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'Das vortrefliche Singspiel' *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Regensburg (2 Dec 1791)

Dexter Edge

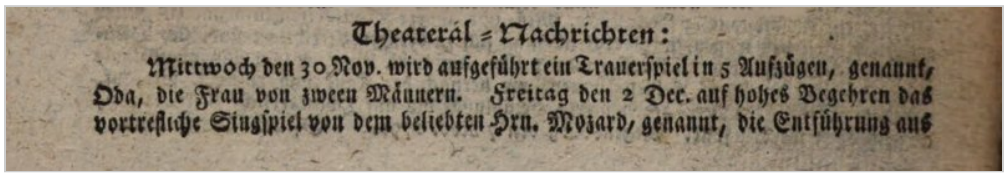
***Regensburgisches Diarium*, no. 48, Tue, 29 Nov 1791**

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Theateral=Nachrichten:

[...]

Freitag den 2 Dec. auf hohes Begehren das
vortrefliche Singspiel von dem beliebten Hrn. Mozard, genannt, die Entführung aus


Theaterál = Nachrichten:
Mittwoch den 30 Nov. wird aufgeführt ein Trauerspiel in 5 Aufzügen, genannt, Oda, die Frau von zween Männern. Freitag den 2 Dec. auf hohes Begehren das vortrefliche Singspiel von dem beliebten Hrn. Mozard, genannt, die Entführung aus

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dem Serail.


(383)
dem Serail. Sonntag den 4. zum Besten des Hrn. Teller, ein ganz neues Trauer=

[translation:]

Theater-News:

[...]

On Friday, 2 Dec, by high demand, the
excellent Singspiel by the popular Mozart, called *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*

Commentary

The earliest known performance of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Regensburg—home of the court of Fürst Carl Anselm von Thurn und Taxis and the "immerwährender Reichstag" of the

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Holy Roman Empire—was given by a German theater company under the leadership of Emanuel Schikaneder on 20 Jul 1787 (see our entries for that date and for 11 Jun 1787). The company performed the opera six more times in Regensburg before the end of 1787, and three times the following year (see the *Notes* below).

Schikaneder left Regensburg in 1789, recommending the actor Johann Jakob Rechenmacher to succeed him as director of the company (Komorzynski 1951, 128–29; Knedlik 2001, 109). Following Rechenmacher's death on 4 Sep 1790, direction was taken over by his widow Elisabeth (*ThK* 1791, 231). A long entry on the Regensburg company in the *Theater-Kalender* for 1791 (based on information from 1790) contains much information about its repertory under the Rechenmachers in 1790, but few specific dates. However, it is clear that *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* was performed at some point after 26 Apr that year, when the theater reopened following a two-month closure on the death of Emperor Joseph II. The opera must have been performed at least twice in Regensburg during 1790, because each of the roles of Constanze, Blonde, and Osmin are said in the *Theater-Kalender* to have been taken by two different performers (*ThK* 1791, 231ff). In the list of works performed after 26 Apr, the correspondent to the *Theater-Kalender* writes: "Die Entführung aus dem Serail Oper gefiel" (*ThK* 1791, 234). "*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, opera, pleased"). *Entführung* had also been performed privately in the summer of 1791 at the summer residence of the Thurn und Taxis court in Dischingen (see our entry for that performance).

Two additional performances of the opera were announced in the *Regensburgisches Diarium* in 1791. The first announcement, for a performance on 2 Dec, is transcribed above. This performance is listed in Meixner's theatrical calendar (Meixner 2008, 546) on the basis of the report in the *Diarium*; the announcement is transcribed by Haberl (2012, 288). The same newspaper announced a performance of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* on 9 Dec 1791.

Although brief, the announcement of the performance on 2 Dec 1791 is notable for its two positive adjectives: "das vortrefliche Singspiel" ("the excellent Singspiel") and "von dem beliebten Hrn. Mozard" ("by the popular Herr Mozart"), and for the remark that the opera was being given "auf hohes Begehren" ("by high demand"). The two performances bracketed Mozart's death on 5 Dec 1791.

Notes (⇧)

Schikaneder's company performed *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Regensburg on 20 Jul, 24 Jul, 5 Aug, 21 Aug, 26 Aug, 7 Oct, and 26 Nov 1787; and 25 Apr, 25 May, and 21 Aug 1788. The performance on 20 Jul 1787 is often cited as the Regensburg premiere, but strictly speaking, we do not know that it was, so we refer to it here as "the earliest known."

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Credit: Christoph Meixner

Author: Dexter Edge

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