

0700. MOZART TO HIS FATHER, SALZBURG

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

Vienne ce 5 d'october

Mon très cher Père!¹

1782

[5] I cannot do more than answer the main point, because it was only a moment ago that I received your letter,² in which I unfortunately had to note the opposite of what I expected. – I called personally on the esteemed *Baron* von Riedesel,³ who is a *charming* man, and I promised |: fully confident that the copying of the *opera*⁴ would already be under way :| to deliver it to him at the end of this month [10] or, at the latest, at the beginning of *November*. I therefore ask you to ensure that I can get it by then. – But I have nothing more convincing to say to you – in order to relieve you of any care and concern, which I honour with a most grateful heart as proof of your paternal love – than that I am very indebted to the esteemed Herr *Baron* for requesting the *opera* from me [15] and not from the *copyist*, from whom he could have had it at any time for ready cash; – and furthermore I would very much regret it if my talent could be paid for once and for all – especially with a hundred ducats!⁵ – For the moment |: only because it is not necessary :| I will not say anything to anyone – if it is performed, as can be reliably expected |: and which is what I most like about the business :|, [20] people will quite certainly hear about it; but this is why my enemies will not laugh at me, not treat me as a base fellow, and be only too eager to give me an *opera* to write, if I should wish to do so! – But I will hardly wish to do the latter; – for – I will write an *opera*, but not to stand and watch [25] how the theatre, for a hundred ducats, earns more than four times that much in a fortnight; – but I will perform my *opera* at my own expense – make at least 1200 florins in three performances – and then the *management* can have it for 50 ducats; if not, I have been recompensed anyway, and can put it on anywhere. – By the way, I hope you will never have detected any traces of a tendency to base dealing in me: [30] one should not be a base fellow! – But not a stupid one either, who allows other people to profit from his work, which has cost him enough *thought* and effort, and relinquishes any further claims on it. –

The Grand Prince⁶ arrived yesterday; – the distinguished *clavier* teacher for the Princess⁷ has already been named; [35] – I need only tell you his salary and you will easily be able to deduce the capacity of this master; – 400 guildens⁸ in coins. – His name is Summerer.⁹ – if this could vex me, I would do my best not to let anyone notice, but now, praise and thanks be to God, I need not put on faces because – [40] only the opposite could vex me, and I – would naturally have had to refuse it, which is always unpleasant if one finds oneself in the sad situation of having to do this to a great man. – I ask you once again for the greatest haste regarding the *copying* of my *opera*; and, kissing your hands 1000 times, sir, I am eternally
your

[45]

most obedient son,
W: A: Mozart

¹ = “To Monsieur Leopold de Mozart, Music Director to His Royal Highness the Archbishop of and in Salzburg. / Vienna, this 5th day of October, 1782. / My very dear father!”. [Note Viennese-style addition of “de” to name.]

² BD: No. 0699, lost.

³ BD: The Prussian ambassador Riedesel.

⁴ BD: *The Abduction from the Seraglio*; cf. No. 0695/24.

⁵ BD: = 450 florins. The standard fee for composing an opera.

⁶ “Grosfürst”. BD: Grand Prince Paul Petrovitch with his wife, Maria Feodorovna. Cf. No. 0689/8.

⁷ “Prinzessin”. BD: Elisabeth von Württemberg, who married the Emperor's nephew Franz. Cf. Mozart's hopes of this position in No. 0698/16-18.

⁸ BD: Equivalent in value to florins.

⁹ BD: Georg Summer; he became organist of the Vienna court chapel in 1791.

My dear wife kisses your hands, and both of us embrace our dear sister from the bottom of our hearts. We saw the cross which my sister received from *Bar.^{ne}* Waldstätten¹⁰ on the day before he sent it to her. [50] – Today I sent off 5 books of paper with 12 staves. – Concerning if and when the *Baroness* is going to the country, we, and perhaps also she herself, do not yet know; but as soon as I do now, I will immediately write telling you. – *Adieu*.

¹⁰ “*Bar.^{ne}*”. BD: Martha Elisabeth, Baroness [Baronin] Waldstätten (1744-1811), a supporter of Mozart and also an outstanding pianist. Lived separated from her husband Hugo Joseph Dominik, Baron Waldstätten, a high official in Vienna.