

0555. MOZART TO HIS FATHER, SALZBURG

À / Monsieur / Monsieur Leopold Mozart / Maitre de la Chapelle / de
S: A: R: / L'archeveque de et à / Salzbourg

Munic ce 5 de Decembre
1780.

Mon très cher Père!¹

[5] The passing of the Empress² does not affect my *opera* in the least – for no theatres at all have been closed, the performances are continuing as otherwise – and mourning as a whole will not last more than 6 weeks – and the *opera* does not go on stage before the 20th January. – Now I would ask you to have my black suit properly brushed down, beaten and put in as good order as possible [10] and to send me the same with the next post-coach. – For next week absolutely everyone will be wearing black – and I, appearing now here, now there, must join in the weeping. – In your last letter³ I find not a word about a certain Herr Sieger⁴ who travelled to Salzburg with the last post-coach – not to mention a letter⁵ which I gave him to give to you. [15] – it was just at that time when I had the *catarrh* and stayed at home 2 days – Sieger was no longer able to call on me because of business – the letter lay there ready – I, having no thoughts of going out, was not dressed – therefore I sent the letter to the post where the coach leaves, with a note with Sieger's name on it – and if someone of that name turned up among the passengers [20] it should be given to him – so I am of the opinion that this man |: who has several addresses to visit in *Salzbourg* :| has perhaps not yet found the opportunity to call on you – but in that case I am sorry because in this letter I asked for something urgent for the *opera* – namely to send me a trumpet sordino⁶ [25] – of which we had some made in Vienna – and the same for hunting horn – which can be found at the city waits – for I need them for the *March* in the 2nd *act*. – but soon – then I also wrote about *Raaff's*⁷ *ultima aria*,⁸ that we both wish to have something more pleasing and more sweetly worded – [30] The *era* is forced – the beginning would be fine – *gelida massa* – is hard again. – In a word, abstruse or unusual words are always unsuitable in a pleasant *aria*. –

And then I would like the *aria* to show only peace and contentment – and if it only had one part – that would be fine for me, yes, almost preferable. – [35] I also wrote about *Panzachi*⁹ – one must surely do a good turn for this honest old man too. – He would like to have his *recitative* in the 3rd *act* lengthened by roughly a couple of verses. – which will have a good effect because of the *chiaro e scuro*¹⁰ and because he is a good *actor*. – for example after this stanza: *sei la città del pianto, e questa Reggia quella del Duol*. [40] – a faint ray of hope – and then! – I am insane! – where is my pain leading me! – *ah Creta tutta io vedo* etc: –

¹ = “To Monsieur Leopold Mozart, music director to His Royal Highness the Archbishop of and in Salzburg / Munich, this 5th day of December, 1780 / My very dear father!”

² BD: Maria Theresia died in the evening on 29th November, 1780.

³ BD: No. 0551.

⁴ BD: Lawyer and music-lover in Munich (cf. No. 0549/55), who came on 3rd December.

⁵ BD: No. 0545.

⁶ = “mute”.

⁷ 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. Raaff caused Mozart worries in *Idomeneo* (cf. No. 0570/8-10) with his poor acting skills.

Metastasio praised his singing, but saw him as a cold actor.

⁸ BD: = “final aria”, at this stage still “*Sazio è destino al fine*”. This was in fact replaced by “*Torne la pace*” (No. 31).

⁹ BD: Domenico de' Panzacchi (1733-1805), sang in Munich between 1762 and 1779. Sang Arbace in *Idomeneo*.

¹⁰ BD: = “light and shadow”, a term taken from visual art.

As far as these things are concerned, *Abbate Varesco*¹¹ does not of course need to copy out the act anew – one can of course easily write these things in – for – [45] I mentioned in my letter too that for me – |: and for others as well :| the subterranean speech, if it is to be effective – seems too long – give it your consideration – now I must close because I have a horrifying amount to write –

I have not seen *Baron Lehrbach*¹² – nor do I know if he is still here or not – I have no time to run around – it can easily be that I do not know that he is here [50] – but he definitely knows that I am here – if I were a girl he would certainly have called on me already – Regarding the dear, young, beautiful, gifted, sensible *Fräulein Louise Lodron*¹³ I very much regret that she is being bestowed upon such a pot-belly¹⁴ – she will quite probably bravely play with him the beginning of the second part of the *minuet*



[55] which I learned from Bach¹⁵ – for – at the conclusion he will probably not be of much use – at least very uncomfortable. – To Peperl *Lodron* my compliments, and I send her my heartfelt *condolences* that her sister has snatched the tasty morsel away from her. – Now *adieu* – from everybody here – – 1000 compliments – I commend myself to all good friends, both gentlemen and ladies. [60] – I have just received this moment your letter¹⁶ of the 4th *December* – you are going to do a little getting used to kissing – meanwhile simply practice constantly with the *Maresquille*¹⁷ woman – for here – every time you come to Dorothea Wendling¹⁸ |: where everything is still measured half in French feet :| you will have to kiss mother and daughter – but N.B. on the chin – [65] so that the rouge does not turn blue¹⁹ – more soon – *Adieu* – I kiss your hands 1000 times, and I embrace my sister from my heart, and am, sir, eternally your

most obedient son
Wolfg. Amadè Mozart

P. S. Do not forget about my black suit
[70] – I must have it,
otherwise I will be laughed at
– and that is of course
not something one likes –

¹¹ BD: *Abbate* Giambattista Varesco (c. 1736-1805), court chaplain in Salzburg from 1766, wrote the texts for *Idomeneo* KV 366 and *L'oca del Cairo* KV 422. The latter was his response to Mozart's request for an opera buffa for Vienna.

¹² BD: Franz Christoph, Baron [Freiherr] (later Count [Graf]) von Lehrbach, Imperial Senior Master of the Hunt, Imperial Senior forestry master; later Court War Councillor [Hofkriegsrat]; gave Mozart a letter of recommendation to his uncle in Munich in 1777. Cf. Nos. 0379/67; 0401/150; 0403/13-15.

¹³ BD: Cf. No. 0526/10: Aloisia (*1763), a daughter of Hereditary Marshal [Erbmarschall] Ernst Maria Joseph Nepomuk, Count [Graf] Lodron (1716-1779). In February, 1776, Mozart wrote for the Marshal's wife and the two daughters, Aloisia and Giuseppina, the concerto for three claviers KV 242. Giuseppina (Josepha, "Pepperl") was one of Leopold Mozart's pupils. For the Marshal's wife's name-days (13th June) in 1776 and 1777, Mozart composed divertimenti: in 1776 KV 247, in 1777 KV 287 (271b, KV⁶: 271 H).

¹⁴ BD: Cf. No. 0551/25.

¹⁵ BD: Johann Christoph Bach. Mozart obviously associated the melody with cuckolding, cf. No. 0552/27.

¹⁶ BD: No. 0553.

¹⁷ BD: A dancer with Schikaneder's troupe.

¹⁸ BD: Dorothea (I) Wendling, née Spurni, wife of the traverse flautist Johann Baptist Wendling, singer in the court music in Mannheim, later dedicated herself entirely to teaching. Cf. No. 0057/2-6.

¹⁹ BD: The mineral fats in the rouge were known to turn blue.