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Walburga Willmann as a student of Mozart (13 Jul 1791)

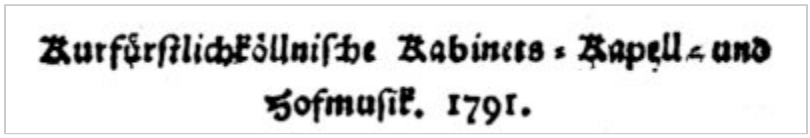
Dexter Edge

***Musikalische Korrespondenz der teutschen Filarmonischen Gesellschaft*, no. 28, Wed, 13 Jul 1791**

[col. 220]

Kurfürstlichköllnische Kabinets=Kapell= und
Hofmusik. 1791.

[...]

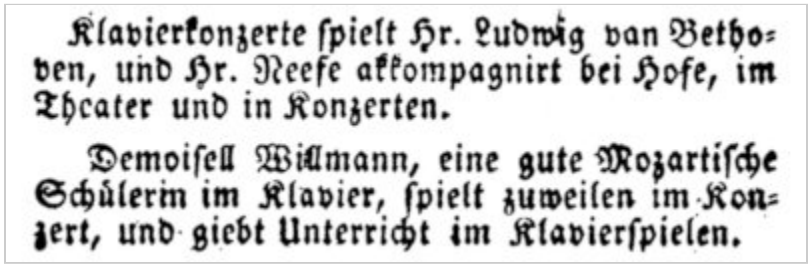

Kurfürſtlichköllniſche Kabinets=Kapell= und
Hofmuſik. 1791.

[col. 222]

[...]

Klavierkonzerte spielt Hr. Ludwig van Betho=
ven, und Hr. Neefe akkompagnirt bei Hofe, im
Theater und in Konzerten.

Demoisell Willmann, eine gute Mozartische
Schülerin im Klavier, spielt zuweilen im Kon=
zert, und giebt Unterricht im Klavierspielen.


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Demoiſell Willmann, eine gute Mozartiſche
Schülerin im Klavier, ſpielt zuweilen im Kon=
zert, und giebt Unterricht im Klavierſpielen.

[translation:]

Chamber- Chapel- and Court Musicians
of the Elector of Cologne. 1791.

[...]

Herr Ludwig van Beethoven plays keyboard
concertos, and Herr Neefe accompanies at court,

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in the theater, and in concerts.

Mademoiselle Willmann, a good Mozartean student in keyboard, sometimes plays in concerts, and gives instruction in keyboard playing.

Commentary

Walburga Willmann (1769–1835) was one of four musically talented children of Johann Ignaz Willmann (1739–1815): her older brother was cellist and composer Maximilian Willmann (1767–1813), her younger sister Magdalena (married name Galvani, 1771–1801) became a celebrated soprano, and their youngest brother Karl (1773–1811) was a violinist. The claim that Walburga had been Mozart’s keyboard student appears frequently in the secondary literature, but no source is ever cited. The notion seems ultimately to trace back to Ernst Ludwig Gerber, whose article about Walburga in his *Neues Lexikon* of 1814 reads:

> **Willmann** (*Dem.*) die ältere, eine wohlgerathene Schülerin von **Mozart** in Klavierspielen, stand im J. 1791 noch in Churf. Cölnischen Diensten zu Bonn, wo sie in den Hofmusiken zuweilen spielte und dabey Unterricht im Klavierspielen gab. Etwas von ihrer Geschichte kommt noch in dem folgenden Artikel ihrer Schwe= ter vor. Wo sie gegenwärtig lebt, ist nicht bekannt. Erst zu Ende des 1801sten Jah= res erfuhr man wieder von Leipzig, daß sie sich daselbst, als verheyrathete Huber, mit einem von ihr gesetzten Konzerte fürs For= tepiano öffentlich hatte hören lassen, wobey Komposition und Spiel gerühmt wurden. Ganz besonder Kunstfertigkeit soll sie da= mals in Privatgesellschaften gezeigt haben. [Gerber 1814, iv:col 582]

[translation:]

> **Willmann** (*Dem.*) the elder, an accomplished student of **Mozart** in keyboard playing, was in service at the court of the Elector of Cologne in 1791, where she sometimes played in musicales at court and also gave instruction in keyboard playing. Something of her history appears in the following article on her sister. Her current whereabouts are unknown. Only at the end of 1801 does one

> hear of her again in Leipzig, where—now
> under the married name Huber—she publicly
> performed a concerto she had written for
> the fortepiano, and where her composition
> and playing were praised. She is said to have
> shown particular virtuosity in private gatherings.

Gerber (who did not know her first name) gives no source for claiming that Walburga was Mozart's student, but it nevertheless came to be accepted as fact in subsequent reference works.

Dictionary articles about Walburga Willmann from the second half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries seem generally to be based not directly on Gerber, but rather on the article in Gustav Schilling's *Encyclopädie der gesammten musikalischen Wissenschaften* in 1838 (the article is apparently by Ignaz Seyfried):

> **Willmann**, Mademoiselle, älteste Schwester des vorhergehenden
> Violoncellisten [Maximilian] und der Sängerin Willmann=Galvani, geboren um 1770,
> bildete sich unter Mozart's Leitung zu einer fertigen Clavierspielerin, und
> ward dann bei der ehemaligen fürstlichen Hofmusik zu Bonn angestellt, wo
> sie auch selbst Unterricht in ihrer Kunst ertheilte. 1796 oder 1797 verheira=
> thete sie sich an einen gewissen Huber, und machte dann als Madame Will=
> mann=Huber Kunstreisen, auf denen sie sich auch mit eigenen Compo=
> sitionen hören ließ, von welchen aber sonst Nichts bekannt geworden ist. 1801
> war sie in Leipzig, 1802 in Dresden, 1803 dann wieder in Bonn, und über
> ihre späteren Lebensschicksale fehlen alle bestimmten Nachrichten. Als Cla=
> viervirtuosin soll sie zu ihrer Zeit einen bedeutenden Rang behauptet haben;
> sie wird zu den besten Schülern Mozart's gezählt.
> [Seyfried 1838, vi:870]

[translation:]

> **Willmann**, Mademoiselle, oldest sister of the cellist in the preceding article
> [Maximilian] and of singer Willmann-Galvani [Magdalena]. She was born around
> 1770 and was formed into a finished keyboard player under Mozart's guidance;
> she was then engaged by the former princely court musical establishment in
> Bonn, where she also gave instruction in her art. In 1796 or 1797 she married
> a certain Huber, and made concert tours as Madame Willmann-Huber, during
> which she also performed her own compositions, of which nothing further is
> known. In 1801 she was in Leipzig, in 1802 in Dresden, and in 1803 back in Bonn;
> of her later fate we have no precise information. As a keyboard virtuoso she
> is said to have ranked highly in her time; she is counted among the
> best of Mozart's students.

This article adds details that are not in Gerber, but the claim that Walburga studied with Mozart is probably derived from Gerber's article of 1814. The elaboration that she was among Mozart's best students came to be repeated in various guises throughout the subsequent reference literature—for example, an early edition of Grove's dictionary has: "[Willmann] studied the

pianoforte with Mozart, and became one of his most distinguished pupils" (Grove 1900, iv:461). As we shall see, there is hardly any critical reaction to Walburga's piano playing that would support such an evaluation.

It seems likely that Gerber's unacknowledged source was the passage in the *Musikalische Korrespondenz* transcribed at the top of this page, from an article published on 13 Jul 1791 about music at the court of the Elector of Cologne in Bonn. Although the article is anonymous, it is probably by Christian Gottlob Neefe, who contributed a number of articles about musical life in Bonn to various journals. These articles do not generally have bylines, but he refers to himself in some, and others are so similar to the self-attributed ones—the same points are sometimes made in nearly the same words—that his authorship seems likely. Neefe was probably the author of an article published in the *Musikalische Korrespondenz* just three issues earlier, on 22 Jun 1791, regarding the visit to Bonn of the celebrated soprano Luísa Todi and the impact of her singing on Magdalena Willmann, who was at that time a member of the elector's musical establishment and soprano in the company of the Nationaltheater in Bonn. The article on Todi includes two poems explicitly attributed to Neefe (one for Todi and one for Magdalena), making his authorship of the article as a whole seem even more likely.

The article of 13 Jul 1791 begins by listing the musicians currently in the electoral Hofkapelle. It then mentions several noteworthy local "Zöglinge" (pupils), including Neefe's own daughter Luisa (a soprano); these are followed by the passage transcribed here on notable keyboardists in Bonn: Beethoven, Neefe, and Mademoiselle Willmann. The article closes with a short paragraph on the musical skills of Elector Maximilian Franz, who (the correspondent writes) now plays viola rarely, but still enjoys singing opera arias with the accompaniment of a few instruments.

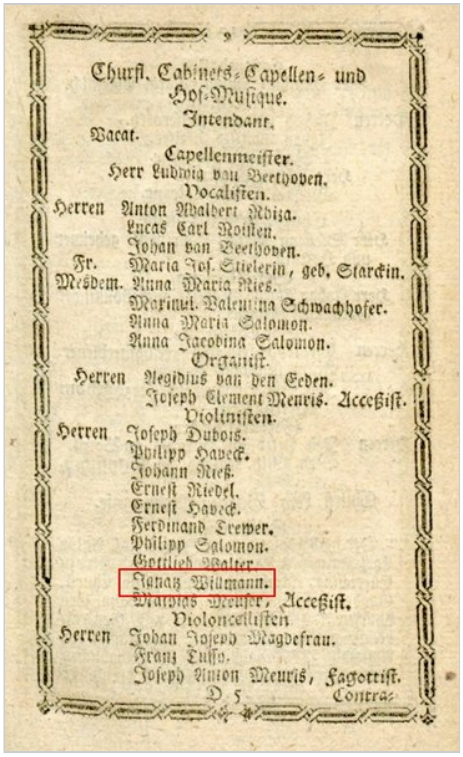
The correspondent to the *Musikalische Korrespondenz* describes Willmann with the slightly odd phrase "eine gute Mozartische Schülerin" (literally "a good Mozartish student"), implying—but not quite stating directly—that she was Mozart's student; the phrase might alternatively be read as saying that Willmann was a good student of Mozart's manner or school of playing. In any case, in subsequent reference works, the correspondent's phrase became transmuted, by way of Gerber, into the straightforward claim that Willmann was Mozart's student—indeed (according to Seyfried/Schilling) his best one; this latter elaboration may derive, rather carelessly, from Gerber's "wohlgerathene Schülerin" (literally, a "student who turned out well," translated here as "accomplished").

The Mozart family's surviving correspondence contains no reference to any member of the Willmann family. This absence does not, however, rule out the possibility that Walburga studied with Mozart. Exactly when the Willmann children arrived in Vienna remains unclear; the earliest known reference to their presence in the city is a short report in the *Wiener Zeitung* of a concert they gave on 16 Mar 1784. They may, however, have arrived years earlier; their father seems to have been employed in Vienna by 1777, when he became a member of the Tonkünstler-Societät (see below). The last appearances by the Willmann children in Vienna during Mozart's lifetime took place in Mar 1787. Little is known about Mozart's daily life in Vienna during precisely the

years that the Willmann children were giving concerts there, and we know very little about his teaching at that time. Most of what we know about him personally in those years comes from short (and sometimes maddeningly uninformative) summaries in Leopold Mozart's letters to his daughter. Of the few letters by Wolfgang that are known to survive from this period, none mention his teaching. The number of Wolfgang's surviving letters increases after Leopold's death at the end of May 1787—but by this time the Willmanns had left Vienna.

