

1807

1375. CONSTANZE MOZART TO HER SON CARL THOMAS,¹ MILAN

EXCERPT:

Vienna, 30th January, 1806²

. . . Every Monday, which has been my usual society day for a couple of years now, we have beautiful music here at home, thanks to the foreign virtuosos; but those who particularly distinguish themselves are the two Pixis³ brothers from Mannheim, [5] the elder on the *violin*, a pupil of *Vioti*,⁴ and the younger on the *pianoforte*. In particular Herr Seidler⁵ from Berlin, a quite outstanding violinist who is now based in Paris and, they say, is in no way inferior to the famous Rode.⁶ You should just hear him playing your father's *quartets*! – What would I give if you could join us to hear them. [10] These are fine people, all have already given public *concerts*, they have already been here for the whole winter, and although they are here to give *concerts*, for which most artists, as you know, make themselves scarce, they nevertheless play here in my home every Monday, and in fact compete with each other and leave me the winner, as you can easily imagine. Everyone wants a chance to perform, and this way I hear them all, [15] and that very frequently; they all send their heartiest greetings.

Your brother⁷ is now going to *Salieri*⁸ and to Humel.⁹ Both have a great deal of affection and friendship for him, my only fear is that he does not make the use of them that he should, for is not always good if one has too much help because one relies on it too much, and when one no longer has any, one cannot help oneself, [20] and this is really my complaint. He, who receives help from every direction, does almost nothing if one does not force him. Now he has the 3 great masters *Salieri*, *Albresberger*¹⁰ and Humel; how happy I would be if I could give you only one of these men . . .

¹ BD: Mozart's second child, Carl Thomas, was born on 21st September, 1784. He was the longest-lived member of the family, dying in Milan on 31st October, 1858. Grammar school in Vienna; mercantile employment in Livorno approx. 1800-1805, after which he moved to Milan. Started musical studies, but ultimately kept music as a hobby and became a civil servant.

² BD: Actually 1807.

³ BD: Friedrich Wilhelm Pixis (1785-1842) and Johann Peter Pixis (1788-1874). The brothers were on international concert tours during the years 1794-1806.

⁴ BD: Giovanni Battista Viotti (1755-1824).

⁵ BD: Ferdinand August Seidler (1778-1840), played in the royal music [Königlich Kapelle] in Berlin at age of 10, received fixed employment in 1793. Probably moved to Vienna in 1805. Returned to Vienna in 1815 as concert master.

⁶ BD: Jacques Pierre Joseph Rode (1774-1830); met Franz Xaver Wolfgang Mozart on a concert tour in Berlin in 1820.

⁷ BD: Franz Xaver Wolfgang (1791-1844).

⁸ BD: Antonio Salieri (1750-1825), composer, succeeded Bonno as court music director in Vienna in 1788. In 1807 he wrote a reference for Franz Xaver Wolfgang Mozart, stating that he had a rare talent and would certainly be as great a success as his father.

⁹ BD: Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837), pupil (1787/1788?) of Mozart.

¹⁰ BD: Johann Georg Albrechtsberger (1736-1809), director of music in the cathedral in Vienna from 1792. Cf. No. 1397/81-83.