

Salzb., 15th December,
1780*Mon très cher Fils*¹

You write to me that the letters I write to you are too short, but how much news is there here for me to send you? – – Now you will have received the *aria* for *Msr. Raff* [5] |: to whom we commend ourselves :|, I sent it off by post Monday past, so it should have been in your hands on Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning.

Concerning the hunting horn mutes: they are not to be had. Herr Proschalka, father-in-law of Herr Fiala, has a couple himself, [10] as I heard from Herr Fiala, who called on me and showed me a letter from Herr Becke² full of the highest praise for your music for the first act: he wrote that the tears came to his eyes for joy and pleasure when he heard this music and that everyone stated that this was the most beautiful music that they had ever heard, that everything was new and unaccustomed etc.; [15] that they were just about to begin rehearsals of the second act, – that he will then write to me himself, –that I should excuse him for not writing before, since he was somewhat indisposed etc. Now, thanks be to God, he is better. I cannot believe, since I know your work, that these are compliments, for I am convinced that your composition, [20] if performed fittingly, must achieve its effect.

Herr Sieger³ yesterday travelled to Hallein completely alone to take a trip into the salt mines. Then he will leave for Vienna. He is not only a lover of music, but he also plays the violin very well, and did a very good job of accompanying the engraved sonatas for your sister two days ago in the presence of *Msr. D'Ippold*⁴ and Herr Schickaneder.⁵

Otherwise he also plays the keyboard a little, is an excellent lawyer, and his practice in Vienna will be with the Imperial Court Council.⁶ Besides the grimaces and cut noodles⁷ such people already have from birth, Herr Esser⁸ accompanied the *sonatas* passably. You know of course that such people cannot play anything naturally. [30] Oh, how few play as I would wish! Regarding the mourning, they have taken their lead here from the court in Munich,⁹ – likewise 3 three months mourning at court – the plays are continuing, Schickaneder has written to cancel in Laybach¹⁰ and is staying here, firmly resolved to hear your *opera*. He was worried that the nobility in Laybach would reply to him with an appallingly abusive letter. [35] But, since he luckily wrote to Laybach at once and they did not yet know at the time his letter arrived what the Emperor¹¹ would command, and were furthermore worried they would

¹ = “My very dear son”.

² BD: Musician in Munich and friend of the Mozarts.

³ BD: Lawyer and music-lover in Munich; cf. No. 0549/55; 0555/13, 16, 19.

⁴ 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.).

⁵ BD: Emanuel Schikaneder (1751-1812), actor and theatre director. He took over the Moser troupe in 1778, which he took to Ulm, Stuttgart, Augsburg, Neuburg an der Donau, Nuremberg, Erlangen, Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Laibach, Klagenfurt and Linz 1780. They were in Salzburg 1780/81. He soon got to know the Mozart family, gave them free entry to the theatre every evening, and participated in the air-rifle club. He was important in giving Mozart familiarity with stage practice. In 1786 they performed operas ten times and plays three times in Salzburg.

⁶ “Reichshofrath”.

⁷ BD: “Cut noodles” = “irritating preciosity”.

⁸ BD: Cf. No. 0559/7. Karl Michael Esser (* c. 1735, untraceable after 1791). He is not mentioned in the travel notes for Mainz. His astounding feats on the violin are mentioned in No. 0556/21 ff.

⁹ BD: Cf. No. 0599/18. On the death of Elector [Kurfürst] Maximilian III of Bavaria cf. No. 0399/53 ff.

¹⁰ BD: Maria Theresa died on 29th November, 1780. It was no doubt the national mourning that led to cancellation of the performances in Laibach.

¹¹ BD: Succeeding Maria Theresa, the new ruler of the Habsburg lands was her son Joseph II (1741-1790), Holy Roman Emperor [Kaiser] 1765-1790.

have to give him a replacement engagement if his troop were breadless because of them, they immediately answered him and they themselves advised him that he should make every possible effort to get permission to remain in Salzburg. [40] meanwhile he has got this in his hands, he commends himself to you. – – The family portrait:¹² nothing more has been done; the reason: because, initially, while the days were still longer and brighter, your sister was ill, and then I too was severely ill with a hefty *catarrh* and *rheumatism* in all outer parts of the body. [45] I am writing this to you not to disquiet you, for you know quite well that I am restoring myself to health. I felt cold in all my limbs; all clothes and furs, even the heating stove, which I do not very much like because the strong stove heat overwhelms my head, did not help, – nothing could warm me. I drank my customary burdock root tea; [50] in the mornings I stayed, well covered, in bed in the heated room until 10 o'clock and could not start sweating at all, not even the least perspiration. This happened in your room, where |: because it is easier to heat :| I have been sleeping during this time. What do you think I did? – I sent for elderflowers; had a tea made, drank several bowls; [55] went to the theatre well-dressed, not forgetting my foot bag, it was indeed full. I ended up sitting next to Teresl Barisani.¹³ The play lasted 3½ hours, I got into such a sweat that I frequently had to change my shirt by the stove at home. Now the big question is whether the elderberry tea or Terese Barisani drove the sweat out of me, or whether I have to thank both of these for this desired effect? [60] – – By the way, I had to listen to this play The Sleepless Nights with your *aria*, there was no way round it!¹⁴ There is still no answer from Wezlar.¹⁵ – perhaps it will yet come. – – but I did receive during this time a letter from M^{dme} Duscheck¹⁶ with a text for an *aria* and have already answered that nothing is possible before the New Year. [65] She wrote that she was still indebted to us because of the last *aria* and since she was making it sound quite urgent, I had to write to her immediately with the utmost courtesy informing her in detail of the current impossibility of this. I understand absolutely what it is: – – Herr Kuzelow¹⁷ |: or whatever the object is called :| has not been staying in Prague for some time now, but in Vienna. [70] Yesterday, Friday, they sounded the passing bell for Countess *Lodron* at 5 o'clock in the morning, but she did not die until half past 6, she lay in the last throes from 3 o'clock in the night until half past six in the morning. The Capuchin preacher on Sundays in the cathedral was with her day and night for a week. You cannot imagine anything more wretched, anything more painful, she could no longer speak aloud, [75] the whole throat and mouth was black on the inside from gangrenous scabs. A terrible death! – – The children are all staying with the Royal Marshal¹⁸. N.B. People are whispering to each other that there were still some difficulties because of the marriage.¹⁹ I would wish it to be called off, [80] the marriage is too disparate. Aesop²⁰ will sing psalms or carry a torch.²¹ *à proposito*.²² there are of course *arias*

