Citation:

Printed: Mon, 02 Nov 2026

Edge, Dexter. 2014. “The Mannheim premiere of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (18 Apr 1784).” In: *Mozart: New Documents*, edited by Dexter Edge and David Black. First published 9 Jun 2014; updated 17 Jul 2023. [direct link]

The Mannheim premiere of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (18 Apr 1784)

Dexter Edge

***Mannheimer Zeitung*, no. 46, Saturday, 17 April 1784**

[191]

Theater=Anzeige.
Auf der hiesigen Nazionalbühne wird mor=
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[translation:]

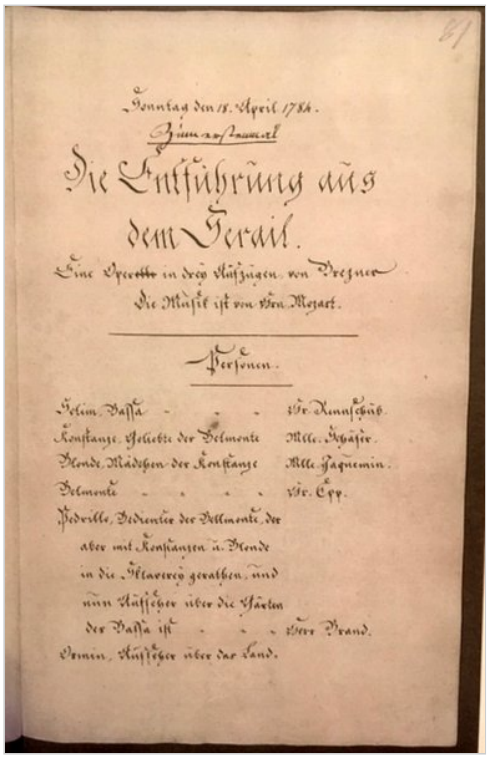
Theater Notice.
On Sunday the 18th on the National stage
here will be performed for the first time: *Die
Entführung aus dem Serail*, an opera in

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three acts by Bretzner; the music is by
Herr Mozart.

Commentary

Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* was first performed in Mannheim on 18 Apr 1784; it was the first performance of any opera by Mozart in that city. Much of the Mannheim theater's archival material was lost when the city was destroyed by Allied bombing in the Second World War, and no exemplar of the original poster for the Mannheim premiere is known to survive. However, images of two manuscript copies of the poster have been preserved, and from these we know the cast of the premiere:



Sonntag den 18. April 1784.

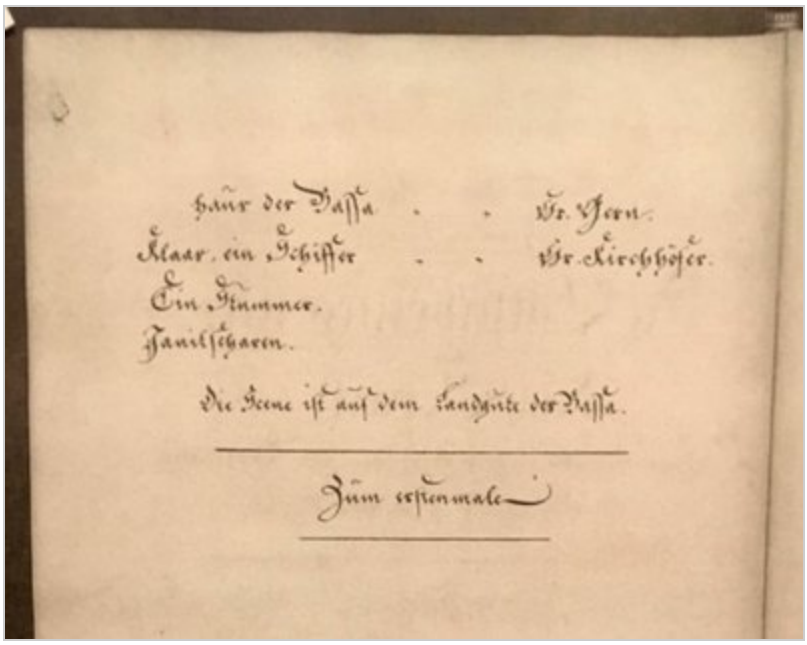
Zum 20ten Mahl

Die Entführung aus dem Serail.

Eine Operette in drey Aufzügen von Bretzner.
Die Musik ist von Hrn. Mozart.

Personen.

Selim Bassa	Hr. Ramschüs
Konstanze, Geliebte der Belmonte	Mlle. Agaßer.
Blonde, Mädchen der Konstanze	Mlle. Jaquemin.
Belmonte	Hr. Epp.
Pedrille, Bedienter der Belmonte, der aber mit Konstanzen u. Blonde in die Sklaverey gerathen, und nun Aufseher über die Garten der Bassa ist	Herr Brand.
Osmin, Aufseher über das Land.	



