

0490.¹ LEOPOLD MOZART TO HIS SON, PARIS

*À Monsieur / Monsieur Wolfgang Amadé / Mozart Maître de Musique /
à / Paris / chez Mr: le Baron de / Grimm² / Rue de la Chaussée / d'Antin
près le / Boulevard.³*

Salzb., 17th Sept.

[5] My dear son!

1778

I had been waiting for a letter from you for two post-days now, since I had to suppose, according to your letter⁴ of 27 August from St. Germain, that you would long have been gone from Paris at the end of August or the first days of September, would have read the content of my letters and thought through my plan. [10] But now that I have once again paid 110 florins to Herr Gschwendner⁵, and indeed paid at once in order to maintain my reputation and honour, you can no doubt see that I <would have had to abandon you completely> if it had gone on that way and that if you would not comply with my advice and paternal will, I would have become a <deplorable, despised man> because of you since I could not <pay the debts that have risen so high at this time>. [15] Staying in Paris in the hope of a lucky upturn and endangering your health seeking your bread with teaching is a dangerous business and contrary to your genius.⁶ And at the same time one should earn so much above that as to be able <to pay so many debts> for one inevitable expense or another, since one is immediately without earnings if one is ill for a day [20] and yet must live, indeed have other people to help and serve, pay them, or lie there like a dog and go to one's ruin. There is no sure hope of earning so much money, especially since there is now no hope of writing a grand opera. In short, you must either succeed in getting to Munich, or meanwhile return to Salzburg with all honours, [25] with a higher salary and more respect and authority as a director so as to be closer to Munich in order to really obtain a position there or pursue your aims further by writing *operas*. I have recommended the idea strongly to *Padre Martini*,⁷ as you can deduce from his answer⁸ which I received yesterday. He writes: – – “It is a great pleasure to me etc. etc. – After Sgr. Raff⁹ had returned to [30] Manheim I wrote to him recommending your son to him in every effective way, still feeling great concern that he should find a fitting and advantageous position; but since Sgr. Raff did not reply to a most urgent letter of mine, I am writing again by standard post and recommending the idea to him in every way I know and can. I moreover feel grievously the loss of your worthy consort etc. etc. – Be assured of my [35] eagerness in every way to see

¹ This letter contains passages in "family code"; these are marked with angle brackets < >.

² 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'Epinau 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'Epinau. Cf. No. 0462/40.

³ = “To Monsieur Wolfgang Amadé Mozart, Knight, Music Director in Paris, c/o Baron von Grimm, Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, near the Boulevard.”

⁴ BD: No. 0479.

⁵ BD: Franz Xavier Geschwendtner, Salzburg merchant, his brother Vital was in Paris. (Cf. No. 0102/144-145). The brothers arranged the payment of 110 florins to Mozart in Paris.

⁶ BD: Cf. Wolfgang's self-characterisation (“of superior talents”) in No. 0487/99 ff.

⁷ BD: Leopold is referring to No. 0477. Giovanni Battista Martini (1706-1784), specialist in the theory and history of music. Taught Mozart during his stay in Bologna in preparation for admission to the *Accademia filarmonica*. Cf. No. 0171/20.

⁸ BD: No. 0483, lost.

⁹ 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. The passage here concerns the letter of recommendation written by Martini for Elector Karl Theodor in Mannheim and entrusted to Raaff.

you consoled, and I hope to God that you will obtain peace from Him. etc. Bologna, 6th September.”¹⁰ So you see that I am applying all means |: if possible :| to bring you to Munich; I have explained everything else to you so clearly and veraciously in my previous letters and shown you plainly that, with sound sense and not otherwise, you will find my plan most necessary [40] <regarding the payment of our debts> and indispensable to all your distant prospects. Of what you write about the people where you are living something of the kind is already known to me, as you will notice that from my letter of 13th Aug., and this will no doubt quickly bring you to the decision to leave Paris soon [45] and to make use of what is still the good time of year. <for if in the end I have to pay all the money for board, – how> could you stay in Paris any longer? This is why I wrote to you, so that you should write to me at once saying what you owe and to whom, and still I do not have an answer. – I wrote that you should pack your blessed mother’s things well and put everything you do not need in with them [50] and send it off as soon as possible. – I hope every day for an answer on this, and that it has been done. You went on your trip to *St. Germain*¹¹ at just the wrong time, as all these letters for you arrived in Paris one by one. *Baron von Grimm*¹² has offered¹³ to get you to Strasbourg if the idea here should come to realisation, only I should arrange a letter of credit for Strassburg for you. [55] Everything has been agreed here, as I have already told you. Accordingly I herewith enclose a little note for you so you can make yourself known to Herr Johann Georg Scherz¹⁴ in Strasbourg, who will receive by post the *aviso*¹⁵ to arrange to convey you to Augspurg¹⁶ by post-coach or other inexpensive means, to provide you with money as far as Augsp. at any rate, [60] and to be at your side in all matters. In Augspurg, as you know quite well, you must go straight to the monastery at Holy Cross. – N.B. If you wanted to stop over in Donaueschingen,¹⁷ you would have to stay there until the post-coach comes again, and then the question would be whether the post-coach might already be occupied? – – [65] It all depends on circumstances and precise information. – Perhaps the Prince¹⁸ is there, and perhaps not? – – You must look after the *aviso* enclosed here very carefully so that it does not get lost, otherwise someone else who finds it could make use of it and bring misfortune on us. You must write out the name Scherz etc. separately or memorise it, and if you should have the misfortune to lose the note, you must write to this Herr Joh. Georg Scherz to say the note has been lost and is consequently |: if it is presented :| invalid, and on your arrival you can then legally show that you are the person alone by your handwriting. – I have

