

So once again, we're September 8, 1995 in Stockholm and talking with Thomas Mandl from Düsseldorf about his musical background and his experiences in musical activity of Terezín. So let's first, Thomas, hear about your musical training.

Yeah, my musical training started at the age of seven in Ostrava, where our family lived. And my teacher was the German violinist, Wolfgang [? Konneman, ?] who was head of an institution he called Musikbildungsanstalt, meaning an institution for musical education. And he was a very, very decent person who kept up the contact with our family, even after the Nazis invaded Czechoslovakia, and Jews were no human beings at all.

Then we moved to Brno. And my new teacher of violin was Milos Sokola, right now, better known as a composer than as a violinist. He, at that time, was studying violin at the conservatory in Brno. And I was about 10 years old when I started to be taught by him. And he was able to introduce me to a bit higher level, like playing in the positions and introducing the Shevchenko school of violin technique.

And that period, I'd developed a real interest in music. And I became something like a violin chauvinist, considering violin being the superior instrument, and all the other instruments in musical activities being inferior. And of course, this was caused by my romantic visions of a violinist, like Paganini and people like him.

And the occupation of Czechoslovakia interrupted this, not because Sokola was afraid to contact Jewish people, but because he became the head of a music school somewhere in Bohemia and was no longer in Brno. And finally, my father found a former viola player from the Vienna Philharmonic, Edward Weiss, who was a composer too, who taught me violin. And it was the first time I played with the accompaniment of a little orchestra Pablo de Sarasate "Zigeunerweisen," "Gypsy Songs."

And all this came to an end, or would have come to an end, because, I guess, in 1940, all musical instruments owned by Jews had to be given up. So my father, who was-- he was an engineer, but he was a fanatical musician at the same time.

So he came up with the idea to buy me a so-called mute violin, which is an instrument where you can just hear the strings, no resonance at all. And he argued, we could say, this is not a musical instrument. It's either a toy or some technical device. So we wouldn't be violating the Nazi laws by using a mute violin. And this mute violin, I used until the day of our deportation to Terezin in March 1942.

And in Terezín, all musical instruments, at that time, were illegal. But I heard that the violinist [? Heini ?] [? Taussig ?] had a violin. So I approached him one day and told him, look, couldn't I practice for a while on your violin? And he very reluctantly said, OK. And so I had a chance to do a little practicing. But I had to give him the instrument back.

And then I was transferred to the so-called Zentralsekretariat, which was the office of the Elder of Jews, Jakob Edelstein, and his deputy, engineer Otto Zuckert, who was a very, very keen violinist, kind of owned a violin. And one day, I approached him and told him, look, I'm desperately trying to practice the violin. And should the SS catch me with the violin, it will be my own violin. You won't be compromised, at which he smiled and said, it's OK. And you will pick up the violin within the next few days.

And I was very, very happy to have a violin. Of course, there was still the danger of being caught, either by a gendarme or an SS trooper. So I had to be very careful in selecting a place for practicing.

Did you know of any cases where musicians were caught with instruments?

No, no, I didn't. But nevertheless, musical instruments were considered contraband, the same thing as cigarettes or alcohol. And with cigarettes, there were gigantic tragedies in Terezín. A cigarette-- if you were caught with a cigarette, it meant certain death because you were put into the next transport, which from August '42 was Auschwitz. So that was practically your end.

I didn't know that people were sent to Auschwitz, but I did know that people were sent into the transport. And the transport was the one thing people in the ghetto dreaded most, although they were not aware of the destination. And the word Auschwitz was unknown to me while I was in Theresienstadt. But nevertheless, people were terrified, and as we now know, rightly so, by the word transport.

I forgot to ask one thing. What year were you born?

I was born in 1926.

1926. So you were already?

I was approximately--

16?