Manuscript copy of the (now lost) poster for the premiere of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Mannheim

Sonntag den 18. April 1784.
Zum erstenmal

Die Entführung aus
dem Serail.
Eine Operette in dreÿ Aufzügen von Brezner
Die Musik ist von Hrn. Mozart.

Personen.

Selim, Bassa „ „ „	Hr. Rennschüb.
Konstanze, Geliebte der Belmonte	Mlle. Schäfer.
Blonde, Mädchen der Konstanze	Mlle. Jacquemin.
Belmonte „ „ „	Hr. Epp.
Pedrillo, Bediente der Bellmonte, der aber mit Konstanzen u. Blonde in die Sklavereÿ gerathen, und nun Aufseher über die Gärten der Bassa ist „ „	Herr Brand.
Osmin, Aufseher über das Land,, haus der Bassa „ „	Hr. Gern.
Klaas, ein Schiffer „ „	Hr. Kirchhofer.
Ein Stummer.	
Janitscharen.	

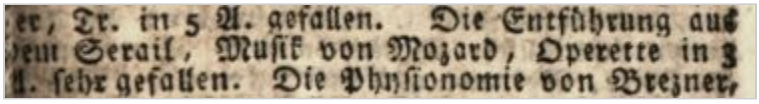
Die Scene ist auf dem Landgute der Bassa

Zum erstenmale

Reception

There is no known review of the first performance of *Entführung* in Mannheim. In the *Theater-Kalender* for 1785, the report on Mannheim notes simply that the opera "pleased very much" ("sehr gefallen"):

[...] Die Entführung aus
dem Serail. Musik von Mozard, Operette in 3
A. sehr gefallen. [...]
[*Theater-Kalender* 1785, 219]


er, Dr. in 5 A. gefallen. Die Entführung aus
dem Serail, Musik von Mozard, Operette in 3
A. sehr gefallen. Die Physionomie von Brezner,

The opera was performed 24 times in Mannheim by the end of 1791, an average of three times per year; it was given at least once in each of those years. Apart from the short evaluation in the *Theater-Kalender*, no other critical reaction to the production is known to have appeared in print until the publication of the *Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne* beginning in 1786; that journal contains detailed critical coverage of all performances in Mannheim starting from 2 Oct 1785. The first few critical notices regarding *Entführung* in the *Tagebuch*, all relatively brief, deal only with the singers. The first to give a more general idea of the opera's reception in Mannheim is a review of the fourteenth performance on 8 Feb 1787:

Den 8. Februarius.
Die Entführung aus dem Serail, ein [*sic*] Ope=
rette in 3 Aufzügen von Bretzner, mit Mu=
sik von Mozart. zum 14ten mal.
Dieses ist immer ein Lieblingstück unseres
Publikums gewesen, auch heute war wieder
das Haus voll. Es wurde mit Wärme ge=
spielet und gesungen. Mademoiselle Schäfer
als Konstanze, Herr Epp als Belmonte und
Herr Gern als Osmin erhielten und verdienten
mit Recht den lautesten Beyfall. Mademoi=
selle Jacquemin als Blonde vernachlässigte die
schöne Musik ziemlich; in ihren Jahren fordert
man, daß eine Sängerin oder Schauspielerin
immer vollkommener werde.
[*Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne*, i/13, [189]; also transcribed in *Neue Folge*, 112–13]

February 8.
Die Entführung aus dem Serail, an operetta
in 3 acts by Bretzner, with music by Mozart,
for the 14th time.
This has always been a favorite piece of
our audience, and today the house was again
full. It was played and sung with warmth.
Mademoiselle Schäfer as Konstanze, Herr
Epp as Belmonte, and Herr Gern as Osmin
received and justifiably earned the loudest
applause. Mademoiselle Jacquemain as

> Blonde quite neglected the beautiful music; at her age, one requires that a singer or actress continually becomes more accomplished.

(Regarding the cast members mentioned in the review, see the following section.)

A retrospective assessment of the previous few years in the Mannheim theater, written around the beginning of 1791 by its intendant Wolfgang Heribert von Dalberg, credits *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* with initiating a general change in the public's taste, both in Mannheim and elsewhere, such that singspiels came to be placed on a par with plays, and to be seen as serious theater rather than merely as entertaining fluff (see our entry for 18 Jan 1791).

Cast

The principal cast of the Mannheim premiere of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* on 18 Apr 1784 was:

Role	Performer
Konstanze	Josepha Schäfer
Belmonte	Franz Anton Epp
Blonde	Caroline Jaquemain
Pedrillo	Herr Brand [Carl?]
Osmin	Georg Gern
Selim	Rennschüb (Johann Ludwig Büchner)

This cast remained stable until the beginning of 1787, apart from absences owing to illness, tours, or (in the case of Epp) waywardness. (For later changes to the Mannheim cast of *Entführung*, see our entry for 21 Oct 1787).