The only significant new research on the Willmanns after Gerber and Seyfried/Schilling was done by Karl Maria Pisarowitz, who published his findings in the *Mitteilungen der Internationalen Stiftung Mozarteum* in 1967. This article formed the basis for his own articles on the Willmanns in *New Grove* and *MGG*; to our knowledge, no substantial new research has been done on the family since then. (The articles on the Willmann family in the online versions of those reference works cite nothing after Pisarowitz's 1967 article). It was Pisarowitz who discovered the true birthdate and first names of the keyboard-playing Mademoiselle Willmann; earlier secondary literature had sometimes referred to her incorrectly as "Marianne," probably from confusion with her stepmother and coeval, soprano Marianne Willmann (née de Tribolet, 1768–1813), the second wife of Johann Ignaz. Our commentary will have occasion to correct a few of Pisarowitz's factual errors and we will cite Viennese archival sources that Pisarowitz seems to have used but did not mention; by and large, however, this commentary will continue to rely on his 1967 article for basic facts about the Willmann family. The Willmanns deserve a thoroughgoing reassessment, but we cannot undertake one here. (However, see our entry on the Frankfurt premiere of *Figaro* on 11 Oct 1788, in which Magdalena sang Susanna, and our entry on a performance of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Dischingen in the summer of 1791, in which Magdalena sang Belmonte and Walburga directed the music).

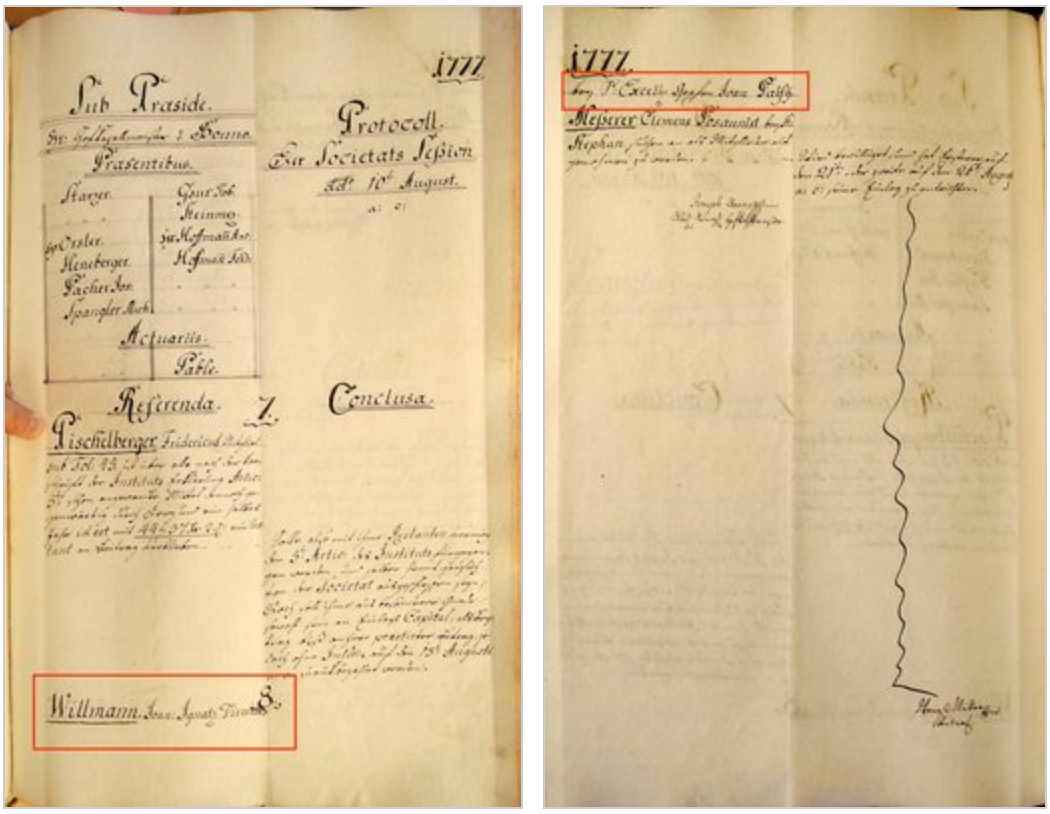
Johann Ignaz Willmann was born in Wolfach in Baden on 2 Nov 1739 (the following sketch is based mainly on Pisarowitz 1967, 9). His first child Franz (who plays no further role in this story) was born in Montjoie (Monschau) on 25 Nov 1765; he died in 1789. On 10 Apr 1767, Willmann was appointed to the position of violinist in the Hofmusik of the electoral court in Bonn under Archbishop Maximilian Friedrich, the predecessor of Max Franz.



Churfl. Cabinets- Capellen- und
Hof-Muſique.
Intendant.
Vacat.
Capellenmeiſter.
Herr Ludwig van Beethoven.
Vocaliſten.
Herren Anton Adalbert Adiza.
Lucas Carl Noiſſen.
Johan van Beethoven.
Fr. Maria Joſ. Stielerin, geb. Starckin.
Mesdem. Anna Maria Ries.
Maximil. Valentina Schwachhofer.
Anna Maria Salomon.
Anna Jacobina Salomon.
Organiſt.
Herren Aegidius van den Eeden.
Joſeph Clement Menris. Acceßiſt.
Violiniſten.
Herren Joſeph Dubois.
Philipp Haveck.
Johann Rieß.
Ernest Riedel.
Ernest Haveck.
Ferdinand Trewer.
Philipp Salomon.
Gottlieb Walter.
Ignaz Willmann.
Violoncelliſten
Herren Johan Joſeph Magdefrau.
Franz Tuſſo.
Joſeph Anton Menris, Fagottiſt.
D 5 Contra-

Johann Ignaz Willmann in the musical establishment of the Elector of Cologne
Chur=fürstlich=Cöllnischer Hof=Calender auf das Schalt=Jahr 1768, 9.
(Universität Bonn)

The Kapellmeister in Bonn at that time was Ludwig van Beethoven, the composer’s grandfather, and godfather to Willmann’s second son, Maximilian Friedrich Ludwig, born in Bonn on 21 Sep 1767 (the name simultaneously honors Willmann’s employer and his son’s godfather). All the rest of Willmann’s known children from his first marriage were born in Bonn: his daughter Maximiliana Valentina Walburga on 18 May 1769, her sister Magdalena on 13 \ Sep 1771, and the youngest child, Karl, on 10 Oct 1773. According to Pisarowitz, Johann Ignaz left Bonn in 1774 (he is listed in the electoral *Hof-Kalender* for 1774, but not in 1775). He became a member of the Tonkünstler-Societät in Vienna on 21 Aug 1777 (Pohl 1871, 106); the society’s minutes for 10 Apr 1777, when his application for membership was approved, identify him as “Director bey Se: Excell: Grafen Joan: Palfÿ”; the reference is to Count Johann Leopold Pálffy von Erdőd (János Lipot Pálffy ab Erdőd, 1728–1791).



Vienna, Stadt- und Landesarchiv, Haydn-Verein, B2/1
(Photos: Michael Lorenz)

Whether his entire family accompanied Johann Ignaz to Vienna is uncertain; at present we know only that Maximilian, Walburga, and Magdalena were with him in the city in the years 1784–1787.

All but one of Walburga's documented public performances as a pianist took place in conjunction with other members of her family, so the investigation of her career must be made in the context of the family as a group. The Willmann family's first concert in Vienna on 16 Mar 1784 is noted in the *Wiener Zeitung*:

> Nationalhoftheater.
> *[...]*
> — Die am
> 16. *[Mar]* gehaltene musikalische Akademie gab
> Herrr *[sic]* Willmann zum Vortheil seiner
> Kinder, und der Mlle. Ringbauer. Die
> jüngere Mlle. Willmann sang, die äl=
> tere spielte auf dem Forte piano, und
> ihr Bruder auf dem Violoncello. Mlle.
> Ringbauer, in einem Alter von 12
> Jahren, ließ sich auf der Violine hören. —
> Am 18. gab Mlle. Storace musikalische

> Akademie zu ihren Vortheile.
> [*WZ*, no. 23, Sat, 20 Mar 1784, 585–86]
>
> National Court Theater.
> *[...]*
> — The
> musical academy held on the 16th *[Mar]* was
> given by Herr Willmann for the benefit of
> his children and Mademoiselle Ringbauer.
> The younger Mademoiselle Willmann sang,
> the older played on the fortepiano, and
> their brother on the violoncello. Mademoiselle
> Ringbauer, at an age of 12 years, performed
> on the violin. — On the 18th, Mademoiselle
> Storace gave a musical academy for her
> own benefit.

The singer was Magdalena Willmann, aged 12; the pianist was her sister Walburga, aged 14; and 16-year-old Maximilian played the cello. The young violinist was Josepha Ringbauer, who according to a short report in *Magazin der Musik* received "unbeschreiblicher Beifall" (indescribable acclaim) at this concert playing a concerto by Giornovichi (*Magazin der Musik*, 9 Jul 1784, 207). The *Wiener Zeitung* gives Ringbauer's age as 12, and the *Magazin der Musik* as 11; but Josepha Ringbauer was born on 26 Mar 1769, and was actually about to turn 15 at the time of the concert (on Ringbauer's dates, see the *Appendix* below). The Willmanns' concert took place the day before Mozart gave one of his own in the Trattnerhof, and on 18 Mar, soprano Nancy Storace gave a benefit concert in the Burgtheater.

Slightly less than a year later, on Thu, 10 Feb 1785 (the day after Ash Wednesday), the Willmanns presented another benefit concert in the Burgtheater. There is confusion in the secondary literature over this concert and an important source has been overlooked. Mary Sue Morrow (1989, 258) bases her entry for the concert on a notice published in *Das Wienerblättchen* on 9 Feb (which she does not transcribe):

> Nachricht.
> Morgen, den 10ten Hornung wird im
> K. K. National=Hof=Theater von Herrn Will=
> mann das uns letzthin schon angezeigte
> Singstück: Morgengesang am Schöpfungs=
> tage *[sic]*, vom Klopstock mit ungemein zahlreichen
> Akkompagnement gegeben werden. Wer die
> angenehme und für ihr Alter so ausdrucks=
> volle Stimme der jüngern Mlle. Willmann,
> wer die Geschicklichkeit ihrer auf dem Piano
> Forte excellendirenden älteren Schwester und
> das Verdienst ihres älteren Bruders
> auf dem Violoncello kennt, wird mit Vergnü=

> gen einer Vorstellung beiwohnen, die so sehr
> dazu geschickt ist, die Talente dieser drey
> hoffnungsvollen Geschwisterte in das volle
> Licht zu setzen, und Herrn Willmann Vater,
> für die an ihre Bildung gewendete Mühe ei=
> nigermaßen zu belohnen.
> [*Das Wienerblättchen*, Wed, 9 Feb 1785, 74]

[translation:]

> News.
> Tomorrow, the 10th of February, Herr
> Willmann will present in the K. K. National
> Court Theater the vocal work that we have
> previously announced: *Morgengesang am*
> *Schöpfungstage [sic]* by Klopstock, with
> a numerous accompaniment. Whoever knows
> the pleasant voice, so expressive for her age,
> of young Mademoiselle Willmann, the dexterity
> of her older sister, who so excels on the
> pianoforte, and the accomplishments of their
> elder brother on the violoncello, will take pleasure
> in attending a performance that so adroitly
> illuminates the talents of these three promising
> siblings, and rewards their father Herr Willmann
> to some degree for the efforts he has expended
> in their education.

