the 38th performance. *The Wandering Musicians*,¹⁵ in which Herr Löfler was acting for the first time. The ballet was *The Viennese Nightwatchmen*.¹⁶ Today was the first time that I have not been to the theatre, since it was best that I should write to you, young Treserl Barisani came to have a lesson from me, she commends itself to you.

[45] The 20th the 39th performance, *Juliane von Lindorack*.¹⁷ And a new ballet, *The Foolish Village Junker*.¹⁸

The 22nd the 40th performance. *Macbeth*.¹⁹ Msr. Schikaneder and Mll. Miller played their roles exceedingly well.

The 24th the 41st performance. The comedy *The Events on the March*; [50] The ballet *The Transformed Farmers*.²⁰

The 26th the 42nd performance. *Burlin's Carnival Prank*.²¹ You have already seen this farce done by Böhm.

The 27th the 43rd performance. Completely new piece or comedy in 4 acts, never before presented here, *Revenge for Revenge*.²²

[55]

Announcement.

Today we hope to win the fame of having performed the most beautiful of all character pieces; each character is new, and spiced with the best comic's salt, so that my gracious patrons have neither unappetising nor warmed-up pap (of which there is unfortunately much) to digest, [60] but will certainly leave our theatre content. To which an invitation is proffered,

gracious Patrons, by your

devoted

Schikaneder, director.

[65] The whole time I did not take one step out of the house, but since *Md. Maresquille* was constantly telling me during this time that I must go and see this play when it is performed because it is such an excellent piece, I therefore risked it without asking the doctor and went. Catherl had also been saving up for this play so as to spend her name-day at the theatre with me. [70] With the laudations which he heaped on this piece, *Msr. Schikaneder* talked the Archbishop into attending. In a word, the people were so curious about it that the theatre was so full that it could hardly have been fuller. The actors played their roles well, but the play lasted all of 4 hours and was so bad that, [75] if every deliberate effort had been made to persuade people to leave the theatre little by little and to spur people on to whistle the

¹³ *Die Weinlese*.

¹⁴ BD: *Die Römer in Deutschland*, tragedy in five acts by Joseph Marius Babo.

¹⁵ BD: *Die Lyranten oder Das Lustige Elend*, comic opera by Emanuel Schikaneder.

¹⁶ *Die Wienerischen Nachtwächter*.

¹⁷ BD: *Juliana von Lindorack* by F.L. Schröder and F.W. Gotter after Gozzi.

¹⁸ *Der Dumme Dorfjunker*.

¹⁹ BD: Presumably the ballet in five acts, *Macbeth, König von Schottland*, by Christian Hieronymus Moll.

²⁰ BD: *Die verwandelten Bauern*, an unknown ballet.

²¹ BD: *Burlins Faschingsstreich*, comedy in three acts by Philip Hafner.

²² BD: *Rache für Rache*, comedy in 4 acts by Johann Christian Brandes.

piece off the stage, it could not have been done better. And so you can imagine how worried we were about poor *Schicaneder*: during the 3rd act the Archbishop left, and likewise, little by little, quantities of people all the time. [80] We personally did not want to be witnesses if he should be faced with an affront, and we left during the final scene. And we did in fact learn the next day that when it was finished the people clapped, whistled, and pounded with sticks and shouted *fora*²³ quite mockingly. Now Herr *Schicaneder* has lost much of his reputation; if he performs a new piece, no-one more will believe him when he says that it is good.

The 28th the 44th performance, *Trust, Look, Who?*²⁴ The *ballet* was completely new, *The Battle between Turks and Moors at Sea*.²⁵

Now, my dear brother, I have fulfilled your wishes. There are still six performances in all to come, you shall learn which they were. [90] *Schicaneder* is very satisfied with your *aria*,²⁶ and the singer will learn it well too, since she is learning with us, but there is too little time, the piece is already due to be performed tomorrow, when she must sing it. You will already know that the Empress²⁷ is so ill. She could play a nice little prank on us. If she dies now, the opera could certainly be performed, [95] but if she were to die later on, all my joy would be brought to nothing. Take care of yourself, dearest brother. I hope of course, if it is God's will, to see you in Munich.

LEOPOLD MOZART'S POSTSCRIPT:

*Mon cher Fils!*²⁸

I hope your catarrh will improve and have no consequences, [100] or perhaps already be better. So now Herr Schachtner is starting the translation. As far as the <Cabals> are concerned, there is no better way of shaming these people than if one is exceptionally <friendly> and <courteous> towards those <who are my enemies>. By that they are confused and ashamed and lose much <of their courage> and <to the detriment of their strength>. [105] You write that I should not write anything sad to you. I wrote nothing other than that your sister was ill, and I surely had to tell you that. Otherwise let your deeds be upright, and do not be worried about my present state; should you however |: which God forbid :| fall ill, do not keep it a secret from me so that I can come at once to look after you. If I had been by your mother's side, [110] I could hope that she would yet be alive. Her hour had come, and that is also why I had to be absent. In that we see the hand of God, which we only recognise in affliction and otherwise seldom think of. I do not demand that you use up the time writing letters, only I must be informed, for my peace of mind, by you or Msr. Becke, of your state of health. [115] Regarding the chorus *Placido è il mar*, you can stop wherever you want, only *N.B.* it must all be printed in the book. Take care of yourself, I am your honest father

Mzt

²³ BD: "da capo".

²⁴ BD: *Der Gasthof, oder Trau Schau Wem?*, comedy in five acts by Johann Christian Brandes.

²⁵ *Der Streit zwischen turken und mohren auf der See*.

²⁶ BD: 535/60: Aria: KV Anh. 11a, for the comedy *Die zwey schlaflosen Nächte* ["Two sleepless nights"]. It was finally sent, after numerous reminders by Leopold, on 22nd November 1780.

²⁷ BD: Maria Theresia died in the evening on 29th November, 1780.

²⁸ = "My dear son!"