

0649.¹ MOZART TO HIS SISTER,² SALZBURG

À / Mademoiselle / Mademoiselle Marie anne / de Mozart / à / Salzbourg.

Vienne ce 15 de Decem.^{bre}

Ma très chère sœur!³

1781

[5] I thank you for all the news you have sent me. Here are my 6 *sonatas*.⁴ – For you there are only four new ones⁵ among them. – Nothing was possible with the *variations*⁶ because the *copyists* have too much to do. But I will send them to you as soon as possible.

The 22nd: In the meantime you will have received the *envelope* enclosing the letter to my father. [10] The *opera*⁷ was sent back to me by Herr von *Daubrawaick*,⁸ so I must look around for another opportunity. *Ceccarelli*⁹ would of course have become anxious if you had accepted his suggestion. – For I spoke to him about it, and he immediately said: – *certo, l'avrei preso meco subito*.¹⁰ – and when I asked him why he did not take you with him, [15] he knew of no better reason than: Where was I to have put her here? – Oh, on that account, I said, I would not have been anxious; and I have enough places where they would receive her joyfully; – and that is true, too. If you are given a good opportunity to come here for some time, simply write to me beforehand. –

[20] It is true¹¹ that *The Hole in the Door*¹² is a good comedy, isn't it? – but you should have seen it performed here. – *The Dangers of Seduction*¹³ is also a good piece. – *The Public Secret*¹⁴ is only acceptable considered as an Italian piece. – For the condescension of the princess with the servant is much too improper and entirely contrary to nature; the best thing about this play is truly [25] – the public secret – namely the way the two lovers make themselves clear to each other, indeed in secret, yet in public. What, then, is the name of the acrobat? – *Elias Vogt* is with Böhm, and little Peter¹⁵ is in Berlin. – Feigle's¹⁶ travelling home and *Andretter's*¹⁷ being in Salzburg again really was news to me. –

¹ BD: This letter, begun on 15th December, should be preceded by No. 0650.

² BD: Mozart's sister, Maria Anna Walburga Ignatia ("Nannerl"), (1751-1829).

³ = "To Mademoiselle Marie Anne de Mozart in Salzburg. / Vienna, this 15th day of December, 1781 / My very dear sister!" [BD: The 'de' is in accordance with Viennese custom.]

⁴ BD: Cf. notes on Nos. 0598/38; 0610/29 ff.

⁵ BD: Cf. No.0598/38. KV 376 (374d), 377 (374e), 379 (374f). Nannerl already knew the others, KV 296 and 378 (317d).

⁶ BD: Cf. No. 0648/98. Probably KV 352 (374c), 359 (374a), 360 (374b); cf. Nos. 0610/31-32; 0649/7-8. These three variations were published along with KV 264 (315d), 353 (300f), 398 (416a) and 455 by Artaria, but not until 1786.

⁷ BD: *Idomeneo*. Cf. No. 0648/4.

⁸ BD: Johann Baptist Anton Daubrawa von Daubrawiack (1731-1810), court councillor, legal officer to the Cathedral chapter, helped the Mozarts as a "messenger" between Salzburg in Vienna more than once. He was expected to help here, cf. No. 0648/26.

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 = "Certainly, I would have taken her with me at once."

¹¹ BD: Nannerl's request for news obviously also referred to the theatre.

¹² BD: "Das Loch in der Thür" by Gottlieb Stephanie the Younger; Mozart had seen the comedy in Vienna.

¹³ BD: "Die Gefahr der Verführung" by Friedrich Ludwig Schröder after a French translation of George Lillo's "George Barnwell or the Merchant of London".

¹⁴ BD: "Das öffentliche Geheimnis" by Friedrich Wilhelm Gotter after Gozzi's "Il pubblico segreto", a reworking of Calderon's "El secreto á voces".

¹⁵ BD: Elias Vogt, dancer; Böhm, leader of a theatre troupe; Peter, brother of Elias, also a dancer.

¹⁶ BD: Entered Salzburg University in 1777 to study law.

¹⁷ BD: Probably the son of the Salzburg administrator Johann Ernst von Antretter.

[30] There is nothing new I can write, my dear sister, because at the moment I know nothing. – Regarding the old acquaintanceships, I will tell you straight away that I was only out at Frau von Mesmer’s¹⁸ one single time. – The house is no longer as it once was. – If I want to eat free of charge, I do not need to drive out to the Landstrass(e) for it, [35] I have places enough in town in walking range. – The Fischers¹⁹ live in the Tiefer Graben, where I have almost never been. – Yet if my way should lead me there, I will pay a visit to them for a moment, for I could not tolerate the warm room and wine on the table longer than that. – I am well aware that this is the best way of paying one’s respects to people like this, [40] only I am no lover of paying one’s respects and even less of people like this. – As far as the Breans²⁰ are concerned, I have not yet seen a soul. – I have often spoken with Grill²¹ |: who is now married :| and Heyfeld.²² – Regarding my shooting *cash-box*,²³ I do not know what is to be done either. – There must surely be money there, *interest* from the hundred guildens? – you must simply take that. [45] – Perhaps I will be luckier next year. – What about the target? – – God! – I have just this moment received a letter²⁴ from my dear, best of fathers! – How can such monstrous human beings exist? – be patient – I cannot write any more for anger and rage, only that – [50] I will give him an answer on this next post-day – and will assure him that there are people who are more – than devils. – He should in the meantime remain calm – his son may perhaps be worth more than he thinks – *Addiu* – I kiss my dearest, best of father’s hands 1000 times and embrace you, my dearest sister, from my heart and am eternally your
[55] sincere brother

W: A: Mozart

To M:^{sr} d’Yppold²⁵ 1000 Compliments:

Adieu.

¹⁸ BD: Dr. Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815), the famous “magnetizer”. Sang and played numerous instruments.

¹⁹ BD: Probably related to the Royal Master Cook Johann Fischer, †1759. Cf. No. 0288/3, 9, 10.

²⁰ BD: Franz de Paula Prean von Zahlhausen, official in the War Ministry.

²¹ BD: Michael Grill, official in the War Ministry, known to the Mozarts since 1773.

²² BD: Franz Reinhard (von) Heufeld, known to the Mozarts since 1770. Imperial official and playwright.

²³ BD: The shooting of airguns at humorously decorated targets was practised in the apartments of the members of the “marksmen’s company” or club. A member would donate the first prize and pay for all food and drinks consumed during the meeting. Cf. No. 0330/5. Mozart still considered himself a member, cf. No. 0610/33 ff.

²⁴ BD: No. 640, lost. In it, Leopold must have informed Wolfgang about slanders being spread by Peter von Winter, cf. No. 0651/3 ff.

²⁵ BD: Franz Armand d’Ippold (c. 1730-1790), Imperial and Royal Captain [k.k. Hauptmann], director of the page-training school in Salzburg. He added the “de” (in the Viennese style) himself. Sometime suitor of Nannerl – Wolfgang supported his romantic plans in 1781 (cf. No. 0625/24 ff.).