

8-27-1986

Henri Temianka Correspondence; (kamen)

Henri Temianka

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Temianka, Henri, "Henri Temianka Correspondence; (kamen)" (1986). *Henri Temianka Correspondence*. 760.

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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, Martin Kamen, August 27, 1986, culture, virtuosity in musical performance, violinist, chamber music, camaraderie, celebration, humor, recreation and entertainment

YET ANOTHER LITANY ON A TIRED SUBJECT

Martin D. Kamen

(written on the occasion of his 73rd birthday,
August 27, 1986)

"Old Age is a shipwreck"-attributed to Voltaire.

Although I am in my seventies, people exclaim how good I look when they see me and insist I can't be more than fifty. But I know better! Intimations of mortality are all too evident. Aches and pains of obscure origin come and go unpredictably with increasing frequency. A minor infarct in 1981 did no major damage but left me on a permanent drug regime. Reflexes have slowed. My typing has deteriorated, as is clear from this effort. I can't fake as well on the viola as I once could. Often, I can't find the right word when before this was no problem. Worst of all, I have practically no short-term memory. Walking away from wallets has cost me as much as a thousand dollars at a time. I have lost at least two complete sets of keys and credit cards in lavatories and elsewhere. Such misplacements and misremembrances still occur and no improvement is in sight. It is only by the most strenuous concentration that I carry through on tasks that once were routine. The most optimistic estimate of the years I have left while coherence still exists is perhaps another decade, judging by family history.

Over the past half-century, I have amassed a backlog of projects and papers which I would like to finish to the extent possible. I must establish some system of priorities whereby what I have to do comes first and what people want me to do comes last. The means that all editorial requests, letters of recommendation, reviews of books and articles, service on committees, etc., must wait a long time or even forever. I am sorry about this but the conclusion is inescapable.