15. So then the problem arose, I realized, I wasn't far enough, good enough to do practicing without the aid of a teacher. So again, my father found a lady from Germany. Her name was [? Spielman. ?] And she was teaching me the violin. Unfortunately, Mrs. [? Spielman ?] vanished with one of the next transports.

And again, I was without a teacher. So finally, I started studying with a Karel Frohlich, who was an excellent violinist, a master of all styles, and with a beautiful technique. He played equally well with a Tchaikovsky concerto, and the Dvorak, and Brahms concerto, and Paganini. And he was a great teacher, with one exception. He forced me to play without a pad.

Without a pad?

A pad--

Yes, yes.

--on the shoulder--

Right.

--which elevates the violin to such an extent that you can hold it with your shoulder and your chin, leaving your left hand free for the technique.

Yes. Why did he have it taken, not--

He said--

--using it?

He didn't need it himself, but he was a person of athletic build. He had broad shoulders. And he was able to do it without a pad. And his argument was acoustically, it's better if you play without a pad because the resonance embraces your chest too, not only the violin. So the resonance is bigger. And he may be right.

And he has a predecessor in France, the Dalcroze method, but I don't think it was a good thing for me because my shoulders are narrow, and were narrow, and most of my technique went to hell by renouncing the pad. But nevertheless, I learned a number of things. And at the same time, the price for a lesson was a slice of bread. So I didn't know how my father managed it, but I was able to pay.

Where did you have the lessons? Did you go to his living place?

I went to his living quarters. He had the privilege of having a very, very small room in the Magdeburger kaserne with his wife, which was a gigantic advantage over the average prisoner.

Yes. Why was he so allowed to have better condition?

I guess because he was either the first transport to Theresienstadt, AK1 or AK2, AK meaning Aufbaukommando. And these people had all or most of the important positions in the ghetto. And so he, obviously, somehow, managed to get this gigantic privilege of living with his wife.

Were you aware of any feelings of jealousy on the part of other people because of these people who were considered to be the prominent sometimes?

Yeah. There existed problems like that. And as I mentioned, I worked at that Zentralsekretariat of the Elder of Jews. And I, among other things, had to go through the mail, the official mail, and the mail directed to the Elder of Jews, Edelstein. And for instance, I remember a letter where one prisoner complained that all of the good positions were held, quote, "by Polish Jews," unquote.

And I even read Edelstein's answer, which was very, very polite. And it pointed out, many positions were filled by people who came here first. But it's unknown to me, and I'm quite surprised that a person living in Theresienstadt has time to pursue the hobby of genealogy, tracing back the origin of people. And as all his letters, it ended with the words, [GERMAN]. I regret that I am unable to help you. But I'm unable to alter the facts, as a free translation.

It showed I was a very young and inexperienced person. But even at that time, I understood that somehow, subconsciously, although the person who had written the letter was unhappy with his situation, he implicitly trusted Edelstein that he would take no revenge. And he was right. Edelstein was a real and true gentleman, up to the very last minute of his short life.

There was jealousy. And of course, when the transports from Germany and Austria started arriving, they found that all of the so-called lucrative positions were in the hands of Czech Jews, especially Jews from Prague, because Prague was the place where the first transport started. But this was later changed.

And for instance, the bass buffo [? Herbert ?] [? Lowenberg, ?] who was an opera star in one of Germany's opera scenes, started working at the children's kitchen. So many people of German Jewish origin came into high positions. And all of this was changed by the SS commandant, who, as I heard-- I don't know whether it's true-- insisted upon a kind of job-sharing with Jews from the so-called Altreich, the old German Reich.

Incidentally, what was the date that you and your family came?

We were-- we started the transport in Brno, I guess, on March 27, 1942. We were in quarantine for three days. And then we were taken to the main railroad station. That was at a time when Jews were no longer allowed to use streetcars. And we had a special streetcar, which went from the Senefelderstrasse in Brno straight to the main railroad station, where we had a section that was reserved for the Jewish transport only. It was not accessible to normal travelers.