This notice was almost certainly written by the father, Johann Ignaz Willmann. Magdalena was still 13, Walburga 15, and Maximilian 17.

The “previous announcement” referred to in the notice of 9 Feb has been overlooked in the secondary literature. Five days earlier, on 4 Feb 1785, *Das Wienerblättchen* published the complete text of Klopstock’s *Morgengesang am Schöpfungsfeste*. (The word “Schöpfungstage” in the notice of 9 Feb is an error.) The text is accompanied by a long footnote clarifying that the musical setting to be performed at the concert was by C. P. E. Bach:

> Morgengesang am Schöpfungsfeste.
> Ein Singstück von Klopstock.*)
> *[...]*
>
> *) Dieses herrliche und unter uns gleichwohl
> noch so wenig bekannte Meisterstück hat der
> berühmte Bach kürzlich in Musik gesetzt, und
> Wien wird künftige Woche das von Ken=
> nern so sehnlich gewünschte Vergnügen ha=
> ben selbiges im k. k. Nationaltheater mit

aller der Pracht aufführen zu hören, die
der erhabene Gegenstand verdient. Die
darinnen vorkommenden zwey Solostim=
men werden von unserer berühmten Ma=
dame Lange, und von Mdlle Willmann
der jüngeren, deren würdigem Vater man
gegenwärtige Vorstellung zu verdanken
haben wird, und deren für ihr Alter so sel=
tenen Talente wir schon im vorigen Jahr
zu bewundern Gelegenheit gehabt haben,
gesungen werden. Und welchen Effekt
dürfen wir uns nicht von den Chören
versprechen, wenn sie mit solcher Wahl
uns so stark mit Sängern besetzt werden,
wie es dem Süjet angemessen ist, und wir
von der sorgfältig= und einsichtsvollen Di=
rektion eines Willmanns es auch sicher
erwarten dürfen.
[*Das Wienerblättchen*, Fri, 4 Feb 1785, 29–30]

[translation:]

Morgengesang am Schöpfungsfeste.
A Vocal Work by Klopstock. *)
[...]

*) This magnificent and for us still so little-
known masterpiece has recently been set to
music by the famous Bach, and next week
Vienna will have the pleasure, so fervently
wished for by connoisseurs, to hear the same
performed in the k. k. Nationaltheater with
all the splendor that this sublime work
deserves. The two solo vocal parts that
occur in it will be sung by our famous Madame
Lange and by Mademoiselle Willmann the
younger, whose worthy father deserves
thanks for the coming performance, and
whose talent, so rare for her age, we had
the opportunity to admire last year. And what
effect can we not promise from the choruses,
when these are staffed with such a selection
and so fully with singers, just as the subject
merits, and as we may expect from the careful
and insightful direction of Willmann.

This footnote was probably also written by the worthy, careful, and insightful Willmann. His son Maximilian likely played in the orchestra. Walburga's role, if any, in the performance is unknown, but she might have directed from the keyboard, something she is known to have done a few years later at a performance of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Dischingen in 1791. If she also directed from the keyboard in 1785, she probably shared directorial duties with her father at the head of the first violins, a common division of responsibility in large vocal works at the time. It seems not to have been noted previously in the secondary literature that the work performed on 10 Feb 1785 was C. P. E. Bach's setting of Klopstock's *Morgensang am Schöpfungsfeste* (Wq 239), which had just been published the previous September by Breitkopf (see Van Boer 2010, xi–xiii); it would therefore almost certainly have been the first performance of the work in Vienna. The participation of Aloysia Lange as a vocal soloist along with Magdalena Willmann seems also to have been overlooked.

Magdalena Willmann is often said to have been a student of Vincenzo Righini in Vienna, although the truth of this claim is no more certain than the claim that Walburga studied with Mozart. The earliest source we have found linking Magdalena and Righini is the article (probably by Neefe) in the *Musikalische Korrespondenz* on 22 Jun 1791 about Todi and Magdalena Willmann in Bonn:

> Auszug eines Schreibens aus Bonn, Mad. Todi
> und Dem. Willmann betreffend.
> *[...]*
> Unsere brave Sängerinn, Demoiselle Willmann die jüngere, eine Schülerinn von Righini, ward nach der Abreise der Mad. Todi von einem ungemeinen Kunsteifer beseelt. *[...]*
> [*Musikalische Korrespondenz*, no. 25, Wed, 22 Jun 1791]

> Extract from a Letter from Bonn, on Madame Todi
> and Mademoiselle Willmann.
> *[...]*
> Our fine singer Mademoiselle Willmann the younger, a student of Righini, was possessed by an uncommon artistic zeal after the departure of Madame Todi. *[...]*

(For more on this article, see the section on Magdalena Willmann in our entry for 11 Oct 1788.) As with Walburga and Mozart, the chronology fits: Righini had been in Vienna since at least 1777 and was working there as a singing teacher while the Willmanns were in the city; his pupils are said to have included the blind pianist and composer Maria Theresia Paradis, Josepha Weber (sister of Constanze and Aloysia), and Princess Elisabeth of Württemberg, designated spouse-to-be of Archduke Franz (Henzel 2014). So Magdalena Willmann certainly *could* have studied with Righini in Vienna, but at present we have no documentary confirmation that she did. The question is complicated further by the fact that Righini went to Mainz in 1787 to take up the

position of Kapellmeister, and that same year Magdalena Willmann became a member of the Mainz Hofkapelle. (On Magdalena in the Mainz Hofkapelle, see below; regarding a letter from Righini in Vienna to Johann Ignaz Willmann in Mainz that mentions Magdalena, see the *Notes* below) She was also a member of the Frankfurt theater in 1788 (*ThK* 1789, 160), and sang the role of Susanna in the Frankfurt premiere of *Figaro* on 11 Oct 1788. Magdalena was still in her late teens at that point, and even though she was now taking professional engagements, we cannot rule out the possibility that she began studying with Righini in Mainz. Alternatively, she might have studied with him only while she was in Vienna, or she might have continued studies with him in Mainz that had begun in Vienna. At present we simply cannot say.

On 19 Mar 1785, the feast of St. Joseph, the emperor's name day, the Willmanns mounted a performance in the Burgtheater (probably a concert performance) of Haydn's Italian opera *L'isola disabitata*:

> Morgen am Tage Josephs, giebt Herr Willmann im K. K. National Hoftheater eine große musikalische Akademie, in welcher die hier noch nicht gehörte große Oper von Hayden, *l'Isola desabitata [sic]*, die einzige die dieser be= liebte Kompositor nach einem italienischen Text in Musik gesetzt, und wofür er von zwey Jah= ren von Sr. Königl. Spanischen Majestät das bekannte prächtige Geschenk erhalten hat, zum erstenmal wird aufgeführt werden. Wahre Musikliebhaber bedürfen keiner Einladung, um am diesem Tage sich zahlreich einzufinden. [*Das Wienerblättchen*, Fri, 18 Mar 1785, 174]
>
> Tomorrow on St. Joseph's Day, Herr Willmann is giving a grand musical academy in the K. K. National Court Theater, at which will be performed the great opera by Haydn, *L'isola disabitata*, not yet heard here, the only one by this beloved composer setting an Italian text, and for which he received the well-known magnificent present two years ago from His Royal Spanish Majesty. True music lovers need no invitation to turn out in great numbers on this day.

Nothing specific is known about the participation of the Willmann siblings in this production (the opera's Viennese premiere), but it seems certain that Magdalena sang one of the two female leads, Constanza or Sylvia. Scene 12 in the second act of the opera (beginning with Gernando's "Giacchè il pietoso amico") includes a concertante violin, which would presumably have been played by the father; the youngest child, Karl Willmann, was still only 11, and we have no evidence that he was capable of this kind of solo work on the violin at that age or even that he was

in Vienna at the time. The opera's *scena ultima* includes a concertante cello as well as a concertante violin, and the solo cello would undoubtedly have been played by Maximilian Willmann. What involvement, if any, Walburga may have had with the performance we can only guess, but again it is possible that she led the performance from the keyboard.

On Sun, 3 Dec 1786, Magdalena sang the role of Zemire in a staged performance in the Kärntnertortheater of Ignaz Umlauf's new singspiel, *Der Ring der Liebe, oder Zemirens und Azors Ehestand*, on a libretto by Paul Weidmann:

> K. K. Hoftheater.
> Die beyden schon einmal angekündigten Neu=
> heiten sind erst letztvergangenen Sonntag den
> 3. Dezember zum Vorschein gekommen, näm=
> lich im Nazionaltheater zum erstenmal: Die
> Jäger, ein ländliches Sittengemälde in fünf
> Aufzügen, vom Hrn. W. A. Iffland; — und
> im Theater nächst dem Kärntnerthor ein neues
> Singspiel in drey Aufzügen, genannt: Der
> Ring der Liebe, oder: Zemirens und Azors
> Ehestand, wobey die Musik vom Hrn. Ka=
> pellmeister Umlauf ist. Mlle. Willmann be=
> tratt dabey zum erstenmal in der Rolle der
> Zemire das Theater, und erhielt einen lau=
> ten Beyfall.
> [*WZ*, no. 97, Wed, 6 Dec 1786, 2981]

> K. K. Court Theater.
> The two previously announced novelties
> took place this past Sunday, 3 December,
> namely: in the National Theater for the
> first time, *Die Jäger*, a portrait of rustic mores
> in five acts by Herr A. W. Iffland; — and
> in the Kärntnertortheater a new singspiel
> in three acts called *Der Ring der Liebe, oder:*
> *Zemirens und Azors Ehestand*, the music of
> which is by Herr Kapellmeister Umlauf.
> Mademoiselle Willmann appeared for the first
> time in the theater in the role of Zemire, and
> received loud acclaim.

According to this notice, the production was Magdalena's theatrical debut, corroborating the assumption that *L'isola disabitata* the previous year had been a concert performance. Umlauf's opera was given twice more, on 5 Dec 1786 and 6 Jan 1787, before disappearing from the stage. (The court theater's score of this opera survives in the music collection of the ÖNB, KT 385.) The account book of the court theater for that season records a payment to Magdalena of 135 fl for guest appearances, presumably 45 fl for each of the three performances of Umlauf's opera.

Link (1998, 100n126) plausibly suggests that these performances may have served as a kind of audition for Magdalena for the singspiel company of the court theater; but in the event she was not hired. She was still only 16.