Soprano *Josepha Schäfer* (also Scheefer or Schefer) was a student of the celebrated soprano Dorothea Wendling. Schäfer made her debut with the Nationaltheater in Mannheim in 1782, and spent her entire career with that ensemble. Around the beginning of 1788 she married the Mannheim actor Heinrich Beck, and thereafter appeared as Josepha Beck. We give a detailed biography and assessment of Schäfer/Beck in our entry for 10 May 1791, where we note that she was one of the earliest performers to sing major roles in all of Mozart's last six operas, all in their Mannheim premieres.

Her performances as Konstanze are frequently praised in reviews. Regarding the twelfth performance of *Entführung* on 26 Jan 1786, the *Pfalzbaierisches Museum* reports:

> Mlle. Schäfer, die einige Zeit abwesend, und nach ihrer Zurückkunft krank gewesen ist, trat heute wieder zum erstenmal als Konstanze auf; und das Publikum bezeigte laut seine Freude, sie wieder zu sehen und zu hören. Die erste Arie sang sie meisterhaft. *[...]*
> [*Pfalzbaierisches Museum*, vol. 3, 1785–1786, 193; the review is transcribed in full in *Neue Folge*, 108]
>
> Mademoiselle Schäfer, who was absent for some time and ill after her return, appeared again today for the first time as Konstanze, and the audience loudly demonstrated its joy to see and hear her again. She sang the first aria in a masterly manner. *[...]*

(The reference is to the aria "Ach ich liebte, war so glücklich" in the first act.) Regarding the thirteenth performance of *Entführung* on 17 Apr 1786, the *Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne* reported: "Herr Epp als Belmonte, und Mademoiselle Schäfer als Konstanze, sangen heute auserordentlich schön" ("Herr Epp as Belmont and Mademoiselle Schäfer as Konstanze today sang extraordinarily beautifully"). Of her appearance—now as Madame Beck—in the seventeenth performance of *Entführung* on 6 Mar 1788, the reviewer wrote: "Madame Beck, als Konstanza [*sic*], sang vortreflich; Mozards Musik in ihrem Munde, riß zum Entzücken hin" ("Madame Beck as Konstanze sang splendidly; Mozart's music in her mouth is ravishing"; for the full review, see our entry for 6 Mar 1788). For further references to Schäfer/Beck's performances as Konstanze in Mannheim, see our entries for 21 Oct 1787 and 17 Aug 1788. As Josepha Beck, she also made guest appearances as Konstanze in Frankfurt and Weimar (see our entries for 1 Aug 1790 and 28 Dec 1790).

The report on Mannheim in the *Theater-Kalender* for 1787 describes *Franz Anton Epp* as "erster Tenor, Liebhaber im Singspiel, Nebenrollen im Schauspiel" ("first tenor, lovers in singspiel, secondary roles in plays"; *ThK* 1787, 199). He was engaged by the Mannheim theater in March 1781 (Walter 1899, i:316). As we have seen in the extracts quoted above, his performances as Belmonte were praised in the *Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne*, and this praise grew ever warmer over time. Regarding the fifteenth performance of *Entfühung* on 21 Oct 1787, the *Tagebuch* reports: "Herr Epp als Belmonte sang wieder herrlich; überhaupt ist bei jeder neuen Vorstellung sein Gesang vollkommener" ("Herr Epp as Belmonte again sang superbly; in general, his singing is more accomplished at every new performance"; *Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne*, ii/4, 61–62; for the complete review, see our entry for 21 Oct 1787). A review of his appearance as Belmonte following an absence from Mannheim is even more effusive, praising the improvement in the expressiveness of his singing and the naturalness of his acting (see our entry for 17 Aug 1788). Epp went on to sing the roles of Don Gusmann (Don Ottavio) in the

Mannheim premiere of Mozart's *Don Juan* on 27 Sep 1789, and the Count in the Mannheim premiere of Mozart's *Figaro* on 24 Oct 1790.

