

0487. MOZART TO HIS FATHER, SALZBURG

*Haute Allemagne. / À / Monsieur / Monsieur Leopold Mozart / maitre  
de la Chapelle de S:A:R: / L'archeveque de Salzbourg / à / Salzbourg.*<sup>1</sup>

Paris, ce 11 Sept.<sup>b</sup>.

*Mon Très cher Père!*<sup>2</sup>

1778

[5] I have received your 3 letters<sup>3</sup> of the 13<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> August safely; now I shall reply only to your last one, because it is the most important; as I was reading it through |: *M:<sup>sr</sup> Heina*,<sup>4</sup> who commends himself to you both, was visiting me |: I was trembling for joy – for I already saw myself in your arms; it is true, you will grant me, that it is no great good fortune to be doing what I am doing here, [10] but when I imagine to myself that I am kissing you, dearest father, and my dear sister from the bottom of my heart – then I know no other happiness; this is truly also the only thing that is accepted as an excuse here by the people who are filling my ears with shouts that I should stay here, I always say to them right away: What do you want then? – I am happy with it, [15] and that is the sum of it. I have a place where I can say I am at home – where I live in peace and tranquillity with the best of all fathers and my dearest sister – can do what I like – for, apart from my duties, I am my own master – have bread in perpetuity – can leave when I want – can travel every 2 years – what more do I want? – the only thing, speaking straight from my heart, that I loathe about *Salzbourg* [20] is that one can have no proper contact with people – and that the musicians are not more highly respected – and – that the Archbishop<sup>5</sup> does not believe astute people who have travelled – for I assure you that without travel |: at least for those knowledgeable in the arts and sciences |: one is surely the most impoverished of creatures! – and I assure you that if the Archbishop does not allow me to travel every two years [25] I cannot possibly accept the appointment; a person of mediocre talent always remains mediocre whether he travels or not – but a person of *superieur* talent |: which, without being impious, is undeniably the case with me |: becomes – poor if he always stays in the same place; [30] if the Archbishop were ready to trust me, I would soon make his music establishment famous for him: this is most certainly true; – I assure you that this journey was not unprofitable for me – in composition, I mean of course, for I play the keyboard – as well as I can. There is only one thing I would like to set as a condition for myself regarding *Salzbourg*, and that is that I should not be among the violins as I previously was – on no account am I prepared to act the *violinist* anymore; [35] I wish to conduct from the keyboard – accompany the *arias*; although it would have been good if I could have received a written assurance about the position of music director, for otherwise I will possibly have the honour of carrying out double duties – being paid for only one – and in the end he again puts a foreigner in charge of me. Dearest of fathers! [40] I must confess to you that if it were not for the pleasure I will have in seeing both of you again, I could not in truth resolve

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<sup>1</sup> = “Upper Germany. To Monsieur Leopold Mozart, Music Director to His Royal Highness the Archbishop of Salzburg in Salzburg”.

<sup>2</sup> = “My very dear father!”

<sup>3</sup> BD: Nos. 0476, 0478, 0480.

<sup>4</sup> BD: Probably Franz Joseph (François-Joseph) Haina (1720-1780), born near Prague, husband of the music publisher Gertrude Haina, nee Brockmüller: they were the first publishers of KV 179 (189a); 180 (173c); 254; 309 (284b); 310 (300d); 311 (284c); 354 (299a), cf. No. 617/66-68. Horn player to Baron Bagge, later trumpeter in royal service. Friend of Mozart in Paris in 1778, especially during the last days of his mother’s life. Cf. No. 0084/18.

<sup>5</sup> BD: Hieronymus Joseph Franz de Paula, Count [Graf] Colloredo (1732-1812), Prince-Archbishop [Fürst-Erzbischof] of Salzburg from 1772. Employer of Leopold and, for a time, of Wolfgang. Cf. No. 0263/9. At one point he dismissed both Leopold and Wolfgang, although Leopold was later reinstated. Cf. No. 0328.

