

8-11-1991

Henri Temianka Correspondence; (catlin)

Dan Catlin

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/temianka_correspondence

Recommended Citation

Catlin, Dan, "Henri Temianka Correspondence; (catlin)" (1991). *Henri Temianka Correspondence*. 570.
https://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/temianka_correspondence/570

This Letter is brought to you for free and open access by the Henri Temianka Archives at Chapman University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Henri Temianka Correspondence by an authorized administrator of Chapman University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact laughtin@chapman.edu.

Henri Temianka Correspondence; (catlin)

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, Dan Catlin, August 11, 1991, virtuosity in musical performance, culture, violinist, violin, chamber music, camaraderie, literature, reading, funds, husband, wife, marriage, cellist, death, Josef Hofmann, Leopold Stokowski, sex, humour, Boyd Neel, Benny Goodman, Emanuel Feuermann, Andrés Segovia, Jascha Heifetz

88 WALDEN STREET
CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01742

11 August 1991

Dear Henri:

I have now had another reading of *Chance Encounters*, and I think I can be most helpful by telling you what I think you have. Then you can decide what you want to do next.

X
The first seven chapters, *Prelude through All in the Family* is a delightful memoir, organized more or less chronologically, and covering, en gros, the period from your birth through your and Emmy's move to Los Angeles. It unfolds segment by segment: early years (Holland, etc.), early training (Berlin & Paris), London years, America & San Francisco. Into that basically, but very happily not slavishly, chronological unfolding of your life story, you have very nicely woven personality sketches (Hofmann, Mazeltov, the Solomans, etc.) and information (bowing technique, Stokowski's sex life, etc.) and jokes that display all your particular joie de vivre. As an artistic, aesthetic matter, this portion of the book hangs together. It does, I believe, need careful, line-by-line editing, the sort of thing I would have done in a couple of weeks (while I was at McKay). For examples, David suddenly appears without introduction of any kind in the *All in the Family* chapter; The Curtis Institute is located in Philadelphia many many too many times; Your bowing technique teacher is not named, etc. You are familiar with these kinds of rewrite changes, which any good editor will prompt. They can be taken care of later. Incidentally, this "book" (of seven chapters) is, I think, mistitled. You have really, perhaps without being aware, dropped the organizing notion (which I never really liked) of life as a series of chance encounters (You stress it now only with reference to your parents extraordinary rescue). Thus, the book should now be titled something like Career in C+ Major, (or whatever knowledgeable musicians know to be an upbeat, exuberant key), and subtitled *The joys, friends, tribulations, exhilarations of a concert performer*. Or something like that. The book is now a memoir, pure and simple, and not an exegesis on the quirks of fate in life. You will take the point I'm sure.

In my candid opinion, this very readable memoir then simply collapses after chapter seven. The next five "chapters" are not memoir, but just undigested writer's material--observations, jokes, character sketches, opinionated digressions, and so on-- material that needs to be worked into a continuation of the story of your life, which did not, after all, exactly end upon moving to Los Angeles. Just as you have taken the reader (with many entertaining digressions) through your London Years, for example, you can continue on to take him through your

**88 WALDEN STREET
CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01742**

Paganini, or Concertizing, or Traveling, Years (couldn't the Primrose material be worked in here?, for example); then through the California Symphony, Fund-raising Years (The Monster Concert material, Boyd Neel, Benny Goodman, perhaps); then through the teaching years; and finally through the Retirement Years (not so much yours, though that would have to be mentioned, as other musicians), which would include Feuermann's early death, Segovia (an example of retiring too late), and surely the "chapter" on longevity. Incidentally, I think this retirement segment will be more interesting than you perhaps realize. I, for one, was intrigued to learn that certain musicians deal with physically induced retirement by diving into drink. (Heifitz?). Others by playing too long (Segovia). Surely you know of other behavioral patterns. The public is interested in this kind of thing, and it is always interested in what stars do once out of the public gaze.

I do not think you, with your experience, would have too much trouble writing on from chapter seven, using most, though perhaps not all, of the material you have already put on paper--until the Temianka story is brought up to date. It will be work, of course, but you know, I'm quite sure, how to do it. However, (that wonderful word), you may not want to. My guess is that a literary agent could sell, or not sell, your memoir to a publisher by making use of the seven completed chapters which are in hand. MacIntosh & Otis should be able to tell you that. And you may decide not to do anything further until that effort has been made. On the other hand, you may want to proceed anyway, even if no commercial publisher were ever to be interested in publishing the memoir--which means you might be doing it essentially for your family, and friends, and for the sake of doing it. My problem in advising you in this regard is that I am 18 years away from publishing. I really do not know whether Career in C+ Major is a commercially viable project. And I don't want you to rush ahead to complete the book while misunderstanding my enthusiasm. On the other hand, I am quite sure that I am right when I say this manuscript can become a good, readable memoir, something you would be proud to have created, something your family would enjoy having. So think it over--and keep me informed, please. Of course, if you want me to expound further on the substance of this letter, you need only pick up the telephone.

Love to you and Emmy.

Dan Catlin

P.S.

I'll send manuscript back under separate cover -