

0573. MOZART TO HIS FATHER, SALZBURG

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

Munic ce 30 decembre

Mon très cher Père!¹

1780.

[5] A blessedly happy New Year! – Forgive me if I write very little at the moment, – for I am now completely up to my neck in work – I am not yet quite finished with the third *act*² – and then – because there is no separate *ballet*, but only a *divertissement* belonging to the *opera* – I also have the honour of writing the music for that. – [10] but I am very happy with that, [10] for this way the music is indeed by one master. The third act will turn out at least as well as the first two – but I believe infinitely better – and that one will have the right to say: *finis coronat opus*.³ – The Elector⁴ was so happy with the rehearsal recently that, as I recently wrote to you, he praised my opera greatly in the *Cercle*⁵ in the morning – and then in the evening again at [15] *cour*.⁶ – And then I know from a very reliable third person that he spoke about my music to everyone who came to him on the same evening after the rehearsal, using this expression: – I was entirely surprised – never has any music made this impression on me; – this music is *magnifique*.⁷ – –

[20] Two days ago we had a *recitative* rehearsal at Frau Wendling's⁸ – and tried the *quartet* together – we repeated it 6 times – now it is finally working. – the stumbling block was *Del Prato*;⁹ – the boy really cannot do anything at all. – His voice would not be so bad if he did not take it in the neck and throat – but besides that he has no intonation at all – [25] no method – no feeling – but sings – something like, for example, the best among the boys who audition to join the Kapellhaus¹⁰ – *Raaff* was delighted to find his judgement wrong – and now does not have any doubts about the effect.¹¹ Now, regarding *Raaff's* final *aria*, I am in an embarrassing position in which you have to help me. – the *rinvigorir*, and [30] *ringiovenir* is for *Raaff* indigestible – and because of these 2 words, the whole *aria* has now become the object of his hate. – It is true, the *Mostrami* and *vienmi* is not good either – but the worst are certainly the 2 words at the end – where, in order to avoid the trill on the *i*, I had to write it on the *O* for him. – Now *Raaff* has found, in the *Natal di Giove*¹² [35] which of course |: is very little known |: , an *aria* fitting this situation. – I believe it is the *licenza aria* from it; –

*Bell' Alme al Ciel dilette
Si Ah! respirate ormai,
già palpitaste assai
è tempo di Goder.
Creta non oda intorno*

[40]

¹ = “To Monsieur Leopold Mozart, Music Director to His Royal Highness the Archbishop of and in Salzburg. / Munich, this 30th day of December, 1780. / My very dear father!”

² BD: Of *Idomeneo*.

³ = “The end crowns the work”.

⁴ 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.

⁵ = “Privy council”.

⁶ = “Court”.

⁷ = “Magnificent”.

⁸ BD: Dorothea (I) Wendling, née Spurni, wife of the traverse flautist Johann Baptist Wendling, singer in the court music in Mannheim, later dedicated herself entirely to teaching. Cf. No. 0057/2-6.

⁹ BD: Cf. numerous critical remarks from No. 0535/44 onwards. He sang *Idamante*.

¹⁰ BD: Boarding school associated with the cathedral choir.

¹¹ BD: See the doubts described in No. 0570/49.

¹² BD: *Il Natale di Giove* by Metastasio, set by Giuseppe Bonno, première Vienna, 1st October, 1740.

*non vegga in si Bel Giorno
che accenti di Contento,
che oggetti di piacer.*¹³

[45] and he wishes me to write this *aria* for him – People do not know it, he says, and we say nothing. – He knows, of course, that we cannot expect the worthy *Abbate*¹⁴ to change this *aria* for the third time – and as it is – he emphatically will not sing it. – Now I ask for a quick answer. – I hope for an answer from you on Wednesday. – And then it is up to me to write his *aria* at once. – [50] Now I must close, for I am up to my neck in writing – everything is already composed – but not yet written – please commend me to all good friends, both gentlemen and ladies, along with my New Year wishes – yesterday I took out the 15 florins – there will not be much left over for me – for there are indeed a hundred trifles which will immediately make inroads into the money [55] – and I am certainly not spending anything unnecessarily – turning the black suit,¹⁵ a new *tamis* lining – patching the arms of the brown suit, already makes 7 f 24 kr: – so I would once again request a transfer, it is good if one has something of the kind in reserve; – one really cannot stand there completely naked – *Adieu*, I kiss your hands 1000 times and [60] embrace my sister with my whole heart and am eternally, sir, your

most obedient son
Wolfgang Amadè Mozart

My compliments to dear Thresel¹⁶ – the maid who serves me here in the house is also called Thresel – but, God! – what a difference compared to [65] the Thresel from Linz! – In beauty, virtue, charms – and 1000 other merits! –

You will certainly already know that the good *castrato Marchesi*¹⁷ – *Marquesius di Milano* has been poisoned in Naples – but in what a manner! – He was in love with a duchess – and her real *amant* was *jaloux*¹⁸ and sent 3 or 4 fellows to him, [70] and they gave him the choice – whether he wished to drink from this vessel or rather be massacred – he chose the former – but because he was an Italian fool he died alone – and let his worthy murderers live in peace and quiet – [75] I would at least |: – in my room! :| have taken a couple into the other world with me if some dying had to be done. – A pity for such an outstanding singer! – *Adieu*.

¹³ = “Beautiful souls, delightful to heaven, yes, ah! breathe now, you have trembled enough. It is time to rejoice. May Crete not hear, not see on such a beautiful day, anything around it except accents of happiness, objects of pleasure.”

¹⁴ BD: *Abbate* Giambattista Varesco (c. 1736-1805), court chaplain in Salzburg from 1766, wrote the texts for *Idomeneo* KV 366 and *L'oca del Cairo* KV 422. The latter was his response to Mozart's request for an opera buffa for Vienna.

¹⁵ BD: Cf. No. 0570/65-66.

¹⁶ Therese Pänckl, serving girl in the Mozart household in Salzburg.

¹⁷ BD: Lodovico Marchesi (c. 1755 - 1829), known as Marchesini, did not die until 1829. The story here is a fiction.

¹⁸ “Amant” = “lover”; “jaloux” = “jealous”.