to do it – – and also for the sake of leaving Paris, which I cannot tolerate – although my activities were now starting to go better and I do not doubt that if I could resolve to hold out here for some years, [45] I would quite certainly conduct my business very well, for now I am at least fairly well-known – the people are not so familiar to me, but I am to them. With my 2 *symphonies*<sup>6</sup> |: of which the last was performed on the 8<sup>th</sup> inst.<sup>7</sup> :| I have brought a great deal of honour to myself; now I would actually |: because I said I was travelling :| have an *opera* to write – but, as I said to *Noverre*,<sup>8</sup> [50] if you can vouch for it being performed as soon as it is finished – and they can tell me with certainty what I will get for it, I will stay here a further 3 months and write it – for I could not reject it out of hand – otherwise they would have believed I did not think I could do it; but they did not manage to organise this for me |: and I already knew in advance that it could not happen :| because it is not the custom here. [55] Here, as you perhaps already know, they do it this way: when the *opera* is finished, it is rehearsed – if the stupid French find it is not good – it is not put on – and the composer has written for nothing; if they find it good, it is put *in scena*;<sup>9</sup> according to how the applause grows, the payment grows too. Nothing is certain. In total, I will save these things until I tell you in person. [60] Otherwise I say to you sincerely that my activities were starting to go well; haste achieves nothing; *chi và piano, và sano*;<sup>10</sup> with my *complaisance*<sup>11</sup> I have built up friendship and protection for myself; if I wished to put it all in writing to you – I would get aches in my fingers; I will tell you all this in person and demonstrate clearly [65] that *M.<sup>sr</sup> Grimm*<sup>12</sup> is capable of helping children, but not adult people<sup>13</sup> – and – but no, I will not write about it – yes, I must: on no account should you imagine that this man – is the same as he once was; if *Mad.<sup>me</sup> d’Epinay*<sup>14</sup> were not there, I would not be in the house; and he has no right to be so proud of this fact – for I have 4 houses<sup>15</sup> where I could lodge – and with board too; [70] the good man was simply not aware that if I had stayed here, I would have moved out next month and got into a house where things are not as simple-minded and stupid as with him – and where you always have it set right before your nose if someone does you a favour – presented this way, I really could forget a favour [75] – but I wish to be more generous than he – I am only sorry that I

<sup>6</sup> BD: KV 297 (300a); KV Anh. 8 (KV<sup>6</sup>: C 11.05). The former opened the *Concert spirituel* on Corpus Christi 1778 (cf. Nos. 0453/107-109; 0458/41 ff.). Mozart sold both symphonies to Legros (cf. line 132) before leaving Paris (cf. No. 0494/66-67).

<sup>7</sup> BD: Again in a *Concert spirituel*. See advertisement reproduced in Deutsch Dok p. 160. On 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 1778, pupils at the Conservatory are formed and overture for grand opera by Mozart (KV 311a; KV<sup>6</sup>: Anh. C 11.05).

<sup>8</sup> BD: Jean Georges Noverre (1727-1810), internationally active (Stuttgart, Milan), ballet master in Vienna 1755-1774. The Mozarts met him in Vienna in 1773. He became composer and master of ballet at the *Académie royale de Musique* and director of festivities [“*Directeur des Fêtes de Trianon*”] in Paris in 1776. His memoirs mention Mozart aged 12; they certainly met in 1778 in Paris, where Mozart wrote part of the music for *Les petits riens* KV Anh. 10 (299b). Cf. Nos. 0293/51; 0430/182.

<sup>9</sup> = “on stage”.

<sup>10</sup> Literally “He who goes slowly goes well”, = “slowly and steady wins the race”.

<sup>11</sup> = “obligingness”.

<sup>12</sup> BD: Friedrich Melchior von Grimm (1723-1807), 1748 private secretary to the Saxon Count [Graf] Friese, with whom he moved to Paris, where he was in contact with the Encyclopaedists. Various publications, one of which, in 1763, mentioned the Mozart children. He was living with the Marquise d’Epinay just mentioned. His relationship with Mozart broke down in 1778 during the latter’s stay in Paris. After his mother’s death, Mozart moved into accommodation in the house shared by Grimm and Madame d’Epinay. Cf. lines 97; No. 0462/40.

<sup>13</sup> BD: Wolfgang now proceeds in the following lines to explain why he asked Leopold not to be too humble towards Grimm and d’Epinay (cf. No. 0479/37-38).