On Wed, 7 Mar 1787, the Willmanns gave a benefit concert in the Kärntnertortheater, the family's last in Vienna. The complete text of the poster for this concert is transcribed in *Neue Folge* (51). Magdalena sang a scena by Cherubini, the aria "Dolce mi parve un di" from *Una cosa rara*, and (with an anonymous second soprano) a duet from Sarti's *Giulio Sabino*. Maximilian played a cello concerto with variations. As the fifth item on the program:

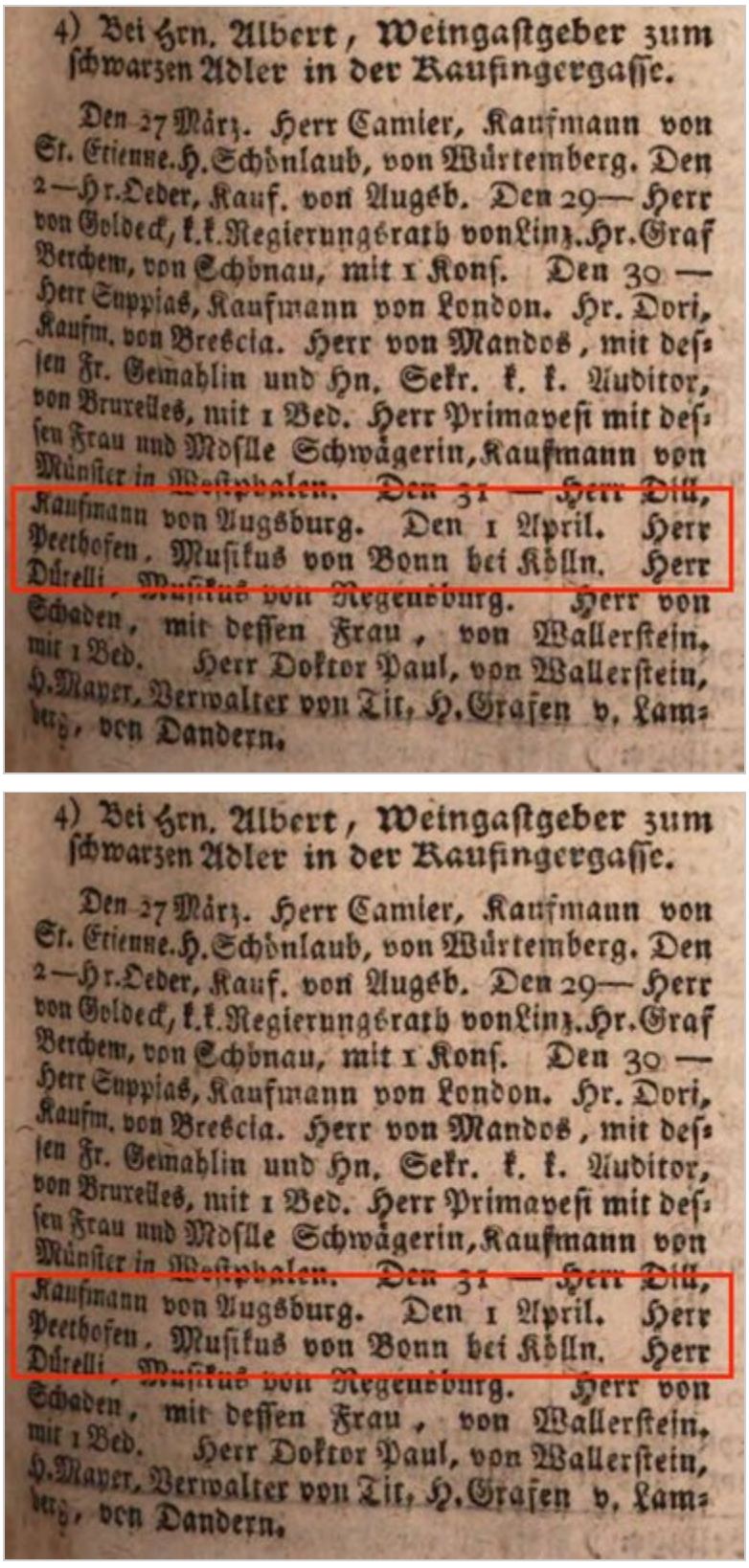
> Spielt Mlle. Willmann die ältere ein großes Konzert auf dem Fortepiano vom Hrn. Mozart.
>
> Mademoiselle Willmann the elder will play a grand concerto on the fortepiano by Herr Mozart.

Apart from the item in the *Musikalische Korrespondenz* in 1791 transcribed above, this is the only known document from Mozart's lifetime that connects her with him in any way. It is often suggested in the literature that she played the Concerto in C Major, K. 503, a guess based on the fact that this was the concerto Mozart had completed most recently (in his catalog of his own works, the concerto is dated 4 Dec 1786). But the commentary in *Neue Folge* (52) rightly points out that there are no convincing grounds for assuming that Walburga played K. 503; several other Mozart concertos were in circulation by that point and would have been readily available, and she might have played any one of them. That Walburga played a concerto by Mozart at her final public performance in Vienna before leaving the city in no way proves that she had been studying with him: by this time, Mozart's concertos were being performed in public by people who had not been his students. This was, in fact, Walburga's only documented performance of a work by Mozart.

On 17 Mar 1787, Magdalena Willmann sang at a benefit concert for the composer Vicente Martín y Soler, along with Caterina Cavalieri and Thekla Podleska (Morrow 1989, 266–67; Link 1998, 101). The three sang a cantata by Martín y Soler (apparently *Il sogno*; see Edge 1992, 153), and two trios from *Una cosa rara*. This was the last appearance by any member of the Willmann family in Vienna before their departure.

So far as we know, Walburga, Magdalena, and Maximilian Willmann lived with their father in or near Vienna from at least the time of their first concert there on 16 Mar 1784 until shortly after Magdalena's final appearance on 17 Mar 1787. Mozart was in Vienna for nearly all of that period, so he certainly could have gotten to know the Willmanns, and it seems likely that he would have had a particular interest in hearing the local premieres of C. P. E. Bach's *Morgengesang am Schöpfungsfeste* (with Aloysia Lange) and Haydn's *L'isola disabitata*. But the fact that he *could* have met the Willmanns does not prove that he did, and it is not evidence that Walburga studied with him.

The Willmanns left Vienna around the end of Mar 1787. On Wed, 4 Apr, the *Wochen Blat* of the *Münchner Zeitung* reported the arrival from Vienna on 1 Apr of "Herr Willmann," music director for Count Pálffy in Vienna. Arriving that same day was young Ludwig van Beethoven, "musician from Bonn," who had been in Vienna since mid January (see Haberl 2006):



4) Bei Hrn. Albert, Weingastgeber zum schwarzen Adler in der Kaufingergasse.

Den 27 März. Herr Camier, Kaufmann von St. Etienne. H. Schönlaub, von Würtemberg. Den 2—Hr. Oeder, Kauf. von Augsb. Den 29— Herr von Goldeck, k.k. Regierungsrath von Linz. Hr. Graf Berchem, von Schönau, mit 1 Konf. Den 30 — Herr Suppias, Kaufmann von London. Hr. Dori, Kaufm. von Brescia. Herr von Mandos, mit dessen Fr. Gemahlin und Hn. Sekr. k. k. Auditor, von Brurelles, mit 1 Bed. Herr Primavesi mit dessen Frau und Mdlle Schwägerin, Kaufmann von Münster in Westphalen. Den 31 — Herr Dill, Kaufmann von Augsburg. Den 1 April. Herr Peethofen, Musikus von Bonn bei Kölln. Herr Dürelli, Musikus von Regensburg. Herr von Schaden, mit dessen Frau, von Wallerstein, mit 1 Bed. Herr Doktor Paul, von Wallerstein, H. Mayer, Verwalter von Tit. H. Grafen v. Lamberg, von Dandern.

4) Bei Hrn. Albert, Weingastgeber zum schwarzen Adler in der Kaufingergasse.

Den 27 März. Herr Camier, Kaufmann von St. Etienne. H. Schönlaub, von Würtemberg. Den 2—Hr. Oeder, Kauf. von Augsb. Den 29— Herr von Goldeck, k.k. Regierungsrath von Linz. Hr. Graf Berchem, von Schönau, mit 1 Konf. Den 30 — Herr Suppias, Kaufmann von London. Hr. Dori, Kaufm. von Brescia. Herr von Mandos, mit dessen Fr. Gemahlin und Hn. Sekr. k. k. Auditor, von Brurelles, mit 1 Bed. Herr Primavesi mit dessen Frau und Mdlle Schwägerin, Kaufmann von Münster in Westphalen. Den 31 — Herr Dill, Kaufmann von Augsburg. Den 1 April. Herr Peethofen, Musikus von Bonn bei Kölln. Herr Dürelli, Musikus von Regensburg. Herr von Schaden, mit dessen Frau, von Wallerstein, mit 1 Bed. Herr Doktor Paul, von Wallerstein, H. Mayer, Verwalter von Tit. H. Grafen v. Lamberg, von Dandern.

Münchner Zeitung, *Wochen Blat*, no. 14, Wed, 4 Apr 1787, [3] (BSB)

Anzeige der hier angekommenen Fremden.
[...]
2) Bei **Hrn. Streicher**, **Weingastgeber** zum goldenen **Kreuz in der Raufingergasse**.

Den 1 April. Herr Willmann, Musikdirektor bei Sr. Exz. Herrn Grafen von Palfy von Wien mit 3 Kons[orten] *[...]*

4) Bei **Hrn. Albert, Weingastgeber zum** schwarzen **Adler in der Raufingergasse**.
[...]
Den 1 April. Herr Peethofen, Musikus von Bonn bei Köln.

Willmann's "3 Konsorten" (3 companions) were probably his children Maximilian, Walburga, and Magdalena. Whether his first wife Maria Elisabeth († 1789) had been in Vienna at any point is unknown, nor do we have any indication that the oldest child Franz was ever in Vienna. It seems that the youngest child Karl was not with Willmann when he arrived in Munich, and at present we do not know if he was ever with his father and the other children in Vienna. Haberl (2006, 233ff) has made a plausible case that Beethoven and the four Willmanns traveled together in the same coach from Vienna to Munich. Beethoven's family was certainly acquainted with the Willmanns in Bonn, but it is unclear whether young Ludwig knew any of the Willmanns personally before his trip to Vienna in 1787; he was only 4 years old when the elder Willmann left Bonn in 1774. But it is entirely plausible that he would at least have met them in Vienna through family or professional connections.

Willmann and his children were heading for Frankfurt, where Magdalena appeared already on 21 Apr 1787 as Violante in *Das schöne Gärtnermädchen von Freskate*, a German version of Paisiello's *La frascatana*.

Samstags den 21ten April, wird im neuen Schauspielhause aufgeführet: Das schöne Gärtnermädchen von Freskate, eine Oper in drey Akten, von Paisiello. In der Rolle des schönen Gärtnermädchen wird sich Demoiselle Willmann, eine junge Sän= gerin von Wien, die zu Wien und Prag, laut allen öffentlichen Nachrichten, mit all= gemeinen und ungetheilten Beyfall aufge= nommen worden, Einem verehrungswür= digen Publikum empfehlen. Auch wird in dieser Oper, Madame Walter, unsere allgemeine beliebte Sängerin, die Rolle der

Donna Stella spielen.
[*Frankfurter Staats-Ristretto*, no. 62, Fri, 20 Apr 1787, 275]

> On Saturday, 21 April, will be performed in the new theater: *Das schöne Gärtnermädchen von Freskate*, an opera in three acts by Paisiello. Commending herself to an honorable public in the role of the beautiful gardner girl will be Mademoiselle Willmann, a young singer from Vienna, who according to all public notices was received with unanimous acclaim in Vienna and Prague. Also appearing in this opera in the role of Donna Stella will be Madame Walter, our universally popular singer.

That Magdalena appeared on stage in Frankfurt in a leading role so soon after leaving Vienna suggests that her appearance had been prearranged (probably by her father) and that Frankfurt, not Bonn, was probably the goal of their journey. The item in the *Frankfurter Staats-Ristretto* mentions published notices of Magdalena's singing in Vienna and Prague, but no notices from Vienna are known apart from those evidently written by her father, and at present we have no evidence that she sang in Prague. It is notable, however, that Magdalena is being advertised in Frankfurt as a "singer from Vienna," implying that (at least in her father's view) her association with the imperial capital was a selling point with the Frankfurt audience. The role of Donna Stella in the performance on 21 Apr 1787 was sung by Juliane Walter, who on 11 Oct 1788 would sing the role of the Countess in the Frankfurt premiere of *Die Hochzeit des Figaro*, with Magdalena as Susanna. The *Theater-Kalender* for 1788 notes Magdalena's guest appearances in Frankfurt the previous year in Paisiello's opera and in Umlauf's *Die schöne Schusterin* (*ThK* 1788, 182).

