

*Paris ce 29
juillet²
1778*

*Monsieur mon Très cher et plus cher Amy!*³

I received your letter of 15th July⁴ – for which I had already been so very longingly waiting and about which I had [5] been speculating so much in the meantime! – Enough! – Now I have been calmed again by your valued letter – except for the main point, which made all my blood boil – so that – yes, I will break off – You know me, my friend, – so you have no doubts about everything that I felt on reading through your letter – [10] I cannot possibly restrain myself – I must reply to you at once, for I consider it very necessary – only I must first ask if you also received my letter of the 29th? – I wrote you no less than three letters⁵ in quick succession; – of the 27th, addressed directly to yourself – of the 29th to Herr Heckmann,⁶ and of the 3rd July, again to the latter; Now to come to the point:⁷ – [15] have I not always said to you that the Elector⁸ will take up residence in Munich? – I have already heard here that Count Seau⁹ has been confirmed as Music Superintendent for both Munich and Mannheim! – Now there is something I absolutely must tell you – and which I cannot possibly entrust to familiar language – you will surely construe it; – [20] in the meantime my wish is, whether the court now moves to Munich or remains in Mannheim, that your salary will be improved and that your *Mad.^{selle}* daughter¹⁰ might receive a good salary – your debts would be entirely paid off so that all of you could draw breath a little more easily – in the course of time it would finally indeed get better – and if not? – one is nevertheless still so well-placed that one can be patient [25] – wait for the right time, and find a place somewhere else in better circumstances; – my friend, if I had the money which some others, who do not earn it, throw away so tragically; if I had it! – Oh, how much joy I

¹ BD: Franz Fridolin Weber (1733-1779): after two years studying law, became a high administrative official [Amtmann in Zell zu Wiesental und Stetten]. Married Maria Caecilia Stamm (1727-1793), daughter of Otto Stamm, secretary to the Palatine government; they had 5 daughters and 1 surviving son. Forced to leave his position in 1763, was then employed at the court in Mannheim as a bass, prompter and music copyist. Moved to Munich with the court in 1778, then to Vienna when Aloisia was engaged there as a singer in 1779. He died shortly afterwards on 23rd October, 1779. His younger brother was Franz Anton Weber, father of the composer Carl Maria von Weber. Cf. No. 0405/29.

Mozart's interest was initially focussed on Aloisia Weber (c. 1760-1839); he married another sister, Constanze, in 1782. Josepha Weber married Mozart's friend Franz Hofer in 1788 and was the first "Queen of the Night".

² = "Paris, 29th July".

³ = "Monsieur, my very dear and dearest friend!"

⁴ BD: No. 0465 (lost).

⁵ BD: Nos. 0454; 0456; 460, all lost.

⁶ BD: "Registrateur de la chambre des finances de S.A: S: Elec. Palatine" (cf. No. 0504/97-99). A state finance official, nothing else known.

⁷ BD: Presumably the Elector's offer to the musicians either to follow the court to Munich or to stay in Mannheim retaining the same salary.

⁸ "Churfürst". BD: Karl Theodor (1724-1799). Studied in Leyden and Leuven. From 1742 Elector [Kurfürst] of the Palatinate, where he encouraged the arts in Mannheim, and from 30th December, 1777, Elector of Bavaria. Cf. No. 0363/30.

⁹ "graf seeau". BD: Cf. No. 0464/96-97. Josef Anton, Count [Graf] Seeau († 1799), from 1753 supervisor of the Palace Theatre [Residenztheater] in Munich. One of his relatives, Ferdinand, Count [Graf] Seeau, († 1768) was Senior Stable Master [Oberstallmeister] in Salzburg.

¹⁰ BD: Aloisia Weber (c. 1760-1839), came to Mannheim with the family in about 1765. She was 17 when Mozart met first her and already singing at court (cf. No. 0469/56). The family moved to Munich in 1778 with many of the other court musicians; Aloisia was employed there at the "German Theatre" ["zum deutschen Theater"]. In September, 1779, she was given a leading position at the German Opera in Vienna [Deutsche Oper]. Cf. No. 0405/30.

