

0686. MOZART TO HIS FATHER, SALZBURG

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

Vienna ce 17 d'Août  
1782

Mon très chère Père!<sup>1</sup>

[5] In my last letter I forgot to say that my wife and I carried out our devotions together at the Theatines<sup>2</sup> on Purtiunkula<sup>3</sup> day – even if devotion had not truly driven us to this, we would have had to do it for the certificate without which we would not have been able to be *wedded*. – For some time too, as single people, [10] we always went together to both Holy Mass and to confession and *communion* – and I have found that I would never have prayed so fervently, confessed so devoutly and taken *communion* as at her side; – and it was the same for her too; – in a word, we are made for each other – and God, who orders all things, and consequently has also decreed this, will not abandon us. [15] We both thank you most obediently for your paternal blessing. – You will hopefully have received the letter from my wife in the meantime. –

Regarding Gluck<sup>4</sup> I have the same thoughts as those that you, my dearest father, put in your letter. – Only I would like to tell you something more. – The gentlemen of Vienna, [20] |: understood, however, to mean primarily the <Emperor<sup>5</sup>> :| should on no account believe that I am on earth because of Vienna alone. – There is no monarch in the world that I am happier to serve than the Emperor – but I am not prepared to beg for any position in service. – I believe I am capable enough to bring honour to any court. – If Germany, my beloved fatherland, of which I am proud [25] |: as you know :| will not receive me, then, in God's name, France or England must again be enriched by one more skilful German, and that to the shame of the German nation. – You are well aware that in almost all the arts it was always the Germans who *excelled* – but where did they find their fortune, their fame? – [30] quite certainly not in Germany! – Even Gluck – did Germany make this great man of him? – unfortunately not! – Countess Thun,<sup>6</sup> – Count Zitschy,<sup>7</sup> Baron *van Suiten*<sup>8</sup> – even Prince Kaunitz<sup>9</sup> is very dissatisfied with the Emperor because he does not show more appreciation for people of talent – and lets them leave his territories. – The latter recently said to Archduke *Maximilian*,<sup>10</sup> as the talk turned to me, [35] that such people only come into the world once in a hundred years, and one must not drive such people out of Germany – especially if one is so fortunate as actually to have them in the Emperor's city of residence. – You would not believe

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<sup>1</sup> = “To Monsieur Leopold Mozart, Music Director to His Royal Highness the Archbishop of and in Salzburg. / My very dear father! / Vienna, this 17<sup>th</sup> day of August, 1782.”

<sup>2</sup> BD: Mozart had confessed here the previous year.

<sup>3</sup> BD: A indulgence valid for one year and granted originally by Pope Honorius in 1223 to those visiting the Portiuncula Chapel in Assisi. It was extended in 1622 to include visits to strict Franciscan churches generally.

<sup>4</sup> BD: The composer Christoph Willibald Gluck.

<sup>5</sup> “Kaiser”.

<sup>6</sup> “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.

<sup>7</sup> “graf”. BD: Karl, Count [Graf] Zichy von Vásonykö, chamberlain, court adviser, spouse of Mozart's pupil Anna Maria Zichy. He appeared on Mozart's subscription list of 1784.

<sup>8</sup> BD: Gottfried Bernhard van Swieten (1733-1803), became a diplomat in 1755, served in numerous European cities. From 1777 he had responsibilities in the “State Education Commission” in Vienna. Owner of an enormously valuable library. Wrote the text for Haydn's “Seven Last Words” and “The Seasons”. Acquainted with C. Ph. E. Bach. Met Mozart in Vienna in 1767, saw him regularly in Vienna, introduced him in his home to the music of Handel and Bach. Commissioned works from Mozart. Composed music himself.

<sup>9</sup> “fürst”. BD: Wenzel Anton, Count [Graf] (1764 Prince [Fürst]) Kaunitz-Rietberg (1711-1794), diplomat, State Chancellor.

<sup>10</sup> “Erzherzog”. BD: Archduke [Erzherzog] Maximilian Franz (cf. Nos. 0034/51; 0641/30; 0660/38), youngest son of Maria Theresia.

how kind and courteous Prince Kaunitz was to me when I visited him. – At the end he added: – I am indebted to you, my dear Mozart, [40] for taking the trouble to visit me etc. Nor could you believe how much effort Countess Thun, Baron *van Suiten* and other important people are making to keep me here – but – on the other hand I cannot wait so long – nor do I at all wish to wait for a merciful intervention – I find that in fact |: even if he is the Emperor :| I am not so dependent on his grace. – [45] My idea is to go to Paris in the coming Lent: not simply to see if anything turns up, needless to say. – I have therefore written to Legros<sup>11</sup> and am waiting for an answer. – Here I have also said this in conversation – especially to the important people. – As you know, one can often throw in something of this kind in during *conversation*, which has more effect than if one makes a dictatorial proclamation. [50] – if I can get myself engaged for the *Concerts Spirituel* and the *Concert des amateurs*<sup>12</sup> – and if I am not left without *pupils* – and since I now have a wife, I can attend to them more easily and more diligently; – then with *composing* etc: – but the main thing for me is the *opera*. – I have therefore been training in French daily since then [55] – and have now already taken 3 *lessons* in English. – in 3 months I hope to be able to read and understand English books passably. – Now I wish you well in every way. My wife and I kiss your hands 1000 times and I am, sir, eternally

your most obedient son,  
W: A: Mozart mp<sup>13</sup>

[60]

*P: S: What then is Luigi Gatti<sup>14</sup> saying? –*

*My compliments to Perwein.*<sup>15</sup>

I hope the *alteration* in the health  
on my dear sister will not be of  
[65] consequence; – My dear wife and I  
kiss her 1000 times and hope that  
she may now already be completely  
well again. *Adieu.*

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<sup>11</sup> BD: Joseph le Gros, originally a singer who made his debut at the Paris Opera in 1764, was director of the *Concert spirituel* 1777-1791.

<sup>12</sup> BD: The *Concert spirituel*, the first commercial concert series in Paris, was founded by Anne Danican-Philidor in 1725. It featured a chorus and orchestra performing in *Les Tuileries*. The *Concert des amateurs*, [“Concert of the music lovers”]. Founded in 1769 by the general tax inspector de la Haye and Baron Rigoley d’Ogny as competition to the *Concert spirituel*. Cf. No. 383/66.

<sup>13</sup> mp = “manu propria” = “in his/her own hand”.

<sup>14</sup> BD: Luigi Gatti (1740-1817), deputy director of music at the Reale Accademia in Mantua. At this time negotiating for a possible post in Salzburg.

<sup>15</sup> BD: Perhaps Ignaz Perwein, school-teacher and organist near Salzburg, perhaps the oboist Marcus Berwein, long acquainted with the Mozarts.