An assessment of Epp written in the earliest years of the nineteenth century describes his increasingly temperamental and demanding behavior as his reputation in Mannheim grew:

> Lange Jahre war Epp trotz seiner schönen Stimme dem Publikum zuwider wegen seiner außerordentlichen Steifheit und widerwärtigen Gesichtsverzerrung. Endlich gewöhnte man sich an ihn, sein Gesang gefiel dann weit besser, er fing an notwendig zu werden. Kaum spürte er dies, als er sich beträchtlichen Gehalt herauspreßte. Kaum war ihm beides, Beifall und Gehalt gesichert, als der erste, höchst abenteuerliche und dem Theater nachteilige Plan entsponnen ward! Er erpreßte unter dem Vorwand, bei dem großen Mozart im Gesang Unterricht nehmen zu wollen einen Reiseurlaub auf 6 Monate mit fortlaufenden Engagement. Statt bei Mozart nahm er Unterricht bei einem gewissen Bondera, Tenorist des Casperl zu Wien . . .
> [Cited in Walter 1899, i:316]

> For many years, the public found Epp unpleasant in spite of his beautiful voice, on account of his extreme stiffness and his repulsive facial contortions. Finally one became accustomed to him, his singing consequently pleased much more, and he began to be necessary. He had barely sensed this when he squeezed out a considerably higher salary. Both of these, acclaim and salary, had barely been assured to him when he hatched his first, highly singular plan, detrimental to the theater! He extorted a 6-month travel leave with continuing contract under the pretext of wanting to take instruction in singing from the great Mozart. Instead of Mozart, he took instruction from a certain Bondera, tenor at the Kasperl in Vienna . . .

The reference here is to Bartholomäus Bondra (also Bondera, 1758–1829), a tenor in the company of the Theater in der Leopoldstadt (the "Kasperl") and later a director at that theater. We do not know the dates of Epp's sojourn in Vienna, but it may well have been in 1788: his name is absent from the *Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne* between his performance as Paris in Winter's *Helena und Paris* on 3 Feb 1788, and his triumphant return as Belmonte on 17 Aug that year, a period of just over six months. It is unlikely that Epp knew Mozart personally when he pitched his plan to the Mannheim directorate: there is no evidence that Epp was in Mannheim in 1778, when Mozart had last been in the city, and the composer did not visit Mannheim again until Oct 1790. Epp's name does not appear in Mozart's surviving correspondence. But even if Epp's plan to study with Mozart was purely aspirational, it is notable that the composer's name was sufficiently famous in Mannheim by 1788 that Epp chose to use it as the basis of his request for a six-month paid leave. And assuming that Epp did indeed make his study tour to Vienna in 1788, whatever he learned there served him well, judging by the rapturous tone of the review upon his return.

According to Walter's summary of documents that are now lost (Walter 1899, i:316), in 1795 Epp received a salary of 800 fl while singing only once. At the end of that year, Dalberg wrote to August Wilhelm Iffland that Epp had been "tödlich krank" ("deathly ill") and had been taken in by his colleague in the ensemble, Georg Gern (Walter 1899, i:378). In 1797, when Dalberg

refused Epp's request to be released from his contract on account of illness, the singer traveled to Düsseldorf without permission, claiming upon his return that it had been for his health. He was subsequently released from his Mannheim contract, but he was engaged in Munich in 1799 when several other members of the Mannheim company were called there. Epp died at the end of 1805.

Walter ends his summary of the documents regarding Epp in the theater's archive by writing: "Beschwerden, Eingaben, ärtzliche Zeugnisse, jüristische Gutachten, Entscheidungen der Intendanz und der Direktion u. s. w. füllen diesen umfangreichen Aktenband" ("Complaints, petitions, doctors' statements, judicial opinions, decisions of the intendant and the director, etc. fill this extensive volume of documents"; Walter 1899, i:316). It is a pity that this extensive documentation of such a colorful character has not survived.

Bass *Georg Gern* played the role of Osmin in the Mannheim premiere of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. He was the only one of the original Mannheim cast to forge a substantial reputation outside of Mannheim: he spent the last three decades of his career as a member of the Nationaltheater in Berlin. Consequently, we are better informed about Gern's biography than about those of the other singers in the Mannheim production. (The biography on German Wikipedia offers a good starting point.)