Just eight days after Magdalena's appearance as Violante, the Willmanns gave a benefit concert in Frankfurt:

> Frankfurt, vom 26. April.
>
> Sonntags, den 29ten dieses, wird in dem rothen Haus dahier, eine grosse Musicalische Academie zum Besten derer dreyen Geschwi= stere, Namens **Willmann von Wien**, ge= geben werden; in dieser wird sich die jüng= ste Schwester, welche ohnlängst in der Oper, das **Gärtner=Mädchen von Frescati**, mit allgemeinen Vergnügen, und lautestem Bey= fall sich hören ließ in einigen Arien — die ältere auf dem Forte Piano und der Bruder auf dem Violoncello hören lassen.
>
> Herr Willmann hat zwar auf 2 Acade=

mien die Subscription angetragen, da er
aber nur eine zu geben gedenket, so findet
er sich, zur Vermeidung alles Vorwurfs,
verpflichtet, Einem geehrten Publico anzu=
zeigen, daß im Fall er die 2te Academie nicht
geben werde, sich zur Zuruckgabe deren et=
wa mehrgenommenen Billets erbiethe.
Die Billets dieser ersteren Academie sind
in seiner Wohnung, bey Madame Oehl
Lit. E. No. 200. gegen dem Rahmhof über
um 1 fl. 12 kr. zu haben.
[*Frankfurter Staats-Ristretto*, no. 66, Fri, 27 Apr 1787, 290]

[translation:]

Frankfurt, on 26 April.
On Sunday, the 29th of this month,
a grand Musical Academy will be given in the
Red House here for the benefit of the three
siblings named **Willmann from Vienna**; in
it, the youngest sister, who recently appeared
to general enjoyment in *Das Gärtnermädchen
von Freskati*, will perform several arias — the
elder will perform on the fortepiano and the
brother on the cello.
Herr Willmann had indeed offered two
academies on subscription, but as he
is now of a mind to give only one, he now
finds himself obliged, in order to avoid all
reproach, to indicate to the honorable public
that in case he does not give the 2nd academy,
he offers to refund the extra tickets.
The tickets for the first academy are
to be had in his apartment, at Madame Oehl's,
Lit. E. No. 200, across from the Rahmhof, for
1 fl 12 kr.

This notice continues a trend already evident in Vienna: Johann Ignaz (who surely wrote the text of all of these notices) was increasingly promoting Magdalena as the family's featured attraction. But it also shows that Walburga continued to perform publicly.

In Oct 1787, Willmann and Angelo Vio advertised a series of 18 subscription concerts in Frankfurt with Willmann’s three musical children; the concerts were to take place throughout the coming winter season of 1787/88, with the first to be held on Wed, 31 Oct:

> AVERTISSEMENTS.
>
> Die Herren Music=Liebhaber werden hiermit benachrichtiget, daß das bereits ange= kündigte grose Liebhaber Concert, des Herrn *Angelo Vio* und Herrn Willmann, künfti= gen Mittwoch als den 31. October, in dem gewöhnlichen Musicksaal im Rothen Haus, sich anfangen wird. Herr Willmann, der diese Concerten selbst *dirigirt*, wird sich um so mehr bemühen Sie bestens herzustellen. Mademoiselle Willmann, diese nun von dem ganzen Churmaynzischen Hof eben so sehr, als schon ehedem von dem vererhungswürdigen Publico so beliebte und bekannte Sängerin, ist erfreuet Gelegenheit zu haben, sich dieses ihr geschenckten Beyfalls immer mehr würdig zu machen, so wie ihre zwey Virtuose Ge= schwistrige, die sich in diesen Concerten ebenfalls jedesmal werden hören lassen. Das Abon= nement kostet für 18. Concerts 9 fl. und ein Herr kan *[sic]* 2. Damen mitbringen. Wer nicht Abonniret ist, bezahlt beym Entree fl. 1. 12 kr. für die Person. Wer sich zu Abonniren wil= lens, beliebe sich desfalls an Herrn Angelo Vio zu wenden, er logirt bei Schneidermeister Herrn Plümer, Senior, auf der Zeil.
>
> [*Franckfurter Frag= und Anzeigungs=Nachrichten*, no. 90, Fri, 26 Oct 1787, [5]]

> ADVERTISEMENTS.
>
> This is to inform the Herren Music-Lovers that the previously announced grand Music-Lovers concert of Herr Angelo Vio and Herr Willmann will begin this coming Wednesday, 31 October, in the usual music room of the Red House. Herr Willmann, who will direct these
> concerts himself, will thus take all the more pains to make them as good as possible. Mademoiselle Willmann, now so popular and well-known with the entire electoral court in Mainz as she was previously with the honorable public, is pleased to have the opportunity to make herself even more worthy of the approval she has received, and will perform in each of these concerts, as will her two virtuoso siblings. The subscription costs 9 fl for 18 concerts, and a man can bring two women. Anyone who is not subscribed pays 1 fl 12 kr per person to attend. Whoever wishes to subscribe should apply to Herr Angelo Vio; he lives at the house of master tailor Herr Plümer, Senior, on the Zeil.

The “zwey Virtuose Geschwistrige” were Walburga and Maximilian. This series had been announced as early as 8 Sep; an advertisement in the *Frankfurter Staats-Ristretto* on 9 Oct had announced 15 concerts, but the advertisement of 26 Oct increased the number to 18. (In the event, the first concert of the series had to be postponed to Thu, 1 Nov, because of a scheduling conflict in the theater.) A notice published on 4 Mar 1788 confirms that 18 concerts did indeed take place:

> Einem verehrungswürdigen Publico wird hiermit angezeigt, daß künftigen Mittwoch als den 5ten März das letzte der 18. Abonirten Liebhaber=Concerten von *Mr. Angelo Vio* und Herrn Willmann, wird gehalten werden, nebst denen gewöhnlichen Stückchen, wird Herr Franckenberg eine Arie und ein Duett mit Madlle Willmann singen.
>
> [*Franckfurter Frag= und Anzeigungs=Nachrichten*, no. 19, Tue, 4 Mar 1788, [5]]

> It is hereby made known to an honorable public that this coming Wednesday, 5 Mar, will be given the last of the 18 subscription Music-Lovers concerts of *Monsieur Angelo Vio* and Herr Willmann. In addition to the usual pieces, Herr Frankenberg will sing an aria, and a duet with Mademoiselle Willmann.

The guest artist was bass Franz Frankenberg (1759–1789), a prominent early Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* who began his career in Vienna, was a member of the Frankfurt theater at the time of the concert, and went on to special prominence with the Nationaltheater in Berlin, until his career was cut short by his early death on 10 Sep 1789. (On Frankenberg, see our entry for 13 Aug 1789.)

As implied in the advertisement of 26 Oct 1787, Magdalena seems by that time to have become a member of the Hofkapelle at the electoral court in Mainz. She is listed in the Mainz *Hof-Kalender* for 1788, which reflects the composition of the court establishment at the end of 1787. (The name given in the *Hof-Kalender* is "Jungfer Helena Willmann"; "Helena" is not known to have been one of Magdalena's given names, but there is no reason to doubt that this entry refers to her.) She is also on the roster for the theater company in Frankfurt for 1788 : "Dem. Willmann, erste und zweyte Liebhaberinnen im Singspiel" (Mademoiselle Willmann, first and second romantic leads in singspiel; *ThK* 1789, 161).



K. Hof- und Kammermuſik.

Muſikdirektor und Kapellmeiſter. Hr. Vinzenz Righini.
Kapellmeiſter, Hr. Johann Michael Schmitt.
Konzertmeiſter, Hr. Georg Anton Kreuſer.

Sänger und Sängerinnen.

Sopraniſten.

Frau Joſepha Hellmuth.
Jungfer Margaretha Hammel.
Jungfer Helena Willmann.

Con=

Magdalena Willmann in the Hofkapelle of the Electoral court in Mainz, *Kurmainzischer Hof= und Staats=Kalender, Auf das Schaltjahr 1788*, 112 (Rheinland-Pfalz dilibri)

Magdalena Willmann in the Hofkapelle of the Electoral court in Mainz,*Kurmainzischer Hof= und Staats=Kalender, Auf das Schaltjahr 1788*, 112 (Rheinland-Pfalz dilibri)

Just one week after the eighteenth concert, on 12 Mar, the Willmanns gave yet another benefit concert, followed on Palm Sunday (16 Mar) by “ein grosses geistliches Concert” (a grand sacred concert) and an oratorio on Good Friday (21 Mar). The concerts on Palm Sunday and Good Friday were again joint productions with Angelo Vio:

AVERTISSEMENTS.

Einem verehrungswürdigen Publico wird hiemit angezeigt, daß (nachdem die 18. abonnirten Liebhaber=Concerts zu Ende sind) Herr Willmann künftigen Mittwoch als den 12ten Merz wird die Ehre haben, ein Concert zum Besten seiner Familie zu geben. Der ihnen bishero immer so schmeichelhaft geschenckte Beyfall hat Herrn Willmanns Vatter aufgemuntert, diese Academie besonders zu verstärcken. Zu diesem Ende wird er nebst denen gewöhnlichen Arien, *Forte pianò*, und *Violoncello* Concerten noch eine grose geist= liche teutsch= Cantate in mehreren Singstimmen, und einem Chor, genannt Adam und Eva, die Ur=Eltern im ersten Gewitter, von Herrn Schmidbaur, geben. Mad. Walter, Madlles Willmann, und Herr Walter werden sich darinnen hören lassen, Mad. Walter und Madlles *[sic]* Willmann, werden noch ein Duett allein singen. Ein besonderer Aufschlags=Zettel wird das mehrere am Tag selbst anzeigen. Billets zu 1 fl. 12 kr. können zu allen Stunden erhalten werden bey Herrn Willmann selbst, wohnhafft in der grossen Sandgasse bey Madame Gelhar eine Stiege hoch.
[*Franckfurter Frag= und Anzeigungs=Nachrichten*, no. 20, Fri, 7 Mar 1788, [5]]

Einem geehrten Publico und Liebhabern der Mu= sique wird hier mit angezeigt, daß *Mr. Angelo Vio* und *Mr.* Willmann, den nächstkommenden Palm= Sonntag im Rothen Haus ein grosses geistliches Concert, und am Heiligen Charfreytag ein grosses Oratorium geben werden, für den Palm=Sonntag wird seyn, in der ersten Partie ein kurzes Orato= rium mit Trompeten und Pauken, nebst einen voll= ständigen grossen Orchester von der Musique des Herrn Capellmeister Bach, dieses kleine Orato= rium wird Madame Walter und Mademoiselle Will= mann singen, in der zweyten Partie wird ein *Pia- no* und *Forte-Concert* seyn, eine Aria von Ma= demoiselle Willmann, ein Concert von Violonce= lo und ein *Duo* von *Mr.* Walter und Madame Walter. Zu Ende auf den Heiligen Charfreytage in grosses Oratorium mit zwey Partien von 4 Stimmen, von Madame Walter und *Mr.* Franckenberg, die Musique ist von Herrn Capellmeister Sterzer mit einem vollständigen Orchester wie oben gemel= det. Die Poesie ist von dem berühmten Poet Me= tastasio, und werden an dem Eingang des Con= certs die Bücher auf einer Seite in deutscher und auf der andern in italiänischer Sprache a 8 kr. zu bekommen seyn, welches sich betittelt: das Leiden Jesus Christus[.] Die Abonirung für den

Palm=Sonntag und Heiligen Charfreytag kostet
2 fl. 24 kr. für jede Person, und diejenigen so
Nicht=Abonirte sind, zahlen beym Eingang 1 fl.
30 kr. Der Anfang ist prächis um 6 Uhr, dieje=
nigen welche sich unterschreiben wollen, können
sich bey Hrn. *Angelo Vio*, auf der Zeil bey dem
Schneidermeister Hrn Plümer Sen. wohnhaft,
melden.
[Frankfurter Staats-Ristretto, no. 40, Mon, 10 Mar 1788, 164]

[translations:]

ADVERTISEMENTS.