¹⁰ “Ho piacer grande etc: etc: – Ritornato a Manheim il [30] Sgr Raff le ho scritto raccomandandole con tutta l’efficacia il di lei figlio, avendo ancor io grande premura che sia collocato decorosamente e vantaggiosamente; ma perche il Sgr. Raff non rispose a una mia di somma premura, repplico in quest’ordinario, e le racomando l’affare quanto mai so è posso. Sento poi con ramarico la perdita sua degna Consorte etc: etc: – s’assicuri che ho [35] tutta la premura possibile perche ella venga consolata, e spero in Dio che obterra il di lui contento etc: Bologna 6 settembre.”

¹¹ BD: No. 0483, lost.

¹² 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.

¹³ BD: Presumably in No. 0486; cf. No. 0491/11-12, 22; No. 049/14 ff.

¹⁴ BD: Strasbourg correspondent for the Salzburg mercantile firm Haffner.

¹⁵ = “Notification”. BD: Legitimation for Wolfgang.

¹⁶ Augspurg. Wolfgang stopped there for some time on the outward leg of the journey, had numerous contacts in the monastery Heiligkreuz (Holy Cross) mentioned in the next lines.

¹⁷ BD: Cf. No. 0485/61-62.

¹⁸ “Fürst”. BD: Leopold had suggested that Wolfgang present himself to the Prince [Fürst] von Fürstenberg, cf. No. 0485/61-62.

changed my opinion¹⁹ regarding what you should do in Munich, [75] namely you should and must never say that you wish to enter service in Salzburg, but that the reason why you are going to Salzburg is that your father is always ill and he would like to see you. – In short! I hope I will already have an answer from you to my previous letters before you receive this letter. I wrote to *Msr. Raff* myself with the last post and, for the sake of security, will enclose it with a letter to *Becke*²⁰ to be handed over on *Raff's* arrival. [80] I recommended the matter to Herr Raff most emphatically and asked him to write telling me the truth, sincerely and without any beating about the bush, as to whether there is a glimmer of hope at the moment or not. Do you know that Count Seeau²¹ lodged²² with Wendling²³ in Manheim? The talk will have turned to you a number of times. In brief! [85] One must be in the closer vicinity if one wants to negotiate anything, you cannot make your way in Paris except if you have permanent lodgings and free board and necessities free of charge. If Herr von Grimm leaves on another journey, you must leave your lodgings; – if *Md.^{me} D'Épinay's*²⁴ health deteriorates, it will not be easy for him to keep you with him any longer. [90] If you had to provide for everything, you would be worried day and night and would have to run around till you dropped, and yet hardly be able to keep yourself, let alone save anything, since you are easily deceived. – I cannot even allow myself to [think]²⁵ about illness – otherwise I will die of worry. *Par Dieu!*²⁶ Would we not be better placed, the 3 of us, with 12 or 1300 florins per annum than someone in Munich with his family, [95] which is larger, who has 2000 florins? – – Is it not quite astonishingly cheaper living here? – We will soon finish paying off our debts, and Herr Bullinger²⁷ is also willingly at our service if we need money for a journey to Italy; and you should certainly not lack anything, you can |: if you wish :| look after your money yourself; [100] it will not be as previously, when we had to turn over every kreuzer²⁸ ten times and examine it. Yesterday was the first time that I was at the grand concert at court as *music director*.²⁹ Now the concerts finish at quarter past eight. Yesterday it started at 7 o'clock, and as I left it chimed quarter past 8, thus 5 quarters of an hour. Usually only 4 pieces are played. A symphony. An aria. A symphony or concerto. [105] Then an aria and, with that, *addio!* Everyone

¹⁹ BD: Cf. Leopold's initial plan in No. 0482/53 ff.

²⁰ BD: Johann Baptist Becké (1743-1817), flautist in the court music in Munich, kept the Mozarts informed about developments there. Played in the music for the Archduke mentioned in note on No. 0333/6.