Gern was born on 20 Mar 1757 in Rottendorf bei Würzburg (some sources give 29 Oct 1759; see WeGA). His obituary in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* in 1830 (transcribed below) suggests that he may have studied with Anton Raaff. This is certainly possible—Raaff was in Mannheim by 1770—but remains unverified. Gern was engaged by the Mannheim theater in Jan 1780. The first printed report regarding his performance as Osmin appeared in the *Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne*, reviewing the performance of *Entführung* in Mannheim on 7 Oct 1785, the first since Ludwig Fischer's guest appearance as Osmin on 31 Aug 1785 (see our entry for that date). It is said there that Gern, after having seen Fischer, overplayed the role in a distasteful manner. But subsequent references to Gern's appearances as Osmin are much more positive. Regarding the fifteenth performance of *Entführung* on 21 Oct 1787, the *Tagebuch* reports: "Herr Gern als Osmin spielte und sang mit ausserordentlichem Beifall; und heute hatte er alle seine Kräfte aufgebotten [*sic*]" ("Herr Gern as Osmin played and sang to extraordinary applause, and today he called upon all of his powers"; *Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne*, ii/26, 62; for a complete transcription of this review, see our entry for 21 Oct 1787). Of his performance as Osmin on 6 Mar 1788, the *Tagebuch* writes: "Herr Gern, als Osmin, ist in dieser Rolle vortreflich. Sein wahrhaft komisches Spiel, sein schöner kunstvoller Gesang, erzielen immer eines jeden Kenners ausserordentlichen Beifall" ("Herr Gern as Osmin is splendid in this role. His truly comic acting, his beautiful, artful singing, always receives extraordinary applause from every connoisseur" (*Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne*, ii/37, 238; for the complete review, see our entry for 6 Mar 1788). Gern sang the role of Leporello in the Mannheim premiere of Mozart's *Don Juan* on 27 Sep 1789, and the title role in the Mannheim premiere of Mozart's *Figaro* on 24 Oct 1790. A long report published in the *Theater-Kalender* for 1792 on the Nationaltheater in Berlin notes that Gern made guest appearances with that company as Leporello on 23 May 1791 and as Osmin on 28 May 1791 (*ThK* 1792, 253).



Georg Gern, miniature by Johann Heusinger, ca.1810
(Wikimedia)

Gern moved from the Mannheim company to Munich in 1795. In 1801, he was engaged by the Nationaltheater in Berlin, where he made his debut as Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* on 11 Mar (Lederbur 1861, 185). He remained a member of that company for the rest of his career, making his final stage appearance on 30 Dec 1829 (as Gordon in *Wallensteins Tod*), and retiring at the beginning of 1830. He died in Berlin on 11 Mar 1830. Among his many roles in Berlin (see Lederbur 1861, 185–86), he played the Eremit (the Hermit) in the world premiere of Weber's *Der Freischütz* on 18 Jun 1821. Weber's song *Lebensansicht* is dedicated to him (WeGA). Gern was a member of the Berlin Sing-Akademie from 1801 until his death, and a founding member of Zelter's Liedertafel.

An obituary for Gern published in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* gives further insight into the man and his career, and is worth quoting in full:

> NACHRICHTEN.
>
> ———
>
> *Berlin* (Beschluss). Einen bedeutenden Verlust hat die Bühne durch den am 11ten März erfolgten Tod des 70jährigen Bassisten der Königl. Oper, des würdigen, allgemein geachteten Veterans, Georg Gern, erlitten, welcher früher in Mannheim und München, seit 1801 aber hier als Sänger und Schauspieler höchst brauchbar, früher als Sarastro, Wasserträger, u. s. w. ausgezeichnet im

Gesang und Spiele war. Vorzüglich hatte die gütige Natur Gern mit einer sonoren, in der Tiefe umfangreichen Bassstimme (bis Contra-H) beschenkt; seine Mitteltöne waren weich und klangvoll, die höheren Töne von *c* der esten Octave schwächer. Der Vortrag dieses ächten Bassisten der alten Schule (ich glaube, eines Schülers von Raff) war würdevoll und einfach, sein Triller ausgezeichnet, die Intonation stets rein, das Fundament seines Basses in mehrstimmigen Gesängen gediegen, voll portamento, die Aussprache des Textes deutlich. Gern hatte früher studirt, und besaass [sic] daher wissenschaftliche Bildung im Allgemeinen, wie auch solide musikalische Kenntnisse. Ein eifriger Verehrer der Kirchenmusik opferte er Zeit und Kräfte der Einrichtung und Erhaltung guter Figural-Musik an den Festen der hiesigen katholischen St. Hedwigskirche. Durch sein Bemühen hörten wir seit Jahren dort Messen von Haydn, Mozart, Vogler, Danzi u. s. w., von Seiten des Gesangs vorzüglich durch Bader's schönes Talent, auch von mehren guten Stimmen und einem dem beschränkten Raume angemessenen Orchester unterstützt, aufführen. Dem Jubelgreise, welcher (leider bereits erkrankt) im Januar d. J. seine 50jährige Bühnen-Laufbahn feyerte, wurde dafür auch von Seiten seiner Kirche noch im Tode ehrende Anerkennung durch ein werthvolles Geschenk an seine Erben und ein feyerliches Requiem (von Mozart) zu Theil, welches zur kirchlichen Gedächtnissfeyer am 22sten März von der Königl. Kapelle und den Theater-Mitgliedern vortrefflich aufgeführt wurde, nachdem Gesänge der Liebe und Wehmuth an seinem Grabe den Aufschwung des Geistes des verewigten Sängers zu dem Regionen ewiger Harmonie geleitet hatten.
[*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, no. 16, 21 Apr 1830, cols. 250–51]