<sup>14</sup> BD: Louise-Florence-Pétronille Tardieu d’Esclavelles, Marquise d’Epinay (1726-1783), divorced since 1749. Hostess to such figures as J.J. Rousseau, Grimm (see above; she had a liaison with him 1755-1778), Diderot. Visited Voltaire. Author and collaborator in Grimm’s *Correspondance littéraire*.

Her husband was the eldest son of the tax farmer de la Live de Bellegarde.

<sup>15</sup> BD: Not identified.

am not staying here just to show him that I do not need him – and that I am capable of just as much as his *Piccini*<sup>16</sup> – although I am only a German; the greatest good deed that he showed me consists of 15 *louis d'or*<sup>17</sup> which he lent me little by little during my blessed mother's struggle between life and death – can it be that he is anxious about this? – [80] if he has any doubt about it he truly deserves a kick – for he is distrusting my honesty |: which is the only thing which has the power to put me in a rage :| and also in my talent – although the latter point is already familiar to me, for he once said to me himself that he does not believe I am capable of writing a French *opera*; [85] at my departure I will return the 15 *louis d'or* to him<sup>18</sup> with thanks and with plenty of very courteous words; my mother of blessed memory often said to me, I don't know, he – seems quite different to me; but I always took his side, although secretly I was also convinced of this; he did not speak to anybody about me – and if he did, it was always stupid and clumsy; [90] – vile; he wanted me to be running to *Piccini* all the time, and also to *Caribaldi*<sup>19</sup> – – for now they have a miserable *opera buffa* here – and I always said: No, I will not go one step in his direction etc.; In short, he is of the Italian faction – is insincere – and attempts to suppress me himself; this is incredible, isn't it? – but it is so; [95] here is the proof; I opened my whole heart to him as to a true friend – and he made good use of it; he always gave me bad advice because he knew that I would follow it – but he only succeeded with this 2 or 3 times, for afterwards I no longer asked him and if he did give me advice, did not do it, but always said yes [100] to avoid suffering more displays of coarseness. Now enough of this – we shall speak more about it in person; but *Mad.<sup>me</sup> d'Epinaï* has a better heart; the room where I am belongs to her, not to him; it is the sick-room; if anyone in the house is ill they are put up in that room; there is nothing beautiful about it except the view; [105] it is nothing but wall, no cupboard or anything there – now see if I could have held out longer there; I could have written to you about this long ago, but was afraid you might not believe me – but now I can keep silent no longer – you may believe me or not – but – you believe me, I know it with certainty – you still have a sufficiently high opinion of me to be convinced [110] that I am telling the truth; I also have my meals with *Mad. d'Epinaï*; you need not believe that he pays her in any way, for her expenses with me do not amount to a nail – they have the same meal on the table whether I am there or not; – for they never know when I am coming to eat and accordingly cannot have things served for me; and in the evening I eat fruit and drink a glass of wine; [115] all the time I have been in the house, which is over 2 months now, I have not eaten there more often than 14 times at most; so apart from the 15 *louis d'or* which I will repay with thanks, he incurs no expenses with me other than than the candles; and there I would indeed be ashamed on his behalf if I should propose to him that I should buy them for myself; – [120] I would truly not dare to say such a thing – upon my honour; that is simply the kind of person I am; recently, when he spoke pretty harshly, simple-mindedly and stupidly with me, I did not dare to say that he need not be anxious about the 15 *louis d'or* – because I was afraid that I might insult him with that; I did nothing except take it all – and asked if he was finished? – and then: Your most obedient servant. [125] He maintained I should leave in a week; he is as hasty as that – I said that could not be – and the reasons, Yes, of no avail, this is simply your father's wish – I beg your pardon, he wrote<sup>20</sup> to me that only with his next letter will I learn when I should leave; Just keep yourself ready to travel – But I cannot possibly leave, I tell you, sir, before the beginning of

<sup>16</sup> BD: The composer Nicola Piccinni (1728-1806), popular in Paris; cf. Nos. 0158/56, 0431/67, 0462/142 f.

<sup>17</sup> BD: Generally taken as 1 *louis d'or* = 11 florins. 15 *louis d'or* = 165 florins; cf. No. 0505/81.

<sup>18</sup> BD: Giacchino Garibaldi (1743- after 1782), tenor from Rome; cf. note on No. 0125/133.