I wanted to ask, also-- you were, of course, very young. But when you were still in Brno and doing your music studies, did you have any contact or awareness of Pavel Haas?

Yeah, Pavel Haas was my music teacher at the Jewish gymnasium, or high school, in Brno. And incidentally, I had a very good friend whose name is Heinz Rosenzweig. He started as a wunderkind on the violin, then became unfaithful to the violin and started the piano.

Then he became unfaithful to the piano and started composing. And I was amazed. He had piles and piles of compositions, and among them, a concerto in D major for violin and piano. And I, as far as I know, am the only person who ever performed it, again, quote, "in public," unquote. It was at my class at the Jewish high school.

What did you study specifically with Haas?

Well, he was teaching us what you now would call music training, music appreciation.

Not theory, and composition, and such?

No, not really.

How was he as a teacher?

He did have his difficulties. He was a very devoted teacher. But he had to teach a class devoid of any discipline. So he had to spend a lot of time by shouting and yelling at the class, and please, be silent, and please, do follow along.

Were these music students or general students?

No, no, general.

Oh, it was a general appreciation course.

Yeah. Yeah.

Had you any opportunity to hear any of his music in Brno before that?

No. No. I knew that the opera "The Charlatan" was on the program. And they were planning to read. But this was, of course, made impossible by, first, the Sudeten crisis in '38 and then the occupation of Czechoslovakia. So it was inconceivable that a work by a Jewish composer should be performed in public.

But I was very, very impressed by the fact that the man had written an opera. I, in my childish imagination, thought that composing operas was a thing of the past and that it no longer happened. And now, I was seeing in the flesh, so to say, a person who had composed an opera, and an opera that was accepted by a stage.

Let's go back to Terezín now. When you came, and you found you had the ability to play a little bit on some borrowed instruments, and you began some study for a certain period with Karl Frohlich, how and when were you aware of any performances going on early in 1942?

If you speak of musical performances, there were some more or less illegal recitals on a piano left behind by the original inhabitants of Terezín. And the people who performed were Bernard Kaff and Gideon Klein, to my knowledge. And I heard Kaff perform and was very, very impressed, although I thought that the piano was an inferior instrument, and the violin was the king of instruments. But his rendition-- I guess it was a Beethoven sonata-- was very, very impressive.

Was this on this now famous, also from the drawing, grand piano without legs?

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

In the other, which they said that Gideon Klein managed to somehow restore it to be able to it. What was the feeling in this concert by the people attending? After all, it was still at a certain risk.

They took it very lightly-- the risk, I mean. And the people who were willing to listen to a recital on an attic which was unheated in winter and very, very hot in summer were really musical idealists who didn't give a damn. They were fascinated by the music.

And somehow, one of the first things I remember-- it's not chronologically correct, but there was a performance of Smetana's "Bartered Bride" were accompanied by a harmonium. And Bernard Kaff told me then, look, it was far from perfect. But it was a true triumph of mind over matter. And this is something that is true about the whole cultural life in Theresienstadt, which, of course, didn't consist of music only.

Sure.

There were very, very interesting lectures, from simple descriptions of the landscapes of the USA to the highly involved theory of currencies and things like that. For instance, my father, who was an excellent mathematician, attended a course of higher mathematics. So yeah, then there were-- lectures were-- Greek classics were quoted in the original language. So it was an incredibly wide prism of cultural possibilities. And I guess that the little place, Theresienstadt, would easily beat in quantity and quality of a big city like Düsseldorf.

Did you attend any music lectures? Ullmann lectured. And James Simon from Berlin lectured.

Yeah, James Simon once accompanied me in the coffeehouse.

He did?

I was playing Beethoven, a romance in F major. And I knew him from some books on musical history. And again, I was very impressed by seeing in the flesh a person mentioned by a textbook on musical history.

How was he to play with? How was he as a musician and a composer?

He was a very competent and understanding musician.