[translation:]

NEWS

———

Berlin (Conclusion). The stage has suffered a significant loss through the death on 11 March of the 70-year-old bass in the royal opera, the worthy, universally revered Georg Gern, who excelled in

> singing and acting, first in Mannheim and Munich, but of greatest utility here since 1801, first as Sarastro, the Wasserträger [Mikeli], etc. Above all, benevolent Nature had endowed Gern with a sonorous bass voice extending into the low register (to low B); his mid-range was soft and melodious, the higher notes from middle C in the first octave were weaker. The execution of this genuine bass of the old school (a student of Raaff, I believe), was dignified and simple, his trills excellent, his intonation always pure, the foundation of his bass in polyphonic vocal pieces solid, full portamento, the enunciation of the text clear. Gern had studied earlier in life, and therefore possessed a general academic education, as well as solid musical knowledge. As a keen admirer of church music, he offered time and energy to the establishment and maintenance of good figural music at the celebrations of the Catholic St. Hedwigskirche here. Through his efforts, we have for years performed masses by Haydn, Mozart, Vogler, Danzi, etc., supported on the vocal side mainly through Bader's great skills, as well as by several good voices, and an orchestra suited to the restricted space. The revered old man, who (unfortunately already ill) celebrated his 50th anniversary on the stage in January of this year, was thus also in death accorded the honorable recognition by his church of a valuable gift and a solemn Requiem (by Mozart), which was splendidly performed at a memorial service on 22 March by the Royal chapel and members of the theater, following which songs of love and melancholy at his graveside guided the ascension of the spirit of this immortal singer to the realms of eternal harmony.

Der Wasserträger is the German title of Cherubini's *Les Deux Journées*, and the occupational designation of its lead baritone role, the character Mikeli. St. Hedwigskirche was built in the third quarter of the eighteenth century at the instigation of Frederick the Great as a monument to religious tolerance. "Bader" probably refers to the German operatic tenor Carl Adam Bader (1789–1870). Later in the same article in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, the author reviews and names the singers of a performance of Mozart's Requiem by the Sing-Akademie, likewise in Gern's honor, noting also the singers who participated in the performance at St. Hedwigskirche.

Blonde and Pedrillo in the first Mannheim production of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* were performed by singers who, by all accounts, were much less distinguished than the other three

principals, although their presence in the cast seems not to have hurt the overall positive reception of the opera in Mannheim. Blonde was sung in the premiere by *Caroline Jacquemain* (also Jacquemin or Jaquemin), who according to the report on the Mannheim company in the *Theater-Kalender* for 1787 took the roles of "Liebhaberinnen und Soubretten im Schau= und Singspiel" ("Lovers and soubrettes in plays and singspiels"; *ThK* 1787, 198). She was engaged by the Mannheim theater in Oct 1781. The *Gallerie von Teutschen Schauspielern und Schauspielerinnen* of 1783 has a brief positive assessment:

> Dem. Jacquemain.
> Ist eine junge, vielversprechende Aktrice und Sängerin. Ihre Pantomime und Aktion ist vorzüglich gut, so wie ihre vernehmliche Ausspra= che und Deklamation.
> [*Gallerie von Teutschen Schauspielern und Schauspielerinnen*, 115]
>
> Mademoiselle Jacquemain.
> Is a young, very promising actress and singer. Her gestures and action are extremely good, as is her distinct pronunciation and declamation.

But her early promise did not pan out, as we have seen from the harsh assessment of her performance in the fourteenth performance of *Entführung* in Mannheim on 8 Feb 1787:

> Mademoi=
> selle Jacquemin als Blonde vernachlässigte die schöne Musik ziemlich; in ihren Jahren fordert man, daß eine Sängerin oder Schauspielerin immer vollkommener werde.
> [*Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne*, i/13, [189]]
>
> Mademoiselle Jacquemain as Blonde quite neglected the beautiful music; at her age, one requires that a singer or actress continually becomes more accomplished.

Jacquemain was dismissed from the Mannheim company on 30 Sep 1787 (Würtz 1975, 74); she was replaced as Blonde by Marie (or Manon) Boudet (see our entry for 21 Oct 1787). Under her married name Reuter (or Reiter), she is said later to have performed with the company of Wenzel Mihule.

The role of Pedrillo in the Mannheim premiere of *Entführung* was taken by "*Herr Brand*," the most obscure member of the original cast. Würtz (1975, 64) gives his first name as "Carl" but cites no source. The entry on Mannheim in the *Theater-Kalender* for 1787 describes him thus: "Hr. Brand, Bediente und Bauern im Schau= und Singspiele" ("Herr Brand, servants and farmers

in plays and singspiels"; *ThK* 1787, 199). He was engaged by the Mannheim theater in Oct 1782, and dismissed on 30 Sep 1787, the same day as Jacquemain. He was replaced as Pedrillo in the Mannheim production by Samuel Friedrich Leonhard (see our entry for 21 Oct 1787). None of the reviews of performances of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in the *Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne* mention Brand, and the handful of references in that journal to his appearances in other productions are lukewarm at best.