It is hereby announced to an honorable public that next Wednesday, 12 Mar (after the 18 subscription concerts have ended), Herr Willmann will have the honor to give a concert for the benefit of his family. The ever so flattering acclaim that they have received up to now has encouraged Herr Willmann the father to add special enhancements to this academy. To this end, in addition to the usual arias, and concertos for fortepiano and cello, he will also give a grand sacred cantata with several vocal parts and a chorus, entitled *Adam und Eva, die Ureltern im ersten Gewitter*, by Herr Schmittbauer. Madame Walter, the Mademoiselles Willmann, and Herr Walter will perform in it, and Madame Walter and Mademoiselles *[sic]* Willmann will sing a duet by themselves. A special poster will announce the details on the day itself. Tickets at 1 fl 12 kr can be had at any hour from Herr Willmann himself, residing in
the great Sandgasse at Madame Gelhar’s on the first floor.

It is hereby announced to an honorable public
and lovers of music that Mr. Angelo Vio and Mr.
Willmann will give a grand sacred concert this
coming Palm Sunday in the Red House, and a grand
oratorio on Good Friday. The first part on Palm
Sunday will be a short oratorio by Herr Kapellmeister
Bach with trumpets and timpani, as well as a complete
large orchestra; Madame Walter and Mademoiselle
Willmann will sing in the small oratorio; in the second
part there will be a concerto for pianoforte, an aria
by Mademoiselle Willmann, a concerto on the
violoncello, and a duet by Mr. Walter and Madame
Walter. Then in closing on Holy Good Friday, a grand
oratorio in two parts with four soloists, with Madame
Walter and Mr. Frankenberg; the music is by Herr
Kapellmeister Starzer, with a full orchestra as
announced above. The poetry is by the famous
poet Metastasio, and the text, with German on
one page and Italian on the other, will be available
at the entrance for 8 kr; the title is *Das Leiden
Jesus Christus*. The subscription for Palm Sunday

> and Holy Good Friday costs 2 fl 24 kr per person,
> and those who are not subscribed pay 1 fl 30 kr
> at the entrance. It begins at precisely 6 o'clock.
> Those who wish to subscribe can inquire with
> Herr Angelo Vio, residing on the Zeil in the house
> of master tailor Herr Plümer Senior.

The composer of the cantata on 12 Mar was Joseph Aloys Schmittbauer (on sources for this cantata, see the *Notes* below). The advertisement implies that both Magdalena and Walburga sang (however, the plural abbreviation "Madlles" for the duet is probably an error); this is the first known reference to Walburga appearing as a singer. The other vocal soloists were Juliane Walter and her husband Ignaz. Although not named in the advertisement, the soloists in the piano and cello concertos would have been Walburga and Maximilian Willmann. No title is given for the "short oratorio" by the "famous Bach" on Palm Sunday. The Willmanns had performed C. P. E. Bach's *Morgengesang am Schöpfungsfeste* in Vienna a year earlier, a work scored for two soprano soloists and orchestra, and they presumably had brought the performance material for that work with them to Frankfurt, and so might have repeated it there; however, in its original scoring, *Morgengesang* does not include trumpets and timpani. The work performed on Good Friday was Joseph Starzer's *La passione di Gesù Christo nostro Signore*.

On 11 Oct 1788 Magdalena Willmann sang the role of Susanna in the Frankfurt premiere of Mozart's *Die Hochzeit des Figaro* (see our entry for that date). Two weeks later, on Sun, 26 Oct, the Willmann sisters gave yet another concert in Frankfurt:

> Morgen Sonntag ist groß *[sic]* Concert im
> rothen Hauß, in welchem beyde Demoiselle
> Willmann sich hiesigem Publikum bestens
> zu empfehlen wünschen. Der Anfang ist
> um 6 Uhr, die Entree kostet einen Conven=
> tions=Gulden.
> [*Frankfurter Staats-Ristretto*, no. 169, Sat, 25 Oct 1788, 725]

> Tomorrow, Sunday, there will be a grand
> concert in the Red House, at which both
> Mademoiselles Willmann wish to pay their
> best respects to the public here. It begins
> at 6 o'clock; entry costs a Convention
> gulden.

This advertisement seems to imply that the sisters would soon be leaving Frankfurt; Maximilian is already notably absent from the announcement.

Magdalena and her father did in fact leave Frankfurt around this time for Berlin, where Magdalena was apparently under contract with the Nationaltheater. However, her debut there on 9 Dec 1788 as Lilla in a German version of *Una cosa rara* was something of a disaster: her detractors in the audience expressed their displeasure by loud coughing (see the section on

Magdalena in our entry for 11 Oct 1788). Her father managed to break her contract, and by 21 Dec 1788 Neefe was able to write to Gustav Friedrich Wilhelm Großmann that Magdalena was expected soon in Bonn (Woodfield 2012, 312). Magdalena made her debut as a member of the Nationaltheater in Bonn on 20 Jan 1789 in *Das Mädchen von Fraskati*. (On Magdalena's rivalry with Christiane Keilholz in Bonn, see our entry for 6 & 13 Jun 1790.) Magdalena also became a member of the musical establishment of the electoral court: her name appears in the *Kurkölnischer Hof-Kalender* for 1790, 1791, 1792, and 1793; Maximilian Willmann is listed as a cellist in those same volumes. Walburga also appears with her sister on the roster of the Nationaltheater in Bonn for 1789/90: "Schauspielerinnen [...] Die Demoisellen Willmann. (Die ältere spielt nur zuweilen)" (Actresses [...] The Mademoiselles Willmann. [The elder performs only occasionally]; *ThK* 1791, 197). This and the advertisement for Schmittbauer's cantata are the only other known references to Walburga acting or singing on stage. It is sometimes said in the reference literature that Walburga Willmann was, like her sister, in the service of the electoral court in Bonn (this claim is made, for example, in Gerber's article about her), but her name appears nowhere in any volume of the *Hof-Kalender*. This apparently mistaken idea may have originated from an inattentive reading of the passage in the *Musikalische Monathsschrift*, in which Walburga is mentioned in the same sentence in which Magdalena is said to be in court service ("wovon die eine Sängerinn in kurköllnischen Diensten, die andere Klavierspielerin ist"). The reference to Walburga in the article in the *Musikalische Korrespondenz* in Jul 1791 states that she "giebt Unterricht im Klavierspielen" (gives instruction in keyboard playing) in Bonn. She had apparently already been giving lessons while in Frankfurt: Goethe's mother refers to Walburga's teaching in a letter to Karl Wilhelm Ferdinand Unzelmann on 19 Dec 1788:

> [Magdalenas] hiesiges Publicum war Herr Arbauer, der sich in jeden Weiberrock verschamarirt, und einige von unserer Nobleße, wo die älste W[alburga] Clavier Informationen gibt *[...]*
> [Koster 1905, i:194]
>
> [Magdalena's] public here was Herr Arbauer, who is infatuated with every petticoat, and by our nobility, where the elder W[illmann] gives keyboard lessons *[...]*

(For more on Frau Rath Goethe's opinions of the Willmanns, see the section on Magdalena in our entry for 11 Oct 1788.)

We hear nothing more of Walburga until 1791, when she and Magdalena undertook a concert tour with their father during a long hiatus of the *Nationaltheater* in Bonn. The sisters are documented as having given concerts in Frankfurt on 24 Apr 1791, in Mannheim on 16 May, and at least two in Munich between 27 Aug and 13 Sep. The last concert in Munich was attended by the Bavarian elector Karl Theodor and Maria Anna of Saxony, the widow of Karl Theodor's predecessor Maximilian III Joseph. The report on the Willmanns' concerts in the *Münchner-Zeitung* is the first known evaluation of Walburga's playing that seems probably not to have been written by her father: "Die Aeltere weiß in ihrem Klavierspiel viele Fertigkeit mit Präzision und Gefühl zu verbinden" (The elder [sister] knows how to combine much facility with precision and feeling; *Münchner Zeitung*, no. 144, Tue, 13 Sep 1791, 773); this is positive, but hardly a rave. At

some point during their tour, Walburga and Magdalena took part in a performance of Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at the Thurn und Taxis summer palace in Dischingen. Magdalena sang Belmonte (her only known appearance in a male role); Konstanze was sung by Duchess Charlotte von Hildburghausen (by all accounts a world-class soprano), and Blonde by Charlotte's sister Therese, Princess of Thurn und Taxis. Walburga directed the performance from the keyboard. (For details on this performance and the Willmanns' concert tour in 1791, see our entry on the Dischingen *Entführung*.)

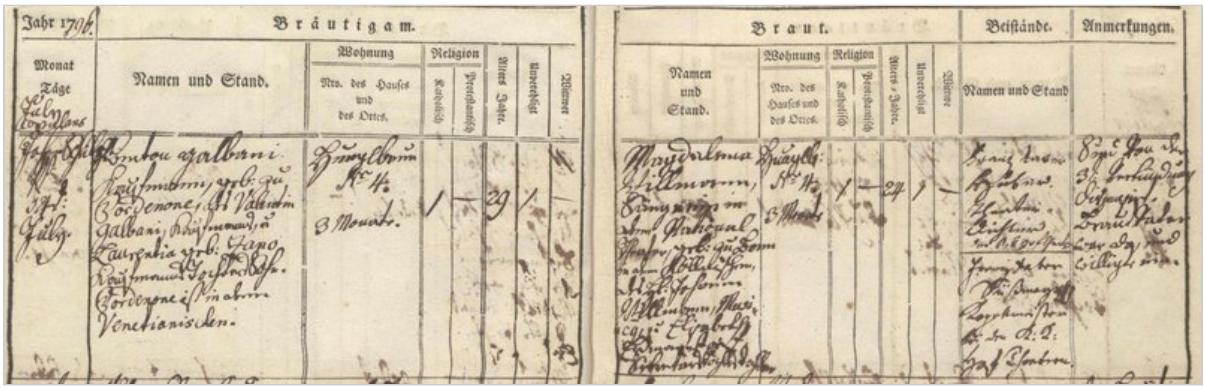
Magdalena's employer in Bonn, Elector Maximilian Franz, was also prince-bishop (Fürstbischof) of Münster. In Dec 1792, in the face of threatening French armies, Max Franz moved his court from Bonn to Münster, taking with him the theater company and a select group of other musicians. The elector's musical life in Münster is described in a report published in the *Berlinische Musikalische Zeitung* (a footnote thanks Neefe for providing the information in the report, which in fact seems to be written by him):

> *Musikal. Nachrichten von Münster und Bonn*. *)
> (Aus einem Briefe aus Bonn.)
>
> Zu Ende des Decembers v. J. gieng unser Churfürst nach *Münster*. Das Theater folgte ihm nach. Hier waren die Musen mehr als jemals beschäftigt. Sonntags war kleine Musik bei Hofe, welche aus sechs *Rombergen*, den zwei Demoisellen *Willmann* und ihrem jüngern Bruder, aus dem Tenoristen *Simonetti* und mir bestand. *[...]*
>
> Bei Hofe wurden gemeiniglich zwei Arien, ein Duett, und einige kleine italiänische Lieder gesungen; zwei Quartetten, ein Duett für Violoncell und Violine, und ein Quintett gespielt. Die ältere Demois. *Willmann* spielte zuweilen ein Solo auf dem Klavier, so wie ihr Bruder auf der Geige. *[...]*
> [*Berlinische Musikalische Zeitung*, no, 38, 19 Oct 1793, 149]
>
> *Musical News from Münster and Bonn*. *)
> (From a letter from Bonn)
>
> At the end of December of last year our Elector went to *Münster*. The theater followed him there. Here the Muses were even busier than usual. Sundays there were small musicales at court, which consisted of the six *Rombergs*, the two Mademoiselles

> *Willmann* and their younger brother, in addition to the tenor *Simonetti* and me. *[...]*
>
> Usually at court, two arias, a duet, and some short Italian songs were sung; two quartets, a duet for cello and violin, and a quintet were played. *Willmann* sometimes played a solo on the keyboard and her brother on the fiddle. *[...]*

The references are to six members of the musical Romberg family, the tenor Luigi Simonetti, Magdalena and Walburga Willmann, and their younger brother Karl, the earliest known documentary reference to him as a violinist.