<sup>19</sup> BD: Wolfgang does not keep this promise (cf. No. 0496/16 ff.); Leopold therefore added the 165 florins to the sum of debts he had to pay (cf. No. 0505/71).

<sup>20</sup> BD: cf. Nos. 0480/34-35; 0482/171 ff.

the coming month [130] – or at the earliest at the end of this one, for I still have 6 *trios*<sup>21</sup> to write – for which I will be well paid – still have to be paid by *Le Gros*<sup>22</sup> and the *Duc de Guines*<sup>23</sup> – and then, because the court<sup>24</sup> is going to Munich at the end of this month, I would like to meet them there, so that I can present my sonatas to the Electress<sup>25</sup> myself, [135] which could perhaps lead to a present for me; I will pack my things and speak to Herr Geschwendtner<sup>26</sup> – and send them at once, as soon as possible; regarding leaving things behind, it is not very advisable with him. For a cash sum I will give the engraver<sup>27</sup> who engraved the sonatas for me 3 concertos, the *Jenomy*<sup>28</sup>, *Litzau*<sup>29</sup> and the one in B<sup>b</sup> <sup>30</sup> – [140] and that is also what I will do with my 6 difficult *sonatas*<sup>31</sup> if possible, even if it is not much – it is certainly better than nothing. On the journey one needs money. As far as the *symphonies* are concerned – most of them are not according to the taste here; if I have time, I will yet arrange some *violin concertos*<sup>32</sup> – make them shorter – for among us in Germany there is the long taste; [145] but in fact it is better short and good – concerning the journey, I will without doubt find some explanation in the next letter – I would only wish that you had written to me only,<sup>33</sup> for I do not wish to have anything more to do with him;<sup>34</sup> I hope so – and it would also be better – for in the main a Geschwendtner or a *Heina* can routinely organise things better than one of these freshly baked *barons*<sup>35</sup> [150] – in fact, I am more obliged to *Heina* than to him; look at this carefully, sir, with the stump of a candle – Well now, I am simply waiting for a prompt answer from you to this letter, I will not leave before that; I have already counted it up: you receive this letter on the 22<sup>nd</sup> *September*, answer me at once, on the 25<sup>th</sup>, the Friday, the post leaves, and on 3<sup>rd</sup> *Oct.*<sup>bre</sup> I receive your answer; [155] on the immediately following 6<sup>th</sup> I can set off,<sup>36</sup> for I have of course nothing to be in a hurry for, and I am not here pointlessly or fruitlessly because I lock myself in and work to bring as much money together as possible. Now I would just like to ask you

<sup>21</sup> BD: Presumably trios with keyboard. Wolfgang appears not to have composed them.

<sup>22</sup> BD: Joseph Legros (1730-1793), director of the Concert spirituel in Paris; cf. No. 0440/11. Various Mozart works were performed there. The payment was for the symphonies mentioned in lines 46-47.

<sup>23</sup> BD: Adrien-Louis Bonnières de Souastre, Comte de Guines (1735-1806), diplomat. Mozart composed the concerto for harp and flute KV 299 (297c) for him and his daughter and also taught his daughter; for both activities, payment was still outstanding; cf. No. 0440/13.

<sup>24</sup> BD: = The Mannheim court.

<sup>25</sup> BD: Cf. No. 0363/84-85. Elizabeth Maria Aloysia Auguste (1721-1794). Married Karl Theodor, her cousin, in 1742. The clavier/violin sonatas KV 301 (293a); 302 (293b); 303 (293c); 304 (300c); 305 (293d); 306 (300l) are dedicated to her.

<sup>26</sup> BD: Karl Gallus Gschwendtner (1751-1818), younger brother of Franz Xaver Gschwendtner (cf. No. 0102/144-145). He dealt in iron in Salzburg, but was often away on business (cf. No. 0467/35-36). The forename “Vital” was probably taken from his uncle, who assumed this name on taking vows in the Benedictine monastery in Niederaltaich.

<sup>27</sup> BD: Jean Georges Sieber published the sonatas dedicated to the Palatine Electress: “*Six Sonates / Pour Clavecin Ou Fortépiano Avec Accompagnement D’un Violon...*”

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Ulrich Konrad, introduction to facsimile edition of *Piano Concerto “Jenamy” E<sup>b</sup> Major KV 271*, Laaber, 2017: Noverre’s daughter Victoire, married name Jenamy, was a noted pianist; KV 271 was written for her.