Were you aware of any of his own music?

No.

No.

No. Then the physician, Kurt Singer, was lecturing on symbolism in music. And he used-- again, it was a very wide, wide scope, a very wide perspective. He talked about symbolism in music. For instance, the bars of quavers in Bach's music, whenever the word cross appeared, formed a cross, which you couldn't hear, but you could see it in a score.

And the phenomenon of symbolism in music even embraces, in his lectures, the phenomenon that the text of the libretto in an opera says, [GERMAN]-- now calms come into my heart. But the orchestra is playing a tremolo. So the words are a deception. And the orchestra reveals the true nature of what's going on in the protagonists or so.

Right. Even disturbance underneath.

Yeah.

Did you hear Ullmann lecture?

No, I don't think so.

It's documented that he gave a lecture on anthroposophy in music. He gave a lecture on Mahler's first symphony.

No, I didn't hear that. What I did hear was Dr. Karel Reiner's lecture on "Ma Vlast," "My Fatherland," by Smetana. And he explained to us why in the first piece, "Vysehrad," he was using the interval of a fourth instead of a third, which would have sounded much more intimate. And you could alter it chromatically. And it would, quote, "be much more interesting," unquote. But that Smetana knew perfectly well why he chose the fourth. I was very impressed.

And yeah, I had lessons in theory of music with a blind musician from either Dachau-- not the concentration camp. He was born at the place known as Dachau. And he was, until 1933, teaching in music acoustics for musicians. And he was a genius as a theoretician. I have never heard any of his music.

What was his name?

Hans Neumeyer.

Neumeyer.

And the theory lessons went like this-- he would give you some homework to do. He would dictate to you a melody. And you were supposed to do the chords. Or he would give you a baseline. And you were supposed to fill in the harmonic structure. And again, I took lessons with him in counterpoint.

And the homework, I wasn't able-- we had access to a harmonium later. But I was too clumsy to play my homework. So I read it to him. And it didn't matter to him whether I read it vertically, giving him the components of each chord, or whether I read the melodic lines, the soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. So he was a very, very brilliant person with a musical intelligence that went far beyond my imagination.

Was the payment for these lessons also a piece of bread?

Either a slice of bread or a bowl of soup.

Now, where did you get this bread? Where did you get a bowl of soup to take? Did you go without your portion in order to pay for the lessons?

Sometimes, I did. But in most cases, I didn't. And my father, somehow, got hold of bread.

What was some organizing.

Yeah, but I still don't know how he did it. Later, the already mentioned opera singer, Herbert Lowenberg, and my father became friends. And Lowenberg would contribute some food.

And I remember, one time, my father had forgotten to report with the ghetto polizei to show his pass for leaving the building. And in the Tagesbefehl, order of the day, my father was mentioned that as a punishment, a bread ration would be confiscated. And at that time, we had plenty of bread because all the friends contributed, which was-- the sum total of the bread was bigger than the confiscated ration.

During this period, how long did your lessons, and with what frequency-- once a week or whenever?

Once a week.

Not only with him, but with Karl Frohlich how long did your violin lessons go?

Once a week for a great number of months.

Did you hear him perform--

Yes, quite.

--as a soloist?

Yeah, quite frequently. He played the Bach E major concerto, being accompanied by the symphonic string orchestra conducted by Karel Ancerl. And I was playing in the orchestra as well.

That would have been in '43, I think.

Yeah.

Yes.

That was in '43.

In '42, there is a program that he gave a recital accompanied on accordion by Wolfi Lederer.

No, I didn't hear that.

You didn't hear that?

No.

He played the Kreutzer sonata accompanied by accordion.

Yeah, I did hear the Kreutzer sonata, but already accompanied by piano. Ferenc Weisz was accompanying. And he was a Hungarian Jew who had been caught by the Nazis in Holland in the Netherlands.