would have in helping you! – but alas; those who can do not wish to, and those who wish to cannot! – Now listen, sir; I wanted to make a special effort [30] |: and perhaps not a fruitless one :| to enable you to come to Paris this winter with your *Mad.^{selle}* daughter – but the circumstances are the following: *M:^{sr} Le Gros*¹¹ |: *Directeur* of the *Concert spirituel*¹² :|, with whom I have already spoken about this *Mademoiselle* singer I know, cannot ask you to come this winter – because *Madame Le Brun*¹³ has been engaged for this season¹⁴ – [35] and he is truly not in the best of circumstances at the moment so he could not pay 2 such persons as they deserve |: and I would not allow it to be otherwise¹⁵ :| – there is therefore nothing to be earned there – but for the following winter it is entirely feasible – I only wanted to say to you – that if you can no longer hold it out at all – not a moment longer – you could come to Paris – [40] travel, board, lodgings, wood and candles would not cost you anything – but that is simply not enough. You would certainly be able to get through the winter – for there are private concerts – and I might perhaps also be able to organise something for you in the *Concert des amateurs*¹⁶; – but throughout the summer? – then for the following winter¹⁷ I have no worries – there you would certainly be engaged for the *Concert spirituel* as well [45] – – Enough, write to me with your thoughts on this; – I will then see to it that everything possible is done; – Best of friends! I am ashamed of myself, so to speak, in presenting you with such a proposition – which, after you have consented, still remains doubtful – and not as excellent as you deserve and as I would wish! But – look only upon my goodwill – [50] the will is there; – I would like to help, but – I am busying myself here and there to see if I can perhaps find something – which is expedient to the matter; – wait, sir; – I will look; – if what I now have in mind works out – – But be patient! – One must never be overhasty in these matters, otherwise they go wrong, or never start at all; – in the meantime, press forcefully for improvement in your salary, [55] and for a good salary for your daughter – do it repeatedly in writing – and N.B. if our heroine is to sing at court – and if she has received no answer to her request – or at least no favourable one, do not let her sing – screen her behind a little illness – do this repeatedly – I beg you; – [60] and when this has been done several times, suddenly let her sing again – then you will see what effect this has; – but this must be done with great sophistication and cunning; – you must be truly sorry that Luise¹⁸ is ill just at the time that she should perform – N.B. but if this happens 3 or 4 times in a row without fail – they will indeed spot the game! – [65] and that is just what I want – and if she sings once again afterwards N.B. it must look as if she is only doing it as a favour! – She should not yet be fully recovered – she is simply doing everything possible to satisfy the Elector – you understand me; – but in this she must dutifully sing with her whole heart – and with all her soul; – in the meantime, [70] needless to say, she must constantly continue to express her only too justified complaints, both in writing and in person – and if, for example, the superintendent¹⁹ or some other person

¹¹ BD: Cf. No. 0440/11. Joseph le Gros, originally a singer, made his debut at the Paris Opera in 1764, was director of the *Concert spirituel* 1777-1791.

¹² BD: The *Concert spirituel*, the first commercial concert series in Paris, was founded by Anne Danican-Philidor in 1725. It featured a chorus and orchestra performing in *Les Tuileries*.

¹³ BD: The singer Franziska Dorothea Lebrun, née Danzi (1756-1791), employed in the court music in Mannheim. Married to Ludwig August Lebrun (1752-1790), oboist first of all at court in Mannheim and then in Munich.

¹⁴ BD: Probably not accurate. The Lebruns were not given leave until 1779, when they were released for two years.

¹⁵ BD: Wolfgang probably overestimates his influence on Legros. Or is this a fiction to impress Fridolin?

¹⁶ BD: The *Concert des amateurs*, [“Concert of the music lovers”]. Founded in 1769 by the general tax inspector de la Haye and Baron Rigoley d’Ogny as competition to the *Concert spirituel*. Cf. No. 383/66.

¹⁷ BD: Wolfgang is talking about the winter of 1779/80.

¹⁸ BD: Aloisia Weber was apparently called Luise/Louise in the family.

¹⁹ BD: Louis Aurel, Count [Graf] Savioli († 1788), supervisor of music at court in Mannheim. Mozart was presented to him by music director Holzbauer on 4th November, 1777. Cf. No. 0363/55.