The speaking role of Bassa Selim in the Mannheim premiere of *Entführung* was taken by "Rennschüb," a pseudonym used by Johann Ludwig Büchner, whose family objected to his pursuing a career in the theater. The pseudonym was derived from his family name spelled backwards. In addition to playing "Liebhaber, Juden und Eskrocs" ("lovers, Jews, and crooks"; *ThK* 1787, 199) in the spoken theater, Rennschüb became a stage director at the theater, and a member of its directorate. For a good detailed biography see Hock (2020).

Regarding the guest appearances of Christiane and Dorothea Keilholz as Konstanze and Blonde in the performance of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Mannheim on 6 Jun 1790, see our entry for that date.

Notes (⇧)

This is a completely new commentary with a new title for a document first published on our site on 9 Jun 2014.

Deutsch (*Dokumente*, 199) correctly states that *Entführung* was premiered in Mannheim on 18 Apr 1784, citing the *Journal von und für Deutschland*, but he does not quote the report. It reads:

> Mannheim. 18 Apr. Die Entführung
> aus dem Serail. Oper. 3 A. von Brezner
> die Musik vom Hrn. Mozart. Zum ersten=
> mal.
> [*Journal von und für Deutschland*, May 1784, 581]

> Mannheim. 18 Apr. *Die Entführung*
> *aus dem Serail.* Opera. 3 A[cts] by
> Bretzner, the music by Herr Mozart. For
> the first time.

The *Mannheimer Zeitung*, the source of the announcement given at the top of this page, does not appear to have been consulted for *Dokumente*, *Addenda*, *NMD*, or *Neue Folge*.

The page following the announcement of the premiere of *Entführung* in the *Mannheimer Zeitung* includes an advertisement for the opera's libretto:

> In der neuen Hof= und Akademischen Buchhand=
> lung neben dem Gasthause zum Riesen sind zu haben[:]
> Die Entführung aus dem Serail, eine Operette,
> 24 kr. Kuhnraths philosophische Erklärung des
> geheimen, äusserlichen, sichtbaren Glut un [*sic*] Flam=
> menfeuers &c. 24 kr. Menschenhandlungen auf
> unebenem Lande, zweiter Theil, 40 kr.
> [*Mannheimer Zeitung*, no. 46, Sat, 17 Apr 1784, 192]

> In the new Hof- und Akademische Buchhandlung
> next to the inn *Zum Riesen* can be had:
> *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, an operetta,
> 24 kr. Kuhrath's *Philosophische Erklärung des
> geheimen, äusserlichen, sichtbaren Glut und
> Flammenfeuers &c.* 24 kr. *Menschenhandlungen auf
> unebenem Lande*, zweiter Theil. 40 kr.

No Mannheim edition of the libretto for *Entführung* is known from this time, and the identity of the libretto offered for sale in Mannheim in 1784 remains speculative.

The principal primary sources for the dates of the 23 performances of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Mannheim during Mozart's lifetime are the *Mannheimer Zeitung*, *Journal von und für Deutschland*, the *Münchner Zeitung*, *Pfalzbairisches Museum*, *Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne*, and *Annalen des Theaters*. None of these sources give every performance, and a few performances appear to be known only from Walter (1899), who had access to primary sources that have not survived. The cast for the Mannheim premiere of *Entführung* was already published by Walter (1899, 288n3), probably on the basis of the poster for the performance, or a copy of it.

The review in the *Pfalzbaierisches Museum* of the Mannheim performance of *Entführung* on 26 Jan 1786 is transcribed in *Neue Folge*, 108–109. A variant version of the same short review appeared in the *Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne*:

> Den 26. Jenner.
> Die Entführung aus dem Serail, eine Ope=
> rete in 3 Aufzügen, mit Musik von Mozart.
>
> Zum 12ten mal.
> Mademoiselle Schäfer, die einige Zeit abwe=
> send und krank zurück gekommen ware trat
> heute wieder zum ersten mal in der Rolle der
> Constanze auf, und wurde von dem Publikum
> mit einem lauten Applaudissement empfangen;
> sie sange ausnehmend schön.
> [*Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne*, i/3, 34–35]

> 26 January.
> *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, an operetta in 3 acts, with music by Mozart.
>
> For the 12th time.
> Mademoiselle Schäfer, who was absent for some time and returned ill, appeared today for the first time in the role of Konstanze, and was received with loud applause; she sang exceptionally beautifully.