Yes. Yes. Did you know of a man who must have been in his 60s by then from Prague named Hugo Lowenthal?

No. No.

In 1942, he wrote a kind of potpourri of Jewish holiday songs for violin and accordion. And I assume that still in June '42, pianos were very scarce, except perhaps for the piano up in the attic?

Yeah, this is the truth.

And this is the reason that the accordion was used so much. But you weren't aware of that?

No, no.

Did you hear Frohlich and his quartet, this quartet?

Yes, I did. Yeah. It was an admirable quartet. And their intonation was so incredibly precise. I was very fond of listening to their rehearsals. And one day, I remember, they couldn't agree which of them was deviating in his intonation. And then they found out that in the voices, one of them had a C sharp and the other a D flat. So they really made a difference between the two things. And being faithful interpreters, they found out they were not in accord. And they started arguing until they found out what was the reason of this deviation.

Now, by when did it become, so to speak, legal for the instruments there?

That was a very vague and gliding process. I remember, one day, in-- I guess it was in '43, Ancerl appeared at the Magdeburg kaserne, at the Magdeburg barracks, asking whether I would be interested in playing in the symphonic string orchestra. I already was in possession of a violin, which belonged to the coffeehouse orchestra. And of course, I said, yes. And legalizing music was something that didn't have a precise date, to my knowledge.

Because it-- was it-- did it become officially condoned by the Freizeitgestaltung?

Yes. Yes. It suddenly appeared on the programs of the Freizeitgestaltung.

Now, did you hear a-- we spoke of hearing them rehearse, or the intonation problems, and so on. Were you present at any actual concert?

Yes, I was. Yeah.

Did you, by chance, hear a concert-- there is a program printed, but without a date. They played a Beethoven quartet, a Brahms quartet, and what would have been the world premiere of Gideon Klein's fantasy and fugue written for them. I wonder if that program you heard.

No, I didn't.

Or did you hear, for example-- this was already in '44. Were you still there in '44?

Yes.

There, in the week between the 14th to the 20th of February '44, Gideon and three members of the quartet did piano quartets of Brahms and Dvorak.

Yeah, I did hear that.

You did hear that?

Yeah. Again, I was struck by how brilliantly they played.

Yes. There was also a performance of, I think, the Brahms B major trio and the Archduke trio with Pavel Kling playing the violin and Gideon on the piano.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, I did hear that.

And Freddie Mark, The cellist from Brno.

Yeah, yeah.

This must have been wonderful chamber music.

It was absolutely perfect chamber music. And all three musicians are-- were brilliant. I especially admired Freddie Mark, who was a gigantic cellist.

Had you known Pablo in Brno? Because he must have been the same age, more or less.

Yeah. Yeah, he is, I guess, two years younger than I. I met him privately at his father's place. His father was a medical doctor and had studied musical composition with Dvorak. And he-- I remember still that he told us that Dvorak was a teacher with terrible nerves. And when he, Dr. Kling, failed to fulfill some of his expectations, Dvorak would throw a plate of soup at his student and then regret it and beg for forgiveness. And I didn't mean it, my dear friend.

And he, of course, was very proud of Pavel playing his son. And he accompanied him on the piano, which his accompaniment wasn't very good. But he did his best to support his son.

And I remember, it must have been 1940 or '41 that we came to Dr. Kling's house. And then we, my father and I, met Pavel Kling. And he played. I don't remember what it was, but I was very, very impressed. He was younger than me, but he was by far the superior violinist. And I immediately made up my mind that the next thing I would study would be the Beethoven B major concerto, which I never finished because we were sent to Terezín, to Theresienstadt.

Let me ask another kind of program, as you heard in Terezín. Viktor Ullmann organized the Studio fur neue Musik. And one program was devoted to works of interest [INAUDIBLE]. Another program was Mahler, and Schoenberg, and Bruno Walter, even, a composition.