where you know that it will be passed on again in gossip enquires about the health of your *Mad.^{selle}* daughter – say to him, in a quite mysterious way; – it is not at all surprising – [75] the poor girl has an affective ailment, and that will be hard to cure here – she put all her diligence and application into singing, and has also made real progress which no-one can deny, – and has now unfortunately seen that all her effort and hard work is fruitless and that the joy and longing to be able to serve His Electoral Highness²⁰ has turned to dust – – [80] she would also have lost all her joy in music – neglected herself and really have given up singing if I had not said to her: My daughter, your effort and your hard work is not fruitless; if you are not rewarded here, they will reward you elsewhere; – and that is also what I have in mind; – I can no longer stand it – [85] cannot possibly allow myself to bear such a justified accusation from my child any longer; – and then – when he asks Where? – I do not know yet – Put that in your pipe and smoke it! – That is only in the event that you believe all hope is lost – which, however, I cannot possibly believe, for it is impossible for the Elector to leave you waiting like this any longer – for when he sees that he cannot make use of your *Mad.^{selle}* daughter [90] without coming up with a salary for her, he is then surely forced to, for he must have her – she is absolutely essential to him. Whom, then, does he have in Mannheim? – the Danzig woman?²¹ – as surely as I am writing this letter, she will not stay. – in Munich? – there he has no-one at all for a start. – for I know Munich by heart, I have, you know, been there 5 times – therefore he must – [95] he cannot let her go – and as far as you are concerned – your main complaint must always be the debts; – But now, so that you are not the one caught out, – if it emerges that nothing can be done at all |: which I hope will not be the case :, you will always be very well advised if you discreetly look around for something secure – but at a court, needless to say – [100] you can be assured that I will also be making every effort. – My idea |: as to what you should do |: is that you should discreetly turn towards Maynz²² – we have of course just been there – you will surely be acquainted with at least one person who can – and is empowered to do something – for do not on any account come to me with the Seyler Company!²³ – I could not tolerate seeing your *Mad.^{selle}* daughter, – [105] and even if she were not your daughter – if she were a foundling, I would greatly regret it if she ended up, with her talent, among the wandering players;²⁴ – as if she were of no use except as a stopgap – for the main thing with the Seyler Company, and with all troupes generally, is always the acting – the *singspiel* is only there – to help the actors out of a tight spot occasionally [110] – often even to give the actors time and space to change – and for general variety – One must always have regard for one’s honour – I at least always have it in mind – – here you have my opinion straight from the heart – it may not be to your liking, but I am accustomed to being sincere with my friends – [115] otherwise you can do what you like – I will never take the liberty of dictating to you – but certainly of advising you as a true friend – you see that I am not obstinate about your remaining in Mannheim – I would be very pleased if you came to Maynz – but with honour and reputation – [120] My God, the joy I would feel if I were to come to Maynz²⁵ would be far weaker and much diminished if I had to search for your *Mad.^{selle}* daughter among the players, which can very easily happen – it is not at all impossible that I may come to Maynz – a permanent post, needless to say; just between the two of us, needless to say – Only to you, my friend, do I confide my business, as you likewise do to me – Only one more thing: [125] and could you tolerate it, my friend, if your *Mad.^{selle}* daughter were working among

²⁰ “seiner Churf: Durchl:”.

²¹ BD: Franziska Dorothea Lebrun, née Danzig, see line 34.

²² Mainz, an important town in the Rhine Palatinate.

²³ BD: Famous German touring theatre troupe. Long engagements in Weimar, Mainz, Mannheim and Gotha.

²⁴ “Comedianten”: BD: At that time a word used for actors in touring troupes without permanent work.

²⁵ BD: Wolfgang maintains, in lines 190-191 and in No. 0471/174-175, that Count [Graf] Sickingen had suggested a way of getting a place for him in Mainz.

the players in the same place where *Mad.^{selle} Hellmuth²⁶* |: with whom no-one at all can be compared²⁷ |: is employed at court – and is consequently given preference over her? – Dearest friend – let this be the last – the very final resort – Now I would like to repeat everything to you in summary – [130] It seems to me |: but you must not be offended at my saying so |: that you can at once be floored by some matter – you at once lose all courage – give up all hope too quickly – you cannot gainsay me on this, for I know your circumstances – – they are distressing, that is true – but by a long way not as distressing as you imagine; [135] I know how painful it is for an honest man when he is forced to go into debt – I know it from experience – but, if we want to consider it strictly, who is getting into debt? – you? – No, the Elector; if you leave today – stay away – do not pay the debts – there is nothing fairer you can do – and no-one, not the Elector himself, [140] will think twice about it – yet – you need not, however, do this – you will quite certainly find yourself in the position – of being able to pay these debts – I therefore advise you – to remain patient throughout the year until next winter – in the meantime, however, to do your best to improve your position in Mannheim – – to make every effort to find a position elsewhere if possible [145] – if something of this kind comes about, all the better; if not, come to Paris next winter for the year – here I vouch for at least 60 *louis d'or*²⁸ for you – in the meantime, however, Louise²⁹ has developed as a singer, but especially as an actress – during this time I will look around for an opera for her in Italy – once she has sung even one – [150] she will be on her way – If *Mad.^{me} Le Brun*³⁰ should happen to come to Mannheim in the meantime – make friends with both³¹ of them – they can be useful to you for London – she is coming here this winter – and then I will certainly take the matter up with her; – although I would prefer it, as I hope you will not doubt, if I could see you today – rather than tomorrow, [155] I must nevertheless, as a true friend, advise you against coming here this winter in the manner I have described to you |: and as would otherwise not be possible at the moment |: – First of all, it will be a little uncertain – then also somewhat ignominious to come without a minimum of employment – and then, so to speak, allowing yourself to be kept by someone is very sad [160] – yes, my God, if I were in such happy circumstances that I could keep you free in every way – then, without the least fear of compromising your honour, you could certainly come – for I swear to you by my honour that no person other than you and me should know of it – and should ever learn of it – Now, there you have my thoughts, my opinion, [165] and my advice; do what appears good in your eyes – Only I beg you not to think that I wish to restrain you from travelling or am attempting to persuade you to stay in Mannheim or to get a position in Mainz because I might perhaps have hopes of getting a position in one of these places – in order, namely, to procure myself pleasure of soon being able to embrace you – – [170] No, but because I consider it good, for many reasons, if you wait a little; yes, best of friends, if I could make it happen that we could live happily and contentedly in one place together – I would quite certainly choose that before anything else – that would be dearest to my heart – but rest assured that I give priority to your happiness above my peace and my pleasure – [175] and will sacrifice all joys in order to know that you are all happy and contented – with the firm trust in God that he will indeed sometime grant me the joy of once again seeing the people that I so love with all my