¹² BD: Cf. No. 0559/33-34.

¹³ BD: Maria Theresia Barisani [1761-1854), one of the daughters of the physician Dr. Barisani.

¹⁴ BD: KV KV Anh. 11a, for the comedy *Die zwey schlaflosen Nächte* ["Two sleepless nights"]. It was finally sent, after numerous reminders by Leopold, on 22nd November 1780. On the play cf. also No. 0559/22.

¹⁵ BD: Cf. No. 0559/35-37. There Mozart speaks of a Herr "Fuchs" ["fox"], who represented Salzburg at the Imperial Supreme Court [Reichskammergericht]; his name was actually "Haas" ["hare"]: Mozart was of course playing on a saying, "a fox is no hare".

¹⁶ BD: Josepha Duscheck (1753-1824), singer, wife of Franz Xaver Duscheck (1731-1799), pianist and composer in Prague. They met the Mozarts in 1777. Mozart wrote two works for Josepha: KV 272 (cf. No. 0337/84); KV 528 (cf. No. 1070/809).

¹⁷ BD: Leopold Anton Koželuch (1747-1818), a versatile musical figure in Prague and then in Vienna, where he taught the royal family.

¹⁸ "Hofmarschall". BD: Nikolaus Sebastian. Cf. following footnote.

¹⁹ BD: Cf. No. 551/23 ff. The aged Nikolaus Sebastian, Count [Graf] Lodron (1719-1792) with Maria Anna Aloysia (* 1769), daughter of Hereditary Marshal [Erbmarschall] Ernst Maria Joseph Nepomuk, Count [Graf] Lodron (1716-1779).

²⁰ BD: The mysterious figure in No. 0559/38.

²¹ BD: Presumably at the burial of Countess [Gräfin] Lodron.

written by him, – but some have no text, and I do not know them at all. I could not send anything more with this post-coach anyway, so in one week. In the meantime we have had two targets.²³ on one was a stage and the *Maresquelle*²⁴ woman dancing *solo*, [85] below in the parterre one saw heads with hairnets, plaits and also round wigs with a bald patch, from each head words arose, *brava bravissima, oh che prodiglio*²⁵ *etcetc.*, and the like *etc.* The other target was a love story which the *Maresquelle* woman supplied on a story about Schickaneder in Linz. [90] Herr Schickaneder was standing on the Danube bridge in Linz with a girl from Linz, and his mouth was saying: I promise what I do not keep for any girl. On the other side was a Linz girl by a table with wine in a garden, had a wine glass in her hand and was saying: He is sure to come. When Herr Schickaneder came for the airgun shooting, he saw the target, looked at it carefully, and turned red. [95] I asked him if he knew who was donating the first prize that day. He answered, – *Mdme Maresquelle*: I recognise her on the target. Tomorrow, the 16th, in the evening, is the burial of Countess *Lodron*.²⁶ On Tuesday they hold the exequies for the Empress, then on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday for Countess *Lodron*. The first one for the Empress in the cathedral, of course: [100] the others in St. Sebastian.

Now nothing more occurs to me. We both kiss you and I am your old, sincere father

L Mzt

Here, via the driver, is a pair of understockings for you too.

²² Here: = “By the way”.

²³ BD: For the regular airgun shooting.

²⁴ BD: A dancer with Schikaneder’s troupe.

²⁵ BD: Correct to “prodigio”: ‘Oh what a marvel’.

²⁶ BD: Maria Antonia, née Komtesse Arco (1738-1780), wife of hereditary marshal [Erbmarschall] Ernst Maria Joseph Nepomuk, Count [Graf] Lodron (1716-1779), cf. No. 0362/87. For her name-days (13th June) in 1776 and 1777, Mozart composed divertimenti: in 1776 KV 247, in 1777 KV 287 (271b, KV⁶: 271 H). In February, 1776, he furthermore wrote for her and her two daughters, Aloisia and Giuseppina, the concerto for three claviers KV 242. Giuseppina (Josepha, “Pepperl”) was one of Leopold Mozart’s pupils.