But there was one program, number two in the series, which was called Jungen Autoren in Theresienstadt. And it had works by Gideon Klein, songs and texts of [? Tikin, ?] piano pieces by Heinz Alt, Karel Berman's Poupata song cycle, and two works by Zikmund Schul, two Hasidic dances for two strings.

Yeah, I vaguely remember the Hasidic dances.



You heard that program, perhaps?

I guess I did. And I once met Schul. And I think the person who introduced us was Dr. Hans Gunther Adler, the man who wrote the very, very profound book *Theresienstadt-- Antlitz einer Zwangsgemeinschaft, Theresienstadt-- The Face of an Involuntary or Forced Community*.

And the way Adler and I met was quite romantic. I was practicing clandestinely at the Sudeten Kaserne, at a place which usually served for peeling potatoes. But there-- at that time, nobody was there. So I went in with my violin. And I was quite thrilled because I was used to my mute violin. And suddenly, I had a beautiful violin. And I was playing in a home, which consisted of stone and wood, with a huge resonance.

So as I was quite drunk, intoxicated by the sound, and suddenly, someone knocked at the door. And Adler came in. And I was practicing the Beethoven concerto. And without introducing himself, he simply told me, no, there should be an accent on the G. With Beethoven, you shouldn't be afraid of accents, of sudden accents.

And I grasped, this must be a man who knows a lot about music. And much later, he introduced himself. And he had studied, which is a comparatively little-known fact, musicology at the University of Prague. And he knew a lot about music. Of course, later, in other fields, more--

Sure, right.

--prevalent. But he still had a great understanding of music. And a friendship developed, which started as, again, a course. He taught me history of music. But history of music was only one of the many subjects we talked about, about German poetry, and classical, or the spirit of classical art, and romantic art, and romanticism in music, and things-- and philosophy. So it was a gigantic horizon he opened up for me.

Yes, of course.

And I was a very grateful student. And the friendship practically lasted until his death.

Could you elaborate a little more on your meeting with Zikmund Schul? Did you have conversations with him?

Yeah. I'm sorry, I don't remember much. I was optically impressed by a person that, to me, at that time, looked like the typical ascetic artist, the person who-- this is a typically romantic concept, the suffering artist, who produces something really sublime.

He was 10 years older than you?

Yeah, which at that age, is a gigantic difference.

Of course, that was.

16 or 26 is the difference between a child and a grown-up.

Pavel Kling, of course, played in that concert in which Zikmund's two Hasidic dances were performed. And the work, which, of course, you heard as well was called "Divertimento Ebraico." But unfortunately, that score was lost. I neglected to ask you about the quartet of [? Abram ?] [? Levitch. ?]

Yeah, I did. [? Abram ?] [? Levitch ?] Quartet was one of the first musical events I remember. It was still an illegal performance. And they played-- they must have played more things. But the thing I remember was Dvorak's American quartet in F major. And I was deeply impressed. I heard them much later. And my dear friend, Hans [PERSONAL NAME] who was originally a violinist, and again, became unfaithful to the violin and started composing, told me that the [? Levitch ?] Quartet has totally succumbed to the spirit of Antonin Dvorak, which was praise and scorn in one sentence, so to say.

Did you hear? He composed one known piece in Terezin, a gavotte.

Yeah, I did hear it.

You heard it?

Yeah.

And did you hear the piece, which was written for him, also in 1942, by [INAUDIBLE], "The Need on the Volta," and they did the premiere in the attic?

Well, this I cannot truthfully answer. I know [? Tomas ?] [? Lipsky ?] well because he was playing at the Coffeehouse Orchestra on the violin. He was my colleague at the Coffeehouse Orchestra. And we played some of his music. And I realized he was a person who was very, very talented to invent convincing melodies. Melodic logic was his forte.

Yes. Did you hear any of the choral concerts, the Subak Choir, the Durra, Choir, the Fischer Choir?