Max Franz returned to Bonn after Easter 1793, but in October 1794 he fled again before the advancing French, this time never to return. The theater company was disbanded, as was, eventually, the electoral court establishment. Meanwhile the Willmanns appear to have gone to Venice in Jul 1793 so that Magdalena could sing in the opera during carnival season (see the section on Magdalena in our entry for 11 Oct 1788). With nothing to return to in Bonn, the sisters settled in Vienna. On 14 Jul 1796 Magdalena married the Italian businessman Antonio Galvani in the church of St. Florian, a suburb of Vienna. (Pisarowitz 1967, 10, incorrectly has the marriage on 13 Jul, which is the date of the marriage contract.) The witnesses (*Beistände*) were composer Franz Xaver Süßmayr, and writer and journalist Franz Xaver Huber (1755–1814).

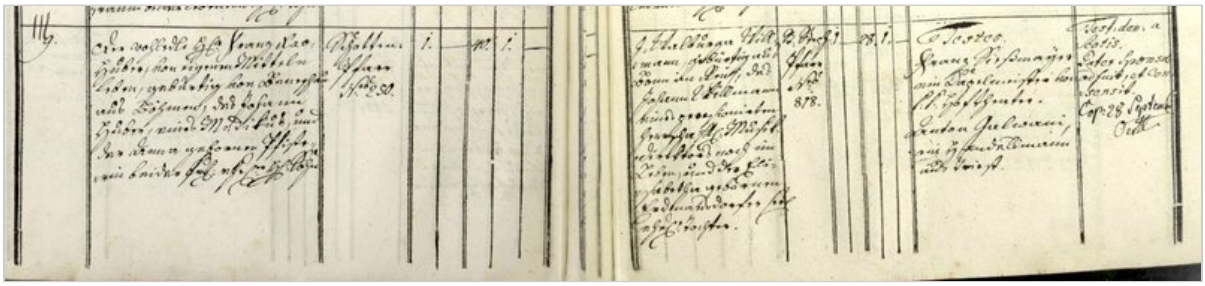


The marriage of Magdalena Willmann and Antonio Galvani, 14 Jul 1796
Vienna, St. Florian, Trauungsbuch 02-05, fol. 27
(matricula)



Detail of the marriage contract of Antonio Galvani and Magdalena Willmann, 13 Jul 1796, showing the (Italian) signatures of Magdalena Willmann, Antonio Galvani, Johann Ignaz Willmann, Franz Xaver Huber, and Franz Xaver Süßmayr.
The contract is included with the Sperrs-Relation of Magdalena Galvani,
Vienna, Stadt- und Landesarchiv, Mag. ZG, A2, 1557/1802
(photo: Michael Lorenz)

Huber married Walburga Willmann a little over a year later, on 9 Sep 1797, in St. Stephan's in Vienna (Pisarowitz 1967, 7, incorrectly has the marriage on 28 Sep). The witnesses (*Testes*) at their marriage were Süßmayr and Galvani.



The marriage of Walburga Willmann and Franz Xaver Huber, 9 Sep 1797
Vienna, St. Stephan, Trauungsbuch 02-079, 123
(matricula)

(For more on Huber see below and in the *Notes*.)

Magdalena had become a member of the court opera company in Vienna, and sang frequently in public concerts in the city. Walburga, on the other hand, seems to have made no impression at all in the documentary record of Viennese musical life in the second half of the 1790s. She is not known to have performed in any public or private concerts, and there is no entry for her in Schönfeld's *Jahrbuch der Tonkunst von Wien und Prag*, published in 1796.

Magdalena Willmann-Galvani died of "Nervenfieber" in Vienna on 23 Dec 1801 at the age of 30 (her age is given incorrectly in the city's Totenbeschauprotokoll as 28). Walburga is said in most biographies to have toured successfully as a pianist in the early years of the new century, but so far as we know, her only documented appearance is a concert in Leipzig in the final quarter of 1801, at which she is said to have performed a concerto of her own composition:

> NACHRICHT
> *Uebersicht dessen, was in Leipzig während des lezten Vierteljahrs für Musik öffentlich gethan worden.*
> *[...]*
> Mad. Huber, gebohrne Willmann aus Wien, spielte ein von ihr selbst komponirtes Konzert auf dem Fortepiano. Sie ist von ihren Reisen vortheilhaft bekannt. Die Komposition ihres Konzerts war recht gut, besonders der erste, doch auch der zweyte Satz; die Variationen an der Stelle des dritten gefielen weniger. In gleichem Verhältnis glückte ihr Spiel. Ihre viele Fertigkeit hatte sie in Privatgesellschaften noch mehr, als öffentlich bewiesen.
> [*AmZ*, no. 16, 13 Jan 1802, cols. 249–250]

[translation:]

> NEWS
> *Overview of public musical events in Leipzig in the previous quarter.*
>
> *[...]*
> Madame Huber, née Willmann from Vienna, played a concerto of her own composition on the fortepiano. She is known favorably from her tours. The composition of her concerto was quite good, especially the first as well as the second movements; the variations in the third were less pleasing. In the same respect her performance succeeded. She has demonstrated her great facility in private gatherings more often than publicly.

At present, this is the only other evaluation of Walburga's playing that can be said with any confidence to have been written by someone other than her father. Her concerto is not known to survive, and no other compositions by her are known.

The Hubers were obliged to leave Vienna after the Treaty of Schönbrunn in Oct 1809 and the subsequent departure of the occupying French. Huber had been involved with the explicitly pro-French and anti-Habsburg journal *Der Morgenbothe*, which appeared for just three issues in 1809. The first issue opened with an item praising Emperor Napoleon the Great and calling for a constitution, and the issue also included a previously banned piece by Huber on Joseph II. The second issue published confidential Habsburg governmental documents that had been copied and taken from the government archives during the chaos of the occupation. One of these published documents was a note from Count Johann Anton von Pergen to Emperor Franz on 23 Jun 1794 on measures to control the population to avoid an uprising. Huber came under suspicion as having been the source of the copied documents and prudently left town before the investigation was concluded. (On Huber and *Der Morgenbothe*, see Gugitz 1909). The Hubers seem eventually to have settled in Mainz, where Franz Xaver died in 1814. Walburga died in Mainz on 27 Jun 1835 at age 66 (Pisarowitz 1967, 8). She is not known to have made any other public appearances as a pianist.

Walburga Willmann remains something of an enigma. This commentary and our commentary on the Dischingen *Entführung* in 1791 reproduce all known primary published references to her. There are not many: most seem to have been written by her father, and she is increasingly in the shadow of her sister Magdalena. Indeed, Walburga seems already to have been an enigma to Gerber in 1814, who wrote that "her current whereabouts are unknown," although she was still alive at the time. For his biographical entries on living and recent musicians, Gerber depended heavily on the musical press, which he seems to have scoured thoroughly (even if he seldom specified his sources). Yet concerning Walburga's later career, he seems to have known only the report of her concert in Leipzig in 1801. The article on Walburga in Schilling's *Lexikon* alludes to appearances in Dresden (1802) and Bonn (1803), but we have so far not found primary sources for these claims. In any case, even if there are as yet undiscovered published references to Walburga, it is already clear that she never had much of a public profile as a musician.

The case for Walburga having studied with Mozart is not strong: it rests (so far as we know) only on the one ambiguous reference in the article in *Musikalische Korrespondenz* on 13 Jul 1791, where she is called "eine gute Mozartische Schülerin". Even if she was a student of Mozart, she did not go on to have a prominent public career. Documented public appearances by her are few, and none at all are currently documented after 1801. Of the known references to her public appearances, only two mention specific composers: her performance of a piano concerto by Mozart at the concert in the Kärntnertortheater in Vienna in 7 Mar 1787, and her performance of her own (lost) piano concerto in Leipzig at the end if 1801. Nearly all descriptions of the quality of her playing are generic and stem from advertising copy written by her father. The only known evaluations that are potentially independent are a single sentence in a report from Munich in 1791 and quoted in the *Musikalische Monathsschrift* in 1792 ("the older sister knows how to combine much facility with precision and feeling in her playing") and the short review of her performance in Leipzig in 1801. There are hints that her musical activities went beyond simply playing keyboard repertoire: she is said to have directed the performance of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Dischingen in the summer of 1791, and she seems to have appeared onstage as a

singer "occasionally" in her younger years. Frau Rath Goethe and the *Musikalische Korrespondenz* both mention that Walburga gave lessons in keyboard playing, and it seems likely that her musical career as an adult was limited mainly to private teaching and occasional performances in private settings. Although we have no direct documentary evidence, it would not be surprising if she had used any purported studies with Mozart as a recommendation for her teaching.

Much of what little documentary evidence we have about Walburga's musical career (and much of what we know of Magdalena's early career) comes from advertisements and notices that were evidently written by her father, who acted as the publicist and agent for his musical children, and whose statements should be treated with appropriate skepticism. His advertisements came increasingly to focus on Magdalena, whom he evidently came to see as the star of the family. Over time, the focus on their sister can hardly have been encouraging to Walburga, Maximilian, and (later) Karl. (For more on Willmann's promotion of Magdalena, see our entry on her performance as Susanna in the Frankfurt premiere of *Figaro* on 11 Oct 1788.)

Notes (⇧)

The article in *Musikalische Korrespondenz* that refers to Walburga Willmann as "eine gute Mozartische Schülerin" is cited in the bibliography of the article about her at the online *Instrumentalistinnen-Lexikon* of the Sophie Drinker Institut (Herold 2008). However, the reference is not mentioned in the text of the article, which says merely: "Die Vermutung, Walburga Willmann sei eine Schülerin Mozarts gewesen, lässt sich nicht verifizieren" (The conjecture that Walburga Willmann was Mozart's student cannot be verified). Otherwise, the article at the Sophie Drinker site is currently the best available reference on Walburga Willmann, although it recapitulates Pisarowitz's erroneous date for her marriage and the undocumented references in Seyfried/Schilling to her alleged performances in Dresden in 1802 and Bonn in 1803. The article quotes extracts from the articles mentioning Walburga in the *Musikalische Monathsschrift* in 1792 and the *Berlinische Musikalische Zeitung* in 1793.