<sup>29</sup> BD: Countess [Gräfin] Antonia Lützow (1738-1780). Niece of the Archbishop of Salzburg, a pupil of Leopold Mozart’s. Concerto KV 246.

<sup>30</sup> BD: KV 238.

<sup>31</sup> BD: Cf. Nos. 0352/47, 0416/31. KV 279 (189d), 280 (189e), 281 (189f), 282 (189g), 283 (189h), 284 (205b), Mozart’s repertoire pieces on this journey, cf. No. 0363/27.

<sup>32</sup> BD: No. 0480 was sent as an enclosure with a letter to Grimm. Cf. No. 0482/6-7.

<sup>33</sup> BD: Cf. Nos. 0352/47, 0416/31. KV 279 (189d), 280 (189e), 281 (189f), 282 (189g), 283 (189h), 284 (205b), Mozart’s repertoire pieces on this journey, cf. No. 0363/27.

<sup>34</sup> BD: Cf. lines 64 ff.

<sup>35</sup> BD: Grimm received the title of Baron [Freiherr Grimm von Grimhoff] in 1775 when he was appointed ambassador for Saxony-Gotha.

<sup>36</sup> BD: Wolfgang left earlier, on 26<sup>th</sup> September, 1778.

something – for I do not yet know how you want me to travel; because I will not have very much extra baggage with me [160] |; since I will take the opportunity to send on what I do not need |; I could indeed accordingly, if possible, allow myself to be given a pretty *capriolet*<sup>37</sup> in the style which they now have in fashion here – that is the way Wendling<sup>38</sup> did it; afterwards one can go as one pleases, with the post or with *viturin*<sup>39</sup>; the *capriolets* here are not as they once were, namely open, but closed – and with glass windows – [165] only that they have 2 wheels and can seat 2 persons if they are not too fat; Now, I will gather all of this from your answer to this letter. I have one more thing to ask, and which I hope you will not refuse me, namely that, let us suppose, although I hope and also believe that it will not be like this, the Webers<sup>40</sup> did not go to Munich [170] but stayed in Mannheim, may I grant myself the pleasure of passing through in order to visit them?<sup>41</sup> – I do of course go out in society, but not much; at least it certainly does not seem much to me – but I do not believe that it will be necessary – I will meet them in Munich – I hope to be assured of this by letter tomorrow, but if it turns out otherwise [175] I am already persuaded in advance of your kindness, that you will not refuse me this joy. Best of fathers! If the Archbishop wishes to have a new female singer, I do not, by God, know a better one;<sup>42</sup> for he is certainly not going to get a Taiber<sup>43</sup> or a *de Amicis*;<sup>44</sup> and the others are certainly worse; I am only sorry that if these Carnival people perhaps come up from *Salzbourg*<sup>45</sup> and *Rosamund*<sup>46</sup> is played, [180] the poor Weber girl will quite possibly not be to their liking, at least the people will certainly not reach a judgement on it in the way she deserves – for she has a miserable role, almost a *persona muta*<sup>47</sup> – singing some stanzas between the choruses; she has one aria in which one could deduce something good from the *ritornello*, but the vocal part is *alla Schweizer*,<sup>48</sup> [185] as if the dogs wanted to bark; she does have a kind of *rondeau*, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> act, where she can sustain her voice, and consequently show it, a little; yes, hapless the singer, male or female, who falls into Schweitzer's hands, for he will not learn singable composition as long as he lives! Once I am in Salzbourg I shall not fail to advocate<sup>49</sup> my dear lady-friend with the greatest zeal [190] – meanwhile I beg you to do likewise, and nor should you fail to do your best, you cannot give your son a greater joy. Now I think of nothing except the pleasure of embracing you soon – I beg you to make sure for yourself of everything that the Archbishop has promised – and what I have requested

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<sup>37</sup> BD: Cabriolet, a light two-wheeled, one-horse carriage.

<sup>38</sup> BD: The flautist Johann Baptist Wendling (1723-1797); his brother was the violinist Franz Anton Wendling (1729-1786). He had already returned to Mannheim on 31<sup>st</sup> May, 1778.

