

0660. MOZART TO HIS FATHER, SALZBURG

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

Vienne ce 23 de Janvier
1782

Mon très cher Père!¹

[5] There is nothing more unpleasant than when one has to live in such uncertainty without knowing what will happen; – that is now the case regarding my *concert*; – and it is the same for anyone else who is willing to give one. – Last year it was the Emperor's² inclination to continue with theatre performances all through Lent. – Perhaps that will happen this time; – *Basta*;³ – [10] at least I am assured of the day |: if there is no theatre performance :|, namely the 3rd Sunday in Lent. – As long as I know for certain a fortnight beforehand, I am happy, for otherwise my whole *plan* goes awry – or I must incur expenses for nothing. – Countess Thun,⁴ Adamberger⁵ and other good friends advised me that I should pick out the best things from my Munich opera⁶ [15] and then perform them in the theatre, and nothing but a *concert*, and at the end play a *fantasy*. –

I already had that in mind too, and now I am completely resolved to do it, especially because *Clementi*⁷ will also give a *concert*. – In this I therefore already have a small *advantage* over him. – [20] especially since I can perhaps give it twice. – I enquired at Peisser's,⁸ but no letter is there yet. – Now I wish to state my opinion regarding the little that is certain.⁹ – I have set my eye on three different things here. – The first is not certain, and even then – probably not much – the second would be the best – – but God knows if it will happen – and the third – [25] would be not negligible – only a pity that it is *futurum*¹⁰ and cannot be the *praesens*.¹¹ – The first is the young Prince Liechtenstein,¹² |: but he does not yet wish it to be known :| wants to set up a *harmoniemusik*,¹³ for which I should write the pieces¹⁴ – there are, of course, there will not be much to do – yet at least it would be something secure – [30] and I would never enter the agreement for less than lifelong tenure – the second |: but which is for me the first – :| is the Emperor himself. – who knows? – I will speak to Herr von

¹ = “[From Vienna | To Monsieur Leopold Mozart, Music Director to His Royal Highness the Archbishop of and in Salzburg. / Vienna, this 23rd day of January, 1782. / My very dear father!”

² “kayser”. BD: Joseph II (1741-1790), Holy Roman Emperor [Kaiser] 1765-1790. Son of Maria Theresia. Ruler of the Habsburg lands from 1780.

³ BD: = “Enough!”.

⁴ gräfin”. BD: Marie Wilhelmina, Countess [Gräfin] Thun-Hohenstein (1747-1800), Vienna, appears frequently in the letters as a patroness of Mozart, although only until 1782. Wife of Johann Joseph Anton, Count [Graf] Thun (1711-1788), Imperial Chamberlain [kaiserlicher Kämmerer], Freemason.

⁵ BD: Josef Valentin Adamberger, singer in Vienna, often involved in Mozart's works.

⁶ BD: Mozart did in fact play excerpts from *Idomeneo*, followed by the clavier concerto in D KV 175 with a new finale composed in Vienna (probably immediately before the concert), then the Rondo KV 382 (cf. No. 0665/10-11), and a freely improvised fantasy.

⁷ 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.); he left Vienna on 9th May, 1782 (cf. No. 0673/54) without giving the planned "concert". 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. No. 0750/24 ff.).

⁸ BD: Franz Xaver Peisser, banker in Vienna, correspondent of the firm Hagenauer in Salzburg.

⁹ BD: Leopold had obviously enquired about reliable sources of income on which to base the marriage.

¹⁰ = “future”.

¹¹ = “present”.

¹² BD: Liechtenstein: Alois Joseph, Fürst Liechtenstein (1759-1805), appears in the subscription list for 1784.

¹³ BD: Instrumental ensemble with only wind instruments, often for outdoor performance.

¹⁴ BD: KV 388 (384a) was probably written for this ensemble towards the end of July 1782.

Strack¹⁵ about it – I do not doubt that he will surely play his part in this – for he is showing himself to be a good friend to me indeed. – Yet one should never trust the sycophants at court. – The way the Emperor spoke to me¹⁶ raised my hopes somewhat. [35] – Great men do not like to hear talk of that kind, let alone say such things themselves; they must always reckon with the butcher’s knife – and otherwise they know how to navigate skilfully round things of this kind. – The third is Archduke *Maximilian*¹⁷ – with him, I can say that I enjoy his highest esteem – he pushes me to the fore at every opportunity – [40] and I was almost about to say that if he were already the Elector of Cologne,¹⁸ I would likewise already be his music director. – It is simply a pity that such gentlemen cannot take action in advance. – I believe I would be able to coax him into a simple promise already – but what help is that for me in the present? – cash in the hand is better. – Dearest, best of fathers! – If I could have it in writing from our dear God that I would stay healthy [45] and not fall ill – Oh, then I would wish to marry my dear, faithful girl straight away today. – I now have 3 *pupils*.¹⁹ – With that I bring in 18 ducats²⁰ per month. – For I no longer do it per 12 *lessons*, but monthly. – I discovered to my loss that they often cancelled entire weeks – but now, whether they wish to learn or not, [50] each one must give me 6 ducats. – I would like to get yet more of this kind – yet I only need one more, with four²¹ I will have enough, that makes 24 ducats, that is: 102 florins and 24 kreuzers: – with this one can certainly make ends meet with a wife |: in the quiet and peaceful way in which we wish to live :|. – Only if I fall ill – we will not have a kreuzer coming in. – [55] I can of course write at least one opera per year. I can give a *concert* every year – I can have things engraved. – Publish things on *subscription* – there are also other paid *concerts*, especially if one is in one place for a long time and already has a *reputation*. – But I would wish to see such things only as *occasional* and not as necessary activities. [60] – yet – if it does not work, then it must fail – and I prefer to risk it in this manner than that I should have to wait a long time. – With me, things cannot get worse – rather, they must always get better. But the reason why I can no longer wait long – is not only – on my account – but principally – on her account – I must rescue her as soon as possible²² – I will write to you about that in my next letter. [65] – Now 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 mp²³

¹⁵ BD: Johann Kilian Strack (1724-1793), cf. No. 0596/44, entered Imperial service in 1758 as a widowed soldier, rose to be the valet to Joseph II. Closely connected to the Weber and Thorwart families. Played violoncello in a private string quartet with the Emperor, is said to have influenced the Emperor against Mozart, Haydn and others.

¹⁶ BD: 0659/58-59.

¹⁷ BD: Archduke [Erzherzog] Maximilian Franz, youngest son of Maria Theresia. Cf. Nos. 0034/51; 0641/30; 0660/38.

¹⁸ BD: This did not happen until April, 1784.

¹⁹ BD: Countess Thiennes de Rumbeke (cf. No. 0585/61), Therese von Trattner (cf. No. 0644/34), Josephine Auernhammer (cf. No. 0585/132).

²⁰ BD: 1 ducat = 4.5 florins.

²¹ BD: The minimum number Mozart specified in No. 0587/29.

²² BD: A recurrent motif in the letters at this stage: cf. Nos. 0648/84; 0663/31-32.

²³ = “*manu propria*” = “in his own hand”.