

Salzburg, 25th Decbr., 1780

In the whole town there is general talk of the quality of your *opera*.² The first stir was created by *Baron* Lerbach;³ the Court Chancellor's wife⁴ said to me that he had told her that the *opera* had been exceptionally praised in every detail. [5] The second was Herr *Becke's*⁵ letter to *Fiala*,⁶ which he caused to be read everywhere. My wish is that the third act should have the same outworking, and am all the certain in this hope in that the great affects make their appearance here and the subterranean voice will necessarily be very surprising and spine-chilling. Enough, I hope that they will say: *Finis coronat opus*.⁷ [10] Just try to keep the whole orchestra in a good mood, flatter them and retain their favour with laudations for every one of them, for I know your way of writing, in which the uninterrupted and most astonishing attention is called for in all instruments, and it is indeed no light matter when the orchestra has to go through at least three hours of nervous strain with such effort and attention. [15] Everyone, even the worst *viola* player, is most deeply touched when one praises him *tête à tête*,⁸ and as a result becomes more zealous and more attentive, and courtesy of this kind costs you nothing more than a few words. Yet – you know this yourself – I am only saying it because one often cannot do it directly during the rehearsal and because it is not until the *opera* goes on stage that you need the friendship and ambition of the whole orchestra. [20] The attitude of the whole orchestra is then completely different, and the concentration of all players must be even more rigorous. You know that one cannot have everyone as one's friend. There must always be a doubt and a but intermixed with it. They doubted whether the second *act* would be as new and good as the first *act*? [25] Now that this doubt is removed, there will be few who still have doubts about the third *act*. But I would stake my head that there will be some who doubt whether this music will have the same effect on the theatre stage as in the room. – – and that is where one truly needs the greatest effort and goodwill of the whole orchestra. [30]

As far as the six weeks are concerned, I am resolved not to move a muscle nor to mention anything; but should only talk reach me, I am resolved to answer that we had understood that you could stay in Munich for six weeks after composing the *opera* for rehearsals and production, since I could not suppose [35] that His High Princely Grace⁹ believed that such an *opera* could be composed, copied and performed in six weeks etc.

¹ BD: Original lost. NissenB.

² BD: *Idomeneo*.

³ 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.

⁴ BD: Wife of Franz Anton Ignaz, Baron [Freiherr] von Kürsinger (1727-1796), director of the Privy Chancellery [geheime Kanzlei]; from 1774 Court Chancellor [Hofkanzler], a position between the President and Director. Member of the eclectic lodge "Zur Fürsicht" ["Under the sign of Providence"] in Salzburg.

⁵ BD: Cf. No. 0333/20 etc. Johann Baptist Becké (1743-1817), flautist in the court music in Munich, kept the Mozarts informed about developments there.

⁶ BD: Joseph Fiala (c. 1754-1816), oboist in Prague, Regensburg, Wallerstein, Munich, Vienna, Salzburg, St. Petersburg, Donaueschingen. Also composed. Cf. Nos. 0485/67; 0529/7.

⁷ = "The end crowns the work."

⁸ = "Face to face."

⁹ "Se. Hochfürstl. Gnaden". BD: Hieronymus Joseph Franz de Paula, Count [Graf] Colloredo (1732-1812), Prince-Archbishop [Fürst-Erbischof] of Salzburg from 1772. Employer of Leopold and, for two periods, of Wolfgang. Cf. No. 0263/9. At one point he dismissed both Leopold and Wolfgang, although Leopold was later reinstated. Cf. No. 0328.

Herr Esser¹⁰ has written to me and *Ferrari*¹¹ from Augsburg. He quite specially extolled the two *acts* of your *opera* which he heard, and wrote that the rehearsal was from 5 to 8 o'clock. Herr *Becke*, to whom we commend ourselves, [40] wrote to me that the chorus during the storm in the second *act* was so powerful that everyone was turned ice-cold, even in the great summer heat. He praises Dorothea Wendling's¹² *concertante aria* in the second act exceptionally etc. In short, it would lead too far to put down all his eulogies here.

[45] Herr *Ferrari* sends you his compliments because of the general approval for your *opera*. He showed the letter from Herr Esser to everyone at court, especially to Haydn, *Brunetti*,¹³ *Hafeneder*¹⁴ etc. because the writer expressed his gratitude to the whole orchestra for the accompaniment for his *concertos* in Salzburg, and there they also read that he had heard the two *acts* [50] and: *che abbia sentito una musica ottima e particolare, universalmente applaudita*.¹⁵

¹⁰ BD: Karl Michael Esser (* c. 1735, untraceable after 1791). He is not mentioned in the travel notes for Mainz. His astonishing and unlikely feats on the violin are mentioned in No. 0556/21 ff.

¹¹ BD: Antonio Ferrari, first cellist in the court music.

¹² 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.

¹³ BD: Antonio Brunetti († 1786; cf. No. 1015/6 ff.), concertmaster of the Salzburg court music. Mozart's compositions for him include KV 261, mentioned in lines 34-35. Cf. No. 0346/10.

¹⁴ BD VII: Joseph Hafeneder (1746-1784), court violinist in Salzburg. Cf. No. 0321/40. Wrote numerous instrumental works.

¹⁵ = "that he heard the best and most special of music, applauded universally."