

0631. MOZART TO HIS FATHER, SALZBURG

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

Vienne ce 6 d'octobre

Mon très cher Père!¹

1781

[5] Otherwise I have always received your letters on Monday, and customarily answered them the following Wednesday; but this time I did not receive your letter² until Wednesday, and that was so late in the afternoon that I did not possibly have time to write more. – Meanwhile you will have received the description³ of the music of my *opera*. – The next day after receiving your letter I went straight to Herr von Scharf⁴ [10] himself at the post office, and spoke with him and gave him my *address* so that he could send me the music immediately; – for I cannot possibly undertake to take a stroll out to Leopoldstadt⁵ to please the young Herr von Mayer,⁶ or spend a twenty piece to drive. – But he is not here yet. – Nor does Herr von Scharf⁷ [15] know anything at all about the – currently so imminent arrival of his father-in-law.⁸ The word was that the Archbishop should arrive here this month |: and indeed with a large following :|. But now they want to deny this again. – Concerning *Ceccarelli*,⁹ I firmly believe that he will receive his decree,¹⁰ for I really do not know of a better *castrato* for the money. [20] You will perhaps already know what the *Alumni*¹¹ travelling to Strasbourg encountered on their arrival there. – They simply did not admit them at the gate because they looked like beggar boys and in fact like villains. – Herr von Auerhammer told me that he heard it from the cousin of the person to whom they had been directed, and indeed with this addition: [25] – – that he had said to them: – Yes, my dear gentlemen, now you must certainly stay 4 or 5 with me at home so that I can dress you beforehand; – for you cannot go out like that without exposing yourself to the danger of boys running after you on the street and throwing muck at you. – A fine honour for His High Princely Grace.¹² – [30] Now I must put a question to you *ex commissione*,¹³ namely as it was dictated to me. – Who in fact were the Counts von Klessheim?¹⁴ – and where have they gone?

¹ = “To Monsieur Leopold Mozart, Music Director to His Royal Highness the Archbishop of and in Salzburg. / Vienna, this 6th day of October, 1781. / My very dear father!”

² BD: No. 0630, lost.

³ BD: No. 0629/8 ff.

⁴ BD: Not identified.

⁵ BD: At that time still a suburb of Vienna.

⁶ BD: Probably the son of the Mayr family where Nannerl gave lessons. Cf. note on No. 0532/12 etc.

⁷ BD: Mentioned in two recent letters, but not identifiable.

⁸ BD: Identity unclear.

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ BD: The decree renewing his Salzburg service.

¹¹ BD: Cf. No. 0585/14.

¹² “seine Hochfürstlich Gnaden”. BD: Hieronymus Joseph Franz de Paula, Count [Graf] Colloredo (1732-1812), Prince-Archbishop [Fürst-Erzbischof] of Salzburg from 1772. Employer of Leopold and, for two periods, of Wolfgang. Cf. No. 0263/9. At one point he dismissed both Leopold and Wolfgang, although Leopold was later reinstated. Cf. No. 0328.

¹³ = “At the behest of a third party”.

¹⁴ “grafen”. BD: This presumably means the owners of Schloss Klessheim, north-west of Salzburg.

– Schmidt¹⁵ |: the poor sufferer of misfortune, the *adornateur*¹⁶ of my cousin¹⁷ :| who is now in Trattner’s bookshop¹⁸ – has asked me most urgently to procure him information on this.

[35] But now I will soon lose patience because I cannot work further on the *opera*. – I am of course writing other things¹⁹ in the meantime – however – the *passion* is simply there – and for what I would otherwise need a fortnight I now need only 4 days. – I *composed* the *aria in A* for *Adamberger*,²⁰ the one for *Cavallieri*²¹ in *B^b*, and the *trio*²² in one day – [40] and wrote them out in one and a half days. – But it would of course be of no advantage even if the whole *opera* were already finished – for it would obviously have to be left lying until Gluck’s 2 *operas* are put together – and there they still have honest work to do. – Umlauf,²³ too, must wait with his finished *opera* – which he took one year to write; – but you must not think that it is good [45] |: between you and me :| just because he took a whole year to it – I would always have considered this *opera* |: but just between us :| to be the work of 14 to 15 days. – Especially since the man must have learnt so many operas by heart! – and then, of course, he needed to do nothing except put them on paper – and – he certainly did it this way – one hears it clearly! – [50] You should know that he *invited* me – |: *c’est à dire*²⁴ in his manner :| in the most courteous manner to call on him so that he could let me hear his *opera* – adding: –you should not think that it is worth the trouble of your hearing it – I am not that progressed that far – I simply do it as well as I can – – afterwards I heard that he had said: – one thing is certain, [55] Mozart has the devil in his head, body and fingers – he played my *opera* |: which is so *miserably* written that even I almost could not read it :| as if he had composed it himself.

Now *adieu* – I hope my dear sister, whom I embrace from my heart, [60] will recover step-by-step. – and you, my dear father, – take wagon fat²⁵ wrapped in a little piece of paper, and apply it to the chest – and also take a thigh cut of a leg of veal, and a kreutzer-worth of *radix arnicae* and carry it with you in your trouser pocket. – I hope that it will surely help you. – Take good care of yourself, [65] I kiss your hands 1000 times, and am, sir, eternally your
most obedient son,
W: A: Mozart

¹⁵ BD: Johann Friedrich Schmidt, in 1781 director of the reading room established by Johann Thomas Trattner.

¹⁶ = “Adorer, worshipper”.

¹⁷ BD: The “Baase”, Mozart’s cousin Maria Anna Thekla Mozart in Augsburg.

¹⁸ Johann Thomas Trattner (1717-1798). When Mozart first came to Vienna, he was already the owner of several bookshops and printing works in and around Vienna. With the Trattnerhof, he erected one of the most impressive buildings of the period in Vienna. Mozart lived there between January and September, 1784. Trattner’s wife Theresia took keyboard lessons from Mozart. The Trattners were godparents to a number of Mozart’s children.

¹⁹ BD: Including the serenade KV 375 (cf. No. 0638/10 ff.).

²⁰ BD: “*O wie ängstlich*” (No. 4). Josef Valentin Adamberger (1740-1804), sang in Germany, Italy and then in Vienna, where he was well paid. Sung in many of Mozart’s works. Freemason.

²¹ BD: “*Ach ich liebte*” (No. 6). Catarina Cavalieri (1755 in Vienna – 1801 in Vienna), trained by Salieri, active in German and Italian opera troupes in Vienna 1778-1793, sang *Konstanze* in the première of the *Abduction*, *Donna Elvira* in the Vienna première of *Don Giovanni*, *Demoiselle Silberklang* in the *Schauspieldirektor*, and the *Gräfin* in the Vienna performance of *Figaro* on 28th August, 1789; Mozart wrote for her KV 469 No. 8; KV 540c.

²² BD: “*Marsch, marsch, marsch*” (No. 7).

²³ BD: Ignaz Umlauf (1746-1796), established as composer, viola player and music director in Vienna.

²⁴ = “That is to say”.

²⁵ BD: The fat used to lubricate wheel hubs.