<sup>39</sup> = *vetturino*, coachman.

<sup>40</sup> BD: The family of Franz Fridolin Weber (1733-1779). He was initially a high administrative official [Amtmann], 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 his daughter Aloisia, of great romantic interest to Mozart, was engaged there as a singer in 1779. Mozart married his daughter Constanze. He died shortly afterwards on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 1779. Cf. No. 0405/29.

<sup>41</sup> BD: Leopold is against the idea (cf. No. 0491/76), but Mozart nevertheless goes out of his way to drive through Mannheim.

<sup>42</sup> BD: Referring to Aloisia Weber, as discussed already in No. 0480/39-40.

<sup>43</sup> BD: Elisabeth Teyber (1744-1816), singer, member of perhaps the only family in Vienna to have maintained contacts with all the members of the Mozart family for 20 years. Cf. note on No. 0117/10 f.

<sup>44</sup> BD: Anna Lucia de Amicis (c. 1740-1816), singer. Met the Mozarts in Mainz and Naples, cf. Nos. 0060/29-31 and 0188/54. Wolfgang reports that she sang in Venice when he was there, cf. No. 0232/33.

<sup>45</sup> BD: At Carnival time residents of Salzburg travelled to Munich to hear an opera.

<sup>46</sup> BD: *Rosamunde*, opera (cf. No. 0377/62) by Anton Schweitzer (1735-1787), composer. Mozart met him in Mannheim, cf. Nos. 0074/15; 0907/51; cf. note on No. 0377/62. Wolfgang was obviously afraid Aloisia would not be a success if she had to sing in this piece.

<sup>47</sup> = “a mute role”.

<sup>48</sup> BD: Schweitzer, the composer of *Rosamunde*.

<sup>49</sup> BD: Leopold had asked him to do so in No. 0480/39.

from you, that my place is at the keyboard.<sup>50</sup> [195] My compliments to all good friends, both gentlemen and ladies, especially to Herr Bullinger;<sup>51</sup> oh, how merry we will be together! – I already have all of this in my thoughts – already have everything before my eyes; *Adieu*. I kiss your hands 100000 times, and I embrace my sister with my whole heart; in the hope of receiving a reply at once so that I can leave immediately, I am, sir, your most obedient son,

Wolfgang Amadè Mozart

ON THE INSIDE OF THE ENVELOPE:

*Apropós:*<sup>52</sup> from the last letter<sup>53</sup> from me you will know that I was in St. Germain; from there I was entrusted with a task: *Mad.<sup>me</sup> de Follard*,<sup>54</sup> wife of the former French ambassador in Munich, and a bosom lady friend [205] of the Bishop of Chiemsee,<sup>55</sup> would very much like to know whether he has perhaps received the letters which she has written to him? – because she has not received any answer at all. I would therefore beg this favour of you, for she implored me urgently – *Adieu*;  
I am waiting for your reply, I shall not leave before getting it – regarding what I have written to you about this gentleman,<sup>56</sup> [210] do not let him notice anything – I like to pay such people back with courtesy – that hurts them more, for they cannot make any reply to that. *Adieu*.

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<sup>50</sup> BD: Cf. line 35.

<sup>51</sup> BD: Abbé Franz Joseph Johann Nepomuk Bullinger (1744-1810), Jesuit, private tutor, friend of the Mozart family in Salzburg, where he seems to have arrived between 1774 and 1776. House tutor to Count [Graf] Leopold Ferdinand Arco, later to Count [Graf] Sigmund (“Sigerl”) Lodron. Amateur viola player. Mozart called him “his best of all friends” (cf. Nos. 0331/5; 0459/1).

<sup>52</sup> Here: = “By the way”.

<sup>53</sup> BD: No. 0479. St. Germain was at that point a suburb of Paris.

<sup>54</sup> BD: Wife of the French ambassador to Bavaria; cf. No. 0479/53.

<sup>55</sup> BD: Ferdinand Christoph, Count [Graf] Waldburg-Zeil (1719-1786), from 1772 Prince-Bishop [Fürst-Bischof] of Chiemsee, a life-long supporter of Mozart. Cf. Nos. 0138/48; 0261/6.

<sup>56</sup> BD: Grimm, cf. lines 63 ff.