In his entry for Johann Ignaz Willmann in the membership list for the Tonkünstler-Societät, Pohl absurdly gives Willmann's birthdate as 1768 (implying that Willmann was only 9 years old when he joined the society), and an incorrect death date, 7 Mar 1813 (Pohl 1877, 106): these are actually the dates of Willmann's son Maximilian. (Maximilian was born on 21 Sep 1767, but at the time Pohl was writing, Maximilian's birthdate was thought to be 1768; see Seyfried 1838, vi:870). Johann Ignaz in fact died on 28 May 1815 in Breslau. Willmann was sometimes referred to in contemporaneous documents as "Ignaz" or "Ignatz" (for example, in the *Kurfürstlich-köllnischer Hof-Kalender* for 1768 and 1774), but the one verified signature that we have seen, on the marriage contract of his daughter Magdalena in 1796 (see the photo above), uses only the first of the two names ("Giovanni" in this case, as the contract is written in Italian). For clarity, we have used "Johann Ignaz" throughout.

In a footnote on the Willmanns in the 1917 edition of Thayer's biography of Beethoven, Hugo Riemann writes:

> Ein seine bevorstehende Anstellung als kurfürstlicher Kapellmeister in Mainz betreffender französischer Brief V. Righinis vom 31. Mai 1787 aus Wien an Johann Willmann, *Directeur de musique de Son Excellence le Comte Jean Palffy* in Mainz (im Kgl. Geh. Staatsarchiv in Berlin), spricht von Willmanns Tochter *Madeleine* und seinen andern begabten Kindern. [Thayer 1917, i:52n1]
>
> A letter in French (in the Royal State Privy Archive in Berlin) on his coming appointment as electoral Kapellmeister in Mainz sent by V. Righini on 31 May 1787 from Vienna to Johann [= Ignaz] Willmann, Music Director of His Excellency Count Johann Pálffy in Mainz, speaks of Willmann's daughter *Madeleine* [= Magdalena] and his other talented children.

The implications of this letter (which we have not seen) for the question of Magdalena's alleged studies with Righini (which Riemann takes as a given) are unclear. However, the letter does imply that the Willmanns left Vienna before Righini in 1787.

Neue Folge (51), in its entry for the Willmanns' concert on 7 Mar 1787, misleadingly identifies Magdalena as a "Sopranisten am Hoftheater" (soprano in the court theater) in Vienna. Magdalena was never a member of the court theater in Vienna in the 1780s. She sang three times as a guest artist with the court theater—on 3 and 5 Dec 1786, and probably again on 6 Jan 1787—in Umlauf's *Der Ring der Liebe, oder Zemirens und Azors Ehestand*. These performance may have been intended as an audition for the court theater company, but if so, she was not hired. She later became a member of the court theater in Vienna from the mid 1790s until her death in 1801.

Loewenberg (1978, col. 377) cites the performance of Haydn's *L'isola disabitata* in Vienna on 19 Mar 1785 as the Viennese premiere of that opera, but he does not cite his source or mention the Willmanns.

The Angelo Vio with whom Johann Ignaz Willmann collaborated in giving concerts in Frankfurt in 1787 and 1788 was probably the "Hr. Vio" listed as a member of the Frankfurt theater in *ThK* 1788 (182).

Primary sources for the cantata performed at the Willmanns' concert in Frankfurt on 12 Mar 1788, Schmittbauer's *Die Ureltern im ersten Gewitter*, include a full score (B-Bc, 902) and a full set of parts (CH-Zz, AMG XIII 757 & a-s). We have not seen these sources, but the RISM records imply that the cantata has only four movements.

Franz Xaver Huber is referred to in three other entries on our site. He was the editor of the short-lived journal *Pfeffer und Salz*, the first issue of which contains the well-known critique of the production of Mozart's *Idomeneo* at Prince Auersperg's in 1786 (see our entry on that production and our entry on Countess Hatzfeld's performance of "Tutte nel cor vi sento" in Bonn). Huber was also editor of the Viennese periodical *Politisches Sieb* (see our entry for 18 Dec 1791).

We are grateful to Steven Whiting for his comments on a draft of this entry, and to Michael Lorenz for his assistance with the archival research.

Appendix: Josepha Ringbauer (by Dexter Edge and Michael Lorenz)

Little is known about Josepha Ringbauer, the young violinist who performed on the concert with the Willmanns on 16 Mar 1784. Her appearance in that concert was mentioned in a brief item published a few months later in *Magazin der Musik*:

> 79) **Wien im März, 1784.)** Kürzlich spielte im Nationaltheater ein Mädchen von 11 Jahren ein Con= cert auf der Violin von der Composition des Herrn Giarnovick, und erhielt unbeschreiblichen Beifall. Sie heißt Mademois. Ringbauer, und ist in Wien geboren. [*Magazin der Musik*, 9 Jul 1784, 207]

> 79) **Vienna in March 1784.)** Recently in the Nationaltheater an eleven-year-old girl played a concerto by Giornovichi on the violin, and received indescribable acclaim. Her name is Mademoiselle Ringbauer and she was born in Vienna.

This item seems to have been the sole source for Gerber’s article on Ringbauer in 1792:

> **Ringbauer** (Mademoiselle) Virtuosin auf der Violine zu Wien, geb. dasselbst 1773; lies sich schon in ihrem 11ten Jahre mit einem Violinconzert von *Giarnovick* auf dem dasigen Natio= naltheater 1784 mit unbeschreiblichem Beyfall hören. [Gerber 1792, ii:293]

> **Ringbauer** (Mademoiselle), virtuosa on the violin in Vienna, born there in 1773. In her 11th year she already performed a violin concerto by *Giornovichi* at the Nationaltheater there with indescribable acclaim.

Gerber did not have an independent source for the year of her birth, but simply calculated from the (incorrect) age given in the *Magazin der Musik*.

Ringbauer gave a concert for her own benefit in the Burgtheater the following year, on 22 Feb 1785:

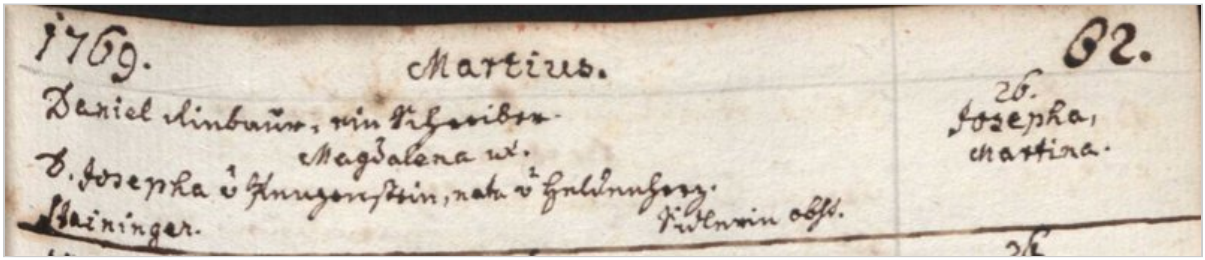
> Koncerte.
> Im K. K. Hoftheater wird Mlle Ring= bauerin heut ein Koncert auf der Violin spielen. Das morgige Koncert ist zum Vor=

theile Herrn Lebruns und seiner Frau. Herr
Lebrun bläßt dabey ein Koncert auf der Oboe.
[*Das Wienerblättchen*, Tue, 22 Feb 1785, 190]

Concerts.
In the K. K. Court Theater today,
Mademoiselle Ringbauer will play a concert[o]
on the violin. The concert tomorrow is for
the benefit of Herr Lebrun and his wife. Herr
Lebrun will play a concerto on the oboe.

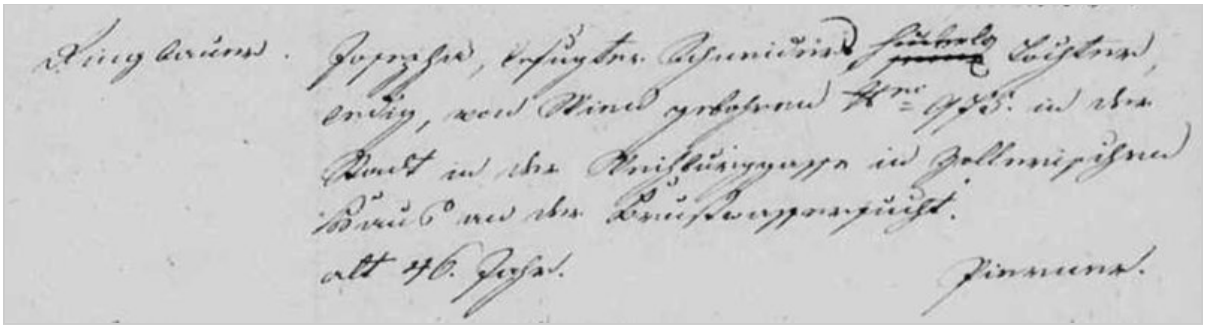
Because of the ambiguity of the word “Koncert”, which can mean “concert” or “concerto,” it is not entirely clear whether Ringbauer gave a full concert or played a single concerto (no poster is known to survive), although a full concert seems more likely. (On this appearance by Ringbauer, see also Morrow 1989, 259.) On 15 Feb 1788, she played an unspecified violin concerto at a benefit concert given in the Burgtheater by Stefano Mandini, a singer in the company of the court theater (Morrow 1989, 270). Ringbauer’s only other documented performance took place nearly 16 years later, at a large private event given in Vienna on 8 Dec 1803 by Carl Rosenbaum and his wife Therese (née Gassmann), where she seems to have played obligato violin parts for arias (Rosenbaum’s diary is in ÖNB, Sammlung von Handschriften und alten Drucken, Cod. Ser. n. 194–204). Ringbauer is referred to in Rosenbaum’s diary as “Pepi.”

We have been able to determine the previously unknown dates of Ringbauer’s birth and death. Josepha Martina Ringbauer was baptized in St. Stephan’s in Vienna on 26 Mar 1769, the daughter of Daniel and Magdalena Ringbauer (the baptismal entry has “Rinbauer”).



The baptism of Josepha Martina Ringbauer (“Rinbaur”), 26 Mar 1769
Vienna, St. Stephan, Taufbuch 01-088, 62r
(matricula)

She never married. Her mother Magdalena died on 18 Dec 1810; she was living with Josepha at the time. Josepha herself died on 17 Jan 1814 at the age of 44 (the archival entries for her death give her age incorrectly as 46).



The death of Josepha Ringbauer on 17 Jan 1814 from "Brustwassersucht"
Vienna, Stadt- und Landesarchiv, Totenbeschreibamt, vol. 137, lit. R, fol. 3r
(FamilySearch)

(See also the record for her burial from St. Stephan's, and the notice in the *Wiener Zeitung*.) The inventory of Josepha's estate includes "1 Violoncello, einige Musicalien, und 15 Stück Lesebücher"; even though no violin is listed in the inventory, the presence of a cello and some music supports the identification of Josepha as the violin prodigy of the 1780s.

If Ringbauer was born on 26 Mar 1769, she was not 11 at the time of her appearance at the Willmanns' concert in 1784 (as stated in the item in *Magazin der Musik*), or 12 (as stated in the notice in the *Wiener Zeitung*); she was actually 10 days shy of her fifteenth birthday, and nearly two months older than Walburga Willmann. Ringbauer is not known to have performed at any other public concerts apart from those documented here, and she is not known ever to have performed anywhere other than Vienna. Her appearance at the Rosenbaum's event in 1803 suggests that she continued to perform privately, but her name does not appear in Schönfeld's *Jahrbuch der Tonkunst von Wien und Prag* in 1796.

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