

MOZART LETTERS

Mozart worked long and hard on a set of six string quartets, which he dedicated to Franz Josef Haydn. Wolfgang said that was only proper, as it was Haydn who had taught him to write a string quartet. Papa Leopold was in Vienna as Haydn and Mozart played through those quartets together for the first time, and Haydn said to Papa Leopold, "Before G-d and as an honest man, your son is the greatest composer known to me, either in person or by reputation." Here is that dedication.

To Franz Josef Haydn

Vienna, September 1, 1785

To my dear friend Haydn,

A father, having decided to send his children out into the wide world, felt that he should entrust them to the protection and guidance of a famous Man who by good fortune also was his best Friend. - Here they are, distinguished Man and dearest Friend, my six children. - They are, to be truthful, the fruit of long and laborious efforts; however, the hope given me by various Friends that my efforts will be at least somewhat rewarded encourages and flatters me to think that this offspring will be of comfort to me someday. You yourself, dearest friend, told me of your approbation of them during your last Visit here in our Capital. This acceptance gives me the courage to commend them to you and makes me hope that they would not be completely unworthy of your favor. May it please you to welcome them kindly and to be for them a Father, Guide, and Friend! From this moment on I hand over to you all my rights in them, begging you, however, to consider with indulgence their flaws, which a Father's uncritical eye may have overlooked, and in spite of them continue your generous Friendship toward one who so greatly appreciates it, while I remain, Dearest Friend, with all my heart, your most Sincere Friend,

W. A. Mozart

To Michael Puchberg in Vienna

Vienna, early June, 1790

Dearest Friend and Brother of the Order,

I am in town to conduct my opera. My wife is feeling a little better - her pains have begun to subside a bit; but she'll have to take 60 baths; - so she'll have to make another pilgrimage out there later in the year; - my God grant that it will help. - Dearest friend, if you could help me with my most urgent expenses, please do it; - to save money I'm staying here with her in Baden and come into town only when it is absolutely necessary. - I am forced to sell my quartets, all that hard work, for a trifle, just to get some cash into my hands and meet my immediate obligations. - I have also begun to compose some Clavier sonatas with that in mind. - Adieu - send me whatever you can spare. - One of my masses will be performed at Baden tomorrow. Adieu - it's about 10 o'clock. Forever yours,

Mozart

P.S. Would you kindly send along my viola.