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Henri Temianka Correspondence; (berges)

Marshall Berges

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Henri Temianka Correspondence; (berges)

Description

This collection contains material pertaining to the life, career, and activities of Henri Temianka, violin virtuoso, conductor, music teacher, and author. Materials include correspondence, concert programs and flyers, music scores, photographs, and books.

Keywords

Henri Temianka, Marshall Berges, August 20, 1985, recreation and entertainment, culture, camaraderie, virtuosity in musical performance, violinist, concerts, concerto, Fritz Kreisler, orchestra, funds, money



Los Angeles Times

MARSHALL BERGES

1000 Casiano Road
Los Angeles, CA 90049

August 20, 1985

Dear Henri:

Perhaps it is time for the obscure instructor to give Fritz Kreisler an interim report on the progress of the effort.

In a previous letter I noted that "you are off to a good start" and there is no reason to revise that opinion; you are a splendid student and you are destined for even greater fame than you have already enjoyed.

At the same time, I do have questions in connection with your dedicated exercise of sifting through the correspondence; and the questions require a preamble:

My impression is that your writing is far, far superior to the writing of any of your correspondents. Your skill as a man of letters was evident in FACING THE MUSIC and it becomes more evident with each new arrival of samples of correspondence.

All too often you have written a small masterpiece of a letter, only to receive in reply a Christmas-card message, a sort of Many Happy Returns! (I do not intend any criticism of those who have written to you; I am merely stating that which must be obvious to you.)

My questions, then, are these: Will this pattern continue? If so, is it time to try a different approach? If so, what approach would work?

Why not (I ask myself) try a story that would illustrate the year-in, year-out inventiveness of one man in his desperate, persistent, agonizing, frustrating effort to keep a chamber orchestra afloat?

The inventiveness (as you know better than I) has been there every time you have hatched a scheme (or theme) to enlist participants for the Allegro Ball or any other fund-raising affair. See, for illustration, the letter to Vincent Price, September 8, 1981; the letter is a classic example.

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Would you look back at your correspondence to review all the wild and wonderful themes you have devised over the years, to enlist this-or-that celebrity to be a participant or an honored guest at a fund-raising event?

It goes without saying that many accepted because they truly love music and treasure your friendship. But I think we could (and should) refrain from indicating the individual acceptances (because that could embarrass those who did not accept); we could deal with acceptances by merely using a broad-brush statement to the effect that "many" did participate.

The point is NOT to set forth a roster of notables who have participated or attended. The point is rather to illustrate one man's (yours) inventiveness in trying to make possible the performance of music.

My notion would be to string together the pertinent excerpts from a number of your letters, all variations on the theme of desperate creativity -- the special kind that you had to employ for many years to keep the chamber symphony alive.

Let me know what you think?

Yrs,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Marshall Berges", written over a horizontal line.

Marshall Berges