²⁶ BD: Josepha Hellmuth, née Heist, singer, wife of the tenor and composer Friedrich Hellmuth, originally a member of Seyler's Theatre Company. Singer at court in Mainz from 1778. Sang Donna Elvira in the Frankfurt première of a German version of *Don Giovanni* in 1789.

²⁷ BD V, p. 543, quotes various contemporary sources confirming Mozart's opinion. Full and pure intonation throughout a wide range, expression, speed, feeling, contrasting effects are mentioned.

²⁸ BD: ≈ 660 florins. Here again, Wolfgang overestimates his influence in Paris, not to mention the contradiction with the statement in line 186 about leaving as soon as possible.

²⁹ BD: Aloisia Weber, cf. fn. line 62.

³⁰ BD: Franziska Dorothea Lebrun, see line 34.

³¹ BD: The Lebruns, see line 34.

heart and all my soul – and perhaps even of being able to live with them – so continue to be patient, dearest, best of friends! – [180] and in the meantime be constantly on the watch for something – Now a little about my ventures – I have to plague myself so much here that I can hardly tell you of it – here everything moves slowly; as long as one is not really well-known, one can do nothing with composition – in the previous letters I have already written to you about how difficult it is to get a good poem³² – [185] after my depiction of music in Paris you can easily imagine how I have no great joy here – and am seeking to get away |: between the two of us :| as soon as possible; Herr *Raaff*³³ will unfortunately not come to Mannheim before the end of August – but then he will further my cause – and then one could hope for something – if this does not work, then, more probably than not, I will come to Mainz – [190] Count Sickingen³⁴ |: whom I called on yesterday and who spoke very fervently about you :| has a brother there³⁵ – and he suggested it to me himself – I therefore believe that it is possible – there, now, you have my prospects, which are still a secret to everyone except the Count, you and myself – otherwise, for all the sadness of my present circumstances, [195] nothing is so painful to me as the fact that I am not in a position to be of service to you – in the way I would wish – I swear it to you on my honour – *Adieu*, best of friends, farewell; write to me soon – reply to me on all points – to the previous letters as well, I beg you; commend me to your good lady spouse³⁶ and to all who are yours, [200] and rest assured that I will apply all my strength to placing you in better circumstances – if I did not have a father and sister for whom I must live more than for myself – about whose maintenance I have to worry – I would with the greatest joy neglect my fate entirely – and concern myself with yours alone – for your well-being – your pleasure – your happiness constitute [205] |: if I may think for myself alone :| my entire happiness – farewell –

Yours unchangeably,

Mozart

³² = Poetic material for an opera.

³³ BD: Anton Raaff (1714-1797), son of a shepherd, originally intended for the priesthood, appeared as a singer in Bonn, Vienna, Paris, Lisbon, Madrid and Naples before a longer period of service in Mannheim and Munich. Cf. No. 0120/54.

³⁴ “graf Sickingen”. BD: Karl Heinrich Joseph, Count [Graf] Sickingen zu Sickingen, Palatine Ambassador (1777-1791) and patron of music in Paris. Cf. Nos. 0439/14; 0462/117-118.

³⁵ BD: Wilhelm, Count [Graf] Sickingen zu Sickingen.

³⁶ BD: Maria Cäcilia Weber, née Stamm (1727-1793), married Franz Fridolin Weber in 1756. Cf. No. 0405/29.