²¹ “graf Seeau”. BD: 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.

²² BD: Probably in connection with the transfer of most of the court's musical activities from Mannheim to Munich.

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

²³ BD: The flautist Johann Baptist Wendling (1723-1797); his brother was the violinist Franz Anton Wendling (1729-1786). For the various members of the family Mozart wrote KV 487a (295a), KV 307 (284d) and perhaps KV 368; he also wrote an instrumentation of a flute concerto by J.B. Wendling.

²⁴ BD: Louise-Florence-Pétronille Tardieu d'Esclavelles, Marquise d'Épinay (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.

²⁵ BD: Word missing.

²⁶ = “By God”.

²⁷ BD: Bullinger had forwarded 300 florins for the journey to Paris (cf. 0375/70-71). 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).

²⁸ 60 kreuzers = 1 florin.

²⁹ “Commendant”. BD: Cf. No. 0482/69-70.

hopes to see you here! The Royal High Steward³⁰ offers you his horses, and Dr. Prex³¹ his fine nag; Robini=Louis³² her love; – – – I my health – long life – and everything good that you would ungrudgingly grant your father; your sister her sisterly friendship, love and service; [110] Tresetl³³ the maid all 13 capons which she bought for you, Pimperl³⁴ 1000 licks. – Can you ask for more? – – Capons expressly bought for this are in fact waiting for you. This evening the players³⁵ arrive. The first performance will be on Sunday. I will therefore already receive a visit tomorrow from the operetta *prima donna*³⁶ recommended to me. [115] Young Thomas,³⁷ the son of the calcant Thomas, who took over his father's service, died in St. John's Hospital,³⁸ now I have written the petition for the elder brother,³⁹ who will pump more *a tempo* because he plays the organ himself.⁴⁰ Carry out your tasks well. Send off what you do not need with your blessed Mama's things. Keep an eye on your things. [120] Do not make friends with anyone on the journey. Sell the copies of anything where I or you have the scores. Take the addresses of the music dealers with you so as to be able to correspond with them. Release me once and for all from my worries, which cause me sleepless nights, and make it possible for me to embrace you soon with the most inexpressible joy, your

[125]

loving, sincere father Mzt

Herr Bullinger and all friends, both gentlemen and ladies, commend themselves. I and Nannerl kiss you a million times.

Take care of your health!

³⁰ "Obersthofmstr". BD: Royal High Steward [Obersthofmeister] Franz Lactanz, Count [Graf] Firmian (1712-1786), member of a very extensive and influential Tyrolean family (cf. BD V, p. 8), occupied various positions at court, ultimately that of Royal High Steward [Obersthofmeister].

³¹ BD: Dr. Johann Nepomuk Prex (1733-1809), physician in Salzburg, first met the Mozarts in Paris in 1766.

³² BD: Aloisia (Luise) von Robinig, once ardently admired by Wolfgang. Cf. No. 0016/67.

³³ BD: Therese Pänckl, serving girl in the Mozart household.

³⁴ BD: The Mozarts' dog in Salzburg. Cf. No. 0291/37.

³⁵ BD: A touring troupe. Cf. Nos. 0482/88; 0485/83. The Sunday was the 20th September, 1778.

³⁶ BD: St.-Johanns-Spital in Salzburg.

³⁷ BD: Thomas Frank the Younger, cf. No. 0417/204; died on 14th February, 1778.

³⁸ BD: St.-Johanns-Spital in Salzburg.

³⁹ BD: Joseph Frank (1758-1787), elder brother of Thomas. Petition: BD V, p. 560: "Your High Princely Grace! / Most Worthy Prince of the Holy Roman Empire! / Most Gracious Governor and Sovereign Lord! Your High Princely Grace was so Highly Gracious as to grant most graciously to my younger brother the post of cathedral calcant which my blessed father had occupied for 40 years. Now this, my brother, has passed into eternity in St. John's Hospital but I have become breadless. For this reason the most submissive, humble and obeisant request of myself and my mother comes before Your High Princely Grace to the effect that You might Most Graciously and Most Considerately grant to me this place in service which I have already shared in carrying out not only now, but during the lifetime of my 80-year-old father, so that all tasks are thoroughly familiar to me; with which I will not only keep my mother, but will make my best efforts, with untiring diligence, to make myself worthy of this and all other Highest Graciousness, to which, in deepest humility, I commend myself along with my poor mother, Your High Princely Grace's, / my Most Gracious Sovereign Lord's / most submissive and most obedient / son of the Cathedral Calcant / Joseph Frank."

⁴⁰ BD: Joseph Frank had just finished the penultimate class at grammar school. Reports suggest his gifts were very limited, but his diligence was usually praised. Occasionally he seemed to pay more attention to the organ than to studies ("magis organo quam studies intenta").