A minor but nonetheless interesting reference to *Entführung* appears in the same issue of *Pfalzbaierisches Museum* immediately preceding the review of the performance on 26 Jan 1786. It regards the Mannheim premiere two days earlier of the one-act play *Jack Spleen*, a German adaptation by Salomo Schletter of Joseph Patrat's French original, *Jaques Splin*:

> Als Jack Spleen geendigt war, trat Hr. Beil heraus, und kündigte die künftige Vor= stellung an, und das mit einer etwas unan= ständigen Art. Andere Schauspieler, wenn sie ankündigen, treten in die Mitte der Büh= ne, beugen sich mit Anstand, und sagen dann, was aufgeführt werden soll. Hr. Beil aber trat kaum drei Schritte aus der Koulisse, sagte im Kommen: "Künftigen Donnerstag führen wir "die Entführung aus dem Serail auf;" und gieng lachend ohne alle Umstände wieder hinein. Glaube ja nicht Freund, daß ich viele Kom= plimente fodere; ich möchte immer mit Ham= let rufen: "Hör' endlich einmal auf, deine Gesich= ter zu schneiden!" allein Anstand und gehörige Achtung für das Publikum, worunter in al= lem Betrachte verehrungswürdige Männer sind, kann man mit Recht verlange. Das Publikum ist langmüthig genug, und läßt (um solche Sachen ganz gelind zu benennen) Un= bescheidenheiten hingehen, ohne sie zu rügen. Die Achtung fürs Publikum wird dadurch ge- schwächt, und verschwindet endlich ganz. Der Schauspieler ist dem Publikum Ehrfurcht schuldig: dagegen aber kann er Aufmerksam= keit, Beifall und Aufmunterung fodern, wenn er seine Pflicht erfüllt.
>
> Das ist, glaube ich, so ziemlich das Ver= hältniß zwischen Schauspieler und Publikum. [*Pfalzbaierisches Museum*, vol. 3, 1785–1786, 192–93]

[translation:]

> When *Jack Spleen* ended, Herr Beil came out and announced the next performance, and did this in a rather rude manner. Other actors, when they announce, come to the middle of the stage, bow graciously, and then say what is going to be performed. Herr Beil, however, took barely three steps from the wings, said as he came out "This Thursday we're giving *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*'," and then went back in laughing without any ceremony. Do not think, friend, that I require a lot of compliments; I would like always to call out, with Hamlet: "Just stop making faces!"; but one can justly demand simple good manners and proper respect for the audience, among which are honorable men in every respect. The audience is patient enough, and (to put things quite mildly) lets pass much immodesty without reproval. Respect for the audience is weakened by this, and eventually disappears completely. The actor owes the audience deep respect: on the other hand, he can demand recognition, applause, and encouragement when he does his duty.
>
> That is, I believe, pretty much the relationship between actor and audience.

"Herr Beil" was the actor and playwright Johann David Beil. The reviewer appears to be referring to Act 3, scene 2 in *Hamlet*, between Hamlet and the players, where at one point (in the English original), Hamlet says "Pox, leave thy damnable faces, and begin." In the German version the reviewer is recalling, the unsanitized quote is "Höre auf deine verteufelten Gesichter zu schneiden." Putting aside the reviewer's somewhat priggish tone, we might imagine that Beil was aware that *Entführung* was so popular with the Mannheim audience that an offhand reference woulds be all that was necessary to motivate them to flock to the performance two days later.

There is one minor error in the transcription in *Neue Folge* of the review in the *Tagebuch der Mannheimer Schaubühne* of the performance of *Entführung* in Mannheim on 8 Feb 1787: *Neue Folge* has "eine Operette" (the correct gender) whereas the orginal has "ein Operette".

Walter (1899, i:316) does not give a clear attribution for the summary assessment of Epp, quoted above in the main text. In the sentence introducing the quotation, Walter refers to two documents: one by Heinrich Beck, dated 5 Apr 1802, and one by the lawyer Wöstenradt, dated 9 Jan 1803. Walter does not specify which document he is quoting.

We are grateful to Martín Nedbal for his photographs of sources in Mannheim, and to Janet Page for her comments and corrections.

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Credit: DE

Author: Dexter Edge

Link(s): Google Books; BSB

Search Term: mozart

Source Library: BSB, 4 Eph.pol. 65-1784

Categories: Reception, Addenda

First Published: Mon, 9 Jun 2014

Updated: Mon, 17 Jul 2023

Citation:

Edge, Dexter. 2014. "The Mannheim premiere of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (18 Apr 1784)." In: *Mozart: New Documents*, edited by Dexter Edge and David Black. First published 9 Jun 2014; updated 17 Jul 2023. [direct link]