

0638. 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 3 de 9.<sup>bre</sup>

Mon très cher Père!<sup>1</sup>

1781.

[5] Please forgive me for not informing you last post-day that I had received the cadenzas,<sup>2</sup> for which I must obediently thank you. – But that was exactly on my name-day – in the morning, therefore, I carried out my devotions and – just as I wanted to write, I was encumbered by a crowd coming to congratulate me – at 12 o'clock I drove to *Leopoldstadt*<sup>3</sup> to *Baronne Waldstätten*<sup>4</sup> [10] – where I spent my name-day. At 11 o'clock in the evening, I was given a night music with 2 *clarinets*, 2 horns and 2 bassoons – and indeed of my own composition.<sup>5</sup> – I had written this music for St. Theresia's Day – for the sister of Frau von Hickl, or the sister-in-law of Herr von Hickel |: Court Painter :|, which is also where it was really *performed* for the first time. [15] – The 6 gentlemen who *perform* do such things are poor devils, but make a very fine wind sound together, especially the first *clarinettist* and the 2 hunting horn players. – But the main reason why I wrote it was to let Herr von Strack |: who is there every day :| hear something of mine. And for that reason too I wrote it half reasonably. – [20] It also met with applause all round. – They performed it in three different places on the evening of St. Theresia's Day. – For when they were finished in one place, they were led off somewhere else and paid. – The gentlemen therefore had the house door opened and, after they had taken up *position* in the middle of the courtyard, just when I wanted to undress, I was surprised in the most pleasant way in the world with the first *E<sup>b</sup>* chord.

I will write the 2<sup>nd</sup> *clavier part* into the *cadenzas* and then send them back again. –

It would certainly be good if my *opera*<sup>6</sup> were ready now, for now Umlauf<sup>7</sup> cannot put his on because *Mad.<sup>me</sup> Weiss*<sup>8</sup> and *Mad.<sup>selle</sup> Schindler* are ill.

[30] – Now I must go to Stephani straight away because he has finally said that something is ready. –

I do not know of anything new at all to write to you about – for bagatelles cannot interest you, and matters of significance – you will already know as well as we do in Vienna. – That a *Dauphin*<sup>9</sup> now exists – may indeed also be – [35] for the moment at least, a bagatelle – until it turns into a bigatelle.<sup>10</sup> – I wrote this here so as not to leave the *Duc d'Artois* alone with the honour of a *bon mot*,<sup>11</sup> for he once said to the Queen, when she complained during her pregnancy, that the Dauphin was causing her trouble: *il me donne des grands Coups de*

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<sup>1</sup> = “To Monsieur Leopold Mozart, Music Director to His Royal Highness the Archbishop of and in Salzburg. / Vienna, this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of November, 1781. / My very dear father!”

<sup>2</sup> BD: The cadenzas to one of the two concertos for two keyboards requested in No. 0608/38-39: KV 365 (316a).

<sup>3</sup> BD: At that time still a suburb of Vienna.

<sup>4</sup> BD: Martha Elisabeth, Baroness [Baronin] Waldstätten, née von Schäfer, (1744-1811), lived separated from her husband, an administrative official. She was an important patroness of Mozart.

<sup>5</sup> BD: Serenade in E<sup>b</sup> KV 375.

<sup>6</sup> BD: *The Abduction from the Seraglio*.

<sup>7</sup> BD: Ignaz Umlauf (1746-1796), established as composer, viola player and music director in Vienna. The opera was probably *Das Irrlicht*.

<sup>8</sup> BD: According to Niemetschek, Mozart wrote for her arias which in 1800 were still in Prague.

<sup>9</sup> BD: Maria Antoinette gave birth to the Dauphin, Louis-Xavier-François, on 22 October 1781. He died on 4 June 1789.

<sup>10</sup> Mozart invents “grosheit” from “kleinigkeit”.

<sup>11</sup> = “Witticism”.

*pied au ventre*<sup>12</sup> – upon which he then said: – [40] *O Madame, laissez le venir dehors, qu'il me donnera des grands coups de pied au cul.*<sup>13</sup> –

Now, on the day when the news came, all theatres and spectacles were free. – and now – it is chiming three o'clock – therefore I must hurry to Stephani, otherwise I will no longer find him in – then I can wait again. – [45] I hope you will find yourself in better health from day to day, and the same to my dear sister, whom I embrace with my whole heart. – May life go well for you, I kiss your hands 1000 times and am, sir, eternally your

most obedient son,

W: A: Mozart

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<sup>12</sup> = “He gives me hefty kicks in the stomach.”

<sup>13</sup> = “Oh Madame, let him come out so that he can give me some hefty kicks in the arse”.