

0251. LEOPOLD MOZART TO HIS WIFE, SALZBURG; MOZART'S POSTSCRIPT TO HIS SISTER

À Madame / Madame Marie Anne / Mozart / à / Salzbourg / par Mantua¹

Milan, 26th *Ottob.*,
1771

Your letter² from Triebenbach³ has reached me safely. [5] I am glad that you are enjoying yourselves thoroughly. Give our compliments to the entire Schiedenhofen household. I will thank them for the hospitality shown to both of you in due time. Perhaps some news has come to Salzburg of the great reception given to Wolfgang's *Serenata*,⁴ since the young Herr Kerschbaumer,⁵ who is here for some days, witnessed with his own eyes and ears, on the 24th, the day before yesterday, [10] how His Royal Highness the Archduke and the Archduchess⁶ not only made them repeat 2 *arias* by dint of their clapping, but how the two of them leaned down from their *balcony* towards Wolfgang,⁷ both during the *Serenata* and especially after it, and, with cries of *bravissimo maestro* and clapping of hands, showed him their gracious approval, [15] which was then always followed by the clapping of the *nobility* and the whole crowd. Today there is the *opera*,⁸ yesterday there was nothing because it was Friday. Tomorrow and the day after, namely Sunday and Monday, there is the *Serenata* again etc. On the 24th, a great misfortune occurred. There was a *cuccagna*⁹ |: that is, a giving away of quantities of victuals and wine etc., as I will explain to you in person :| [20] and consequently *platforms* were set up in that place so that the people could see it. A *platform* of this kind collapsed and consequently over 50 persons were not only severely injured, but many broke arm and legs, others their hand, others their foot, others their spine, others a couple of ribs, some fell and punctured their heads, [25] 2 women were left dead on the spot, more precisely the 2 sisters of that Herr *de Dominicis*¹⁰ who visited you along with Herr von Troger.¹¹ One *religious* died soon afterwards; the lives of many others are also in danger. Fortunately, we were late getting there, because Herr von *Zinner*,¹² the Chamber *Quartermaster*, sent the coach late, so Herr *Germani* and his wife¹³ went onto the court *platform* beside the Archduke, [30] as did we. If we had arrived earlier, we would have been on the *platform* in question which collapsed, because it was opposite the prince and even nearer to the *cuccagno* and was therefore very advantageous. This accident happened early, before the whole *platform* was

¹ BD: Note (by Frau Mozart? Nannerl?) beside the address: "N:º 12 from Milan".

² BD: No. 250a, lost.

³ BD: Home of Johann Baptist Joseph Joachim Ferdinand von Schiedenhofen, who made a successful career in the state administration of Salzburg. The Schiedenhofens were in frequent contact with the Mozarts, offering mother and daughter accommodation in Schloss Triebenbach during the travels of Leopold and Wolfgang. Cf. Nos. 0143/29-30; 0217/3.

⁴ BD: *Ascanio in Alba* KV 111, performed at the royal wedding celebrations. Cf. No. 0239/15.

⁵ BD: The son of Johann Franz Kerschbaumer, the Salzburg merchant mentioned in line 43, cf. No. 0152/11.

⁶ "S^c: Konigl: Hoheit der Erzherzog und die Erzherzogin". BD: Archduke Ferdinand, son of Empress Maria Theresia, and Maria Beatrice Ricciardi d'Este. The marriage consolidated the might of the Habsburgs in northern Italy considerably.

⁷ BD: Wolfgang was directing the performance. His score is preserved in the Austrian National Library, Vienna.

⁸ BD: *Ruggiero ovvero L'eroica gratitudine*, text by Metastasio. Hasse's last opera. Cf. No. 0250/8.

⁹ BD: Cf. No. 0249/13. Typically, a temple or similar building would be set up filled with food and the populace helped themselves.

¹⁰ BD: No details are known about this person.

¹¹ BD: Leopold Troger, secretary to the governor general of Lombardy. His sister lived in Salzburg, where he visited her in 1771. He had no doubt paid a visit while accompanying the governor on a journey to Vienna to clarify wedding arrangements, cf. No. 0241/42.

¹² BD: Georg Johann Zinner, mentioned in No. 0242/22.

¹³ BD: Don Fernando (Ferdinandi) Germani, steward [Haushofmeister] to the governor general and his wife Therese. They were frequent hosts to Leopold and Wolfgang, cf. No. 0158/59.

completely full, otherwise more than 30 to 40 persons more would have climbed onto it. [35] Let us thank almighty God! We will not climb onto any more *platforms*. You see that what I wrote in my previous letter is true, and you can believe with certainty that little can be seen without danger on such occasions. In due time, I will then tell you in person more of the daily events which have taken place here. The Archduke and his wife are in good health and very happy, [40] which will be a special joy to Her Majesty the Empress,¹⁴ as there was concern that he would have little pleasure in his bride, since she is not beautiful. But she is exceptionally friendly, is consequently loved by everyone, and has completely won the Archduke over, for she has the best heart and the most pleasant manner in the world. [45]

Keep well, both of you. We kiss you 100000000 times and I am as always your
faithful

Mzt.

We commend ourselves to all good friends, both gentlemen and ladies etc.

[50] When you need clothing, have whatever is necessary made. Neither you nor Nannerl should go without the necessities. What must be, must be. And do not take anything shoddy. One makes no savings by buying something shoddy. Have a beautiful dress made for yourself for festive days, and take the one which was made in Vienna for everyday wear. Only nothing in wool, [55] that is not worth a damn.

MOZART'S POSTSCRIPT TO HIS SISTER:

Dearest sister!

I, too, am well, praise and thanks be to God. As my work is now finished, I have more time to write, but I don't know what, Papa has already said everything. I know nothing, except that 35. 59. 60. 61. 62. came up in the *lottery*, [60] and so, if we had put our money on these *numbers*, we would have won, but, since we put no money down at all, we have neither won nor lost, but we laughed at the people. The 2 *arias* which were repeated in the *serenade*: one is by *Manzuoli*,¹⁵ the other by *la Girelli*,¹⁶ the *prima donna*. I hope you will thoroughly enjoy yourself in Triebenbach with shooting and |: if the weather allows it :) with walking. [65] We will now go to the *opera*. My *compliments* to all good friends, both gentlemen and ladies. *Baron Dupin*¹⁷ often comes to that *Mademoiselle*¹⁸ who plays *clavier* and, consequently, we come together often. My handkiss to Mama. Keep well. I am as always your faithful brother
Wolfgang

[70] *P.S.* Pardon the wild handwriting, for I am in haste.

¹⁴ "Sr: M: der Kayserin". Maria Theresia.

¹⁵ BD: Giovanni Manzuoli (1725?-1780?), soprano castrato from Florence, in Milan singing the leading part in Mozart's composition. He gave Wolfgang singing lessons free of charge, cf. No. 0099/76. Cf. 0095/11, 12.

¹⁶ BD: Girelli, mentioned in Nos. 0229/8; 0245/24.

¹⁷ BD: du Beyne. Cf. Nos. 0251/66; 0783/14. Possibly retired Court Counsellor [Hofrat] Aedat Joseph Philipp du Beyne de Malechamp (1717-1803), with whom the Mozarts ate on 28th August, 1773 (No. 0293/5-6). A noted music lover with an extensive music collection.

¹⁸ BD: Not identified.