Yeah. The Fischer Choir I have in very bad memory because I was practicing at the Magdeburg barracks. And they were having a rehearsal there. And they antagonized my violin. So I was very mad. They were practicing something out of Mascagni.

Cavalleria,

Cavalleria, that's right.

That's his poster. Yeah.

And were you present at any concerts or rehearsals of choirs which were conducted by Rafi Schachter?

No, except "The Bartered Bride" by-- I wouldn't know. And he conducted "La Serva Padrona" by this Italian composer.

Oh, "La Serva Padrona."

Italy.

I know it as well. It suddenly-- it escapes me. What about vocal concerts, recitals by singers? Had [BOTH TALKING]

Yeah, I knew them. But yeah, I wasn't much interested in vocal music, played vocal music. I was a fan of instrumental music. Later, I lost my prejudices about the violin being the only valuable instrument. And I recognized that I'd been a fool. But still, I was a fanatic for instrumental music.

Did you hear the performance at which Karel Ancerl played, apparently, second viola of the Schubert quintet? And the Brahms sextet?

Yeah, yeah. I remember. And I admired Ancerl that he was able to play an instrument and conduct brilliantly. And it's a little-known fact that Gideon Klein was a really accomplished conductor. He once conducted the symphonic string orchestra. He conducted the study for strings by Pavel Haas.

Gideon conducted it?

Yeah.

Really?

In one of the rehearsals just for fun. And he did it brilliantly. Parts of it are polyrhythmic.

Yes.

And he did it smoothly, elegantly.

Haas must have been present at the rehearsals of that piece.

Not at all the rehearsals, some.

Did he have any comments to make other than obviously [BOTH TALKING}

No. No, no, he was just sitting there and listening. And you could see the concentration on his face.

What was the experience of sitting in this extraordinary, surrealistic environment and having absolutely, in many cases, professional rehearsals of chamber music and orchestral music going on? How did these things combine in your consciousness as your own person?

Look, I was a very defiant prisoner. And I had the idea that I would do a maximum of practicing and, on the very first day of our liberation, give a recital. That was my idea of a trial. So I was fully aware of the absurdity of the situation, living under conditions which an animal wouldn't have endured, and playing music to-- and not only music, theater and opera as well-- to the point of absolute perfection.

And combinations between reality, our reality, the Theresienstadt reality. And the text, for instance, of the Fledermaus by Johann Strauss was very obvious to me, for instance, where the prison warden, Frosch, addresses his prisoner by saying, Mr. Prisoner. And the SS address him as [NON-ENGLISH]. Sorry, I heard the-- or I remember the performance of Fledermaus with Wolfi Lederer conducting from the harmonium the whole thing by heart. I really admired him.

Tell me a bit about Wolfi Lederer.

Wolfi Lederer was the product of what you may call light music. He was, I guess, a piano player at a nightclub with a genuine love of classical music. And that's one of the reasons, for instance, when he was playing chamber music that he was more classical than all the people who were classical, so to say, by origin. He was very strict, very formal, but very, very, very musical.

He's the one who, I think I mentioned earlier, of course, did the Kreutzer sonata on the accordion before there was a piano.

Yeah, yeah. He was a person of great talent. And I understand he survived. And he worked in Turkey after the war.

Yes. He lives in Seattle, Washington.

He lives in Seattle?

I spoke to him recently. It's only recently that I found out. And I received a cassette of a jazz evening that he did.

In Seattle?

Well, no, I think it was in the East Coast. But it's very, very good.

But in the United States?

Yes. He's called, I guess, for years now Peter, Peter Lederer. But it's him.

It's not Wolfi anymore?

No, but it's the same person.

It's the same person?

Yeah. I'm hoping to hear from him. Speaking of this direction of this lighter music, I have met, of course, Martin Roman, who we spoke of a bit earlier.

Yeah.

And also--

The last time I heard or saw Martin Roman was in Auschwitz, where amid-- you said something about a surrealistic situation.