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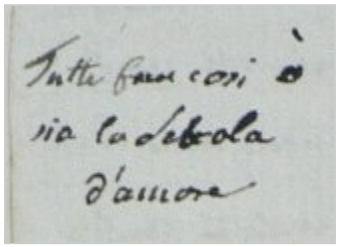
Report of the first performance of *Così fan tutte* (26 Jan 1790)

David Black

Diary of Countess Maria Sidonia Chotek, Tue, 26 Jan 1790

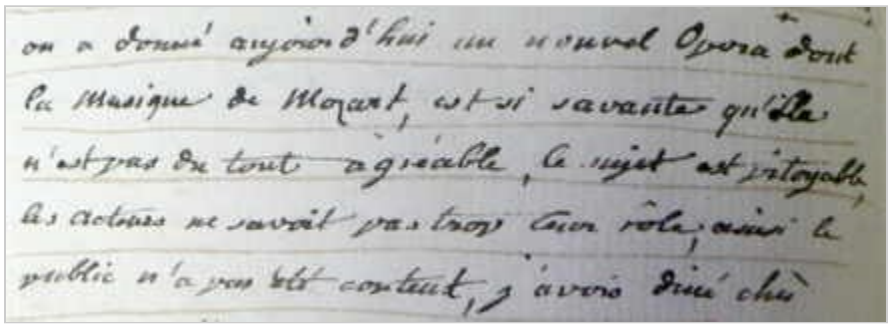
[in margin:]

Tutte fan cosi ò
sia la Scuola
d'amore



[diary entry:]

[...] on a donné aujourd'hui un nouvel Opera dont
la Musique de Mozart, est si savante qu'elle
n'est pas du tout agréable, le sujet est pitoyable,
les Acteurs ne savoit pas trop leur rôle, ainsi le
public n'a pas été content. *[...]*



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Commentary

Among the subscribers to Mozart’s famous series of subscription concerts in 1784 was “Chotek.” This may be Count Johann Rudolph Chotek (1748–1824), who as director of the Finanz-Hofstelle was later to make the frank admission (following the *Hofmusikgraf* Ugarte) that Mozart was only given a court post in 1788 to keep him in Vienna (*Briefe*, iii:305; *Dokumente*, 378, 388).

Chotek’s wife Maria Sidonia (née Clary-Aldringen, 1748–1824) kept a diary from 1789 until her death, and in an entry discovered by Ivo Cerman, the Countess recorded her attendance at the premiere of *Così fan tutte*. Her evaluation was highly negative, but she was not in agreement with Count Zinzendorf, who found the music charming and the subject very amusing (*Dokumente*, 318; *Addenda*, 62). As no other detailed reviews of the Viennese production are known to survive, it is difficult to evaluate the Countess’ claim that the singers—Adriana Ferrarese, Louise Villeneuve, Francesco Benucci, Vincenzo Calvesi and Dorotea and Francesco Bussani—did not know their parts. As far as the public reception is concerned, Dexter Edge has shown that Così at least initially maintained a healthy pattern of box-office takings (Edge 1996, 82).

This entry is also transcribed in Brauneis 2010, 243 and Mixánková 2011, 84.

We are very grateful to Dr. Ivo Cerman for providing us with a copy of this document.

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