

0659. MOZART TO HIS FATHER, SALZBURG

À / Monsieur / Monsieur Leopold Mozart / maitre de la Chapelle / de
et à / Salzbourg

vienne ce 16 de Janvier
1782

Mon très cher Père!¹

[5] I thank you for your letter,² so concerned for my good and full of affection! – If I wished to give you a detailed answer to everything, I would have to fill up a whole book of paper. – Now, because that is impossible, I will answer only the most essential points. The name of the guardian is Herr von Thorwarth³ – he is the *inspecteur* of the theatre *wardrobe* – in a word, everything that has any influence at all on the theatre has to go through his hands. [10] – it was also through him that the 50 ducats⁴ from the Emperor⁵ were sent. – It is also with him that I spoke regarding the *concert* in the theatre, because it mostly depends on him, – and he stands high in the estimation of Count Rosenberg⁶ and Baron Kienmayr.⁷ – I must confess to you that I personally thought he would disclose the whole thing to you without saying a word to me; [15] – and the fact that he did not do this, but announced it |: despite his Word of Honour :| to the whole city of Vienna, detracted for me greatly from the good opinion that I had of him. – That *Mad.^{me}* Weber⁸ and Herr von Thorwarth may have acted in error out of too much concern for their own security: I am quite happy you grant them that, [20] although *Madame* is no longer free to decide as she wishes and has to put herself entirely in the guardian’s hands, especially in things of this kind; and the latter |: since he never knew me :| truly does not owe me any trust – yet – he was too hasty in demanding a written assurance⁹ – that is undeniable; – [25] especially since I told him that you did not yet know anything about it, and that I could not possibly disclose it to you now; – he should therefore just be so kind as to be patient a little while until my circumstances took a better turn, then I would write to you with everything, and then the whole matter would be put in order. – but – now, it is over; – and love has to excuse me; – but Herr von Thorwarth acted wrongly; – [30] yet not to the extent¹⁰ that he and *Mad.^{me}* Weber should be clapped in irons and sweep the streets and carry a notice round their necks with the words: Seducers of Youth. That is also exaggerated. – If what you wrote there were true, that for me they opened the doors wide open to love, allowed me complete freedom in the house, gave me every opportunity for it etc., etc., [35] the punishment would indeed still be too spectacular. – But this is not the case, as I do not need to tell you; – for me, even the suspicion that you could believe that your son would *frequent* such house, where things like that happen, is painful enough. – I will only say this much to you: you can believe just the opposite of that. – Enough of this; –

¹ = “To Monsieur Leopold Mozart, Music Director of and in Salzburg. / Vienna, this 16th day of January, 1782. / My very dear father!”

² BD: No. 0652, lost.

³ BD: Johann (von) Thorwart, guardian of the Weber daughters, whose father had died on 23rd October, 1779. Closely connected with other Viennese families.

⁴ BD: = 225 florins; sent after the competition with Clementi, cf. No. 0651/115.

⁵ BD: Joseph II (1741-1790), Holy Roman Emperor [Kaiser] 1765-1790. Son of Maria Theresia. Ruler of the Habsburg lands from 1780.

⁶ “Graf”. BD: Franz Xaver Wolf, Count [Graf] (later Prince [Fürst]) Orsini-Rosenberg (1723-1796), administrator in Vienna, later “General Director of Spectacles” there. Cf. No. 0173/7.

⁷ “Baron”. BD: Johann Michael, Baron [Freiherr] von Keinmayr, deputy director, i.e. von Thorwart’s deputy.

⁸ BD: Maria Cäcilia Weber, née Stamm (1727-1793), married Franz Fridolin Weber (1733-1779) in 1756. They had 5 daughters and 1 surviving son. Mozart married Constanze, one of the daughters, in 1782.

⁹ BD: Referred to in No. 0651/33 ff.

¹⁰ BD: The following is presumably what Leopold had suggested. In Austria, felons were often chained in pairs and made to sweep the streets.

[40] Now about *Clementi*:¹¹ – he is a solid enough *harpsichordist*. – And that is all that can be said. – He has a very great deal of dexterity in the right-hand. – His main *passages* are the thirds. – Otherwise he does not have a kreuzer’s worth of taste or feeling. – a pure *mechanicus*.

The Emperor |: after we had paid each other enough *compliments* :| declared [45] that he should begin to play. *La santa chiesa Catholica*,¹² he said, because *Clementi* is from Rome. – He improvised a *prelude*, and played a *sonata*¹³ – then the Emperor said to me, *allons*,¹⁴ do your business. – I too improvised a *prelude*, and played *variations*.¹⁵ – Then the wife of the Grand Prince¹⁶ put *sonatas* by *Paesello*¹⁷ in front of us |: miserably written in his hand :|; from which I had to play the *allegro* and he the *andante* and *rondò*. [50] – then we chose a theme from it and performed it on 2 *pianofortes*. – The remarkable thing in this is that I borrowed Countess Thun’s¹⁸ *pianoforte*, but only played it when I was playing alone – because the Emperor wanted it this way. – and N.B. the other was out of tune and 3 of the keys kept sticking. – That doesn’t matter, said the Emperor; – [55] I take it, and indeed looking on the best side, that the Emperor knows my artistry and knowledge in music already, and only wanted to enjoy the stranger fittingly. –

Otherwise I know from a very reliable source¹⁹ that he was very satisfied. The Emperor was very gracious towards me, and spoke much to me privately. – [60] He also spoke with me about my marriage.²⁰ – Who knows? – Perhaps – What do you think? – It is always worth trying. –

More with the next letter. – I wish you well in every way. I kiss your hands 1000 times, and embrace my dear sister with my whole heart and am, sir, eternally your

most obedient son,

W: A: Mozart

[65]

¹¹ BD: Muzio Clementi (1752-1832, Deutsch Bild No. 335), pianist and composer. Employed as an organist at the age of 9. 1766-1780 in England and London. Competed publicly with Mozart in Vienna in 1781 (cf. No. 0659/44 ff.). Mozart saw his gift as primarily technical (cf. Nos. 0659/40-43; 0750/35-41). He advised his sister not to spend too much time on his sonatas (mentioned in a number letters between the two of them) so as not to lose the calm poise of her hand position (cf. Nos. 0651/114; 0657/9; 0750/24 ff.).

¹² = “The Holy Catholic Church”.

¹³ BD: In E^b. Incipit in Deutsch Dok, p. 465.

¹⁴ = “Let’s go”.

¹⁵ BD: Not identified.

¹⁶ BD: Maria Feodorovna, wife of the Russian Grand Prince currently visiting Vienna. The Grand Prince was Paul Petrovich (*1754, murdered 1801), later Czar Paul I. He visited Vienna in November 1781 and October 1782. Cf. Nos. 0615/34; 0617/50.

¹⁷ BD: Giovanni Paisiello (1740-1816); he resided in St. Petersburg 1776-1784, where he also taught Maria Feodorovna.

¹⁸ “gräfin”. BD: Marie Wilhelmina, Countess [Gräfin] Thun-Hohenstein, Vienna, appears frequently in the letters as a patroness of Mozart, although only until 1782. Was also acquainted with Baron van Swieten. She had an instrument by Johann Andreas Stein of Augsburg, cf. No. 0585/85-86.

¹⁹ BD: Not identified.

²⁰ BD: The news had no doubt reached the Emperor via Mozart’s “very good friend” Johann Kilian Strack, cf. No. 0596/44, No. 0660/31-32.