



Bernadette Mayrhofer

Max Starkmann (Violin I, Viola)

Born on October 2, 1880 in Vienna, murdered on October 9, 1942 in Minsk/Maly Trostinec

Joined the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Philharmonic on December 1, 1911, compulsory suspension shortly after the annexation of Austria on March 23, 1938;

Member of the Jewish Community (Israelitische Kultusgemeinde); married in 1911 to Elsa Schimmerling (born on August 25, 1887); Officer of the French Academy;

1895/96 – 1898/99 studied at the Conservatory of the Society of Friends of Music in Vienna, his teacher was Jakob Moritz Grün (renowned soloist, teacher of Carl Flesch and concertmaster of the Vienna Court Opera until 1909); preparatory instruction on the violin from Sigmund Bachrich (conductor at the Théâtre-Lyrique in Paris, member of the Vienna Philharmonic, violist in the Hellmesberger and Rosé Quartet); completion of studies in 1899, received his diploma with distinction;



*Max Starkmann
(on right - Josef Geringer)*

Deportation on October 5, 1942 (along with his wife, Elsa Starkmann) from Vienna to the extermination center at Maly Trostinec near Minsk;

For sources see footnote¹

¹ Information on Max Starkmann, compiled by Dr. Silvia Kargl, HAdWPh; IKG Matriken/Database Office of Restitution, provided by Mag.a Sabine Loitfellner, Office of Restitution, Jewish community of Vienna; Historical Housing Records on Max Starkmann, Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv; information from the Österreichischen Musiklexikon online on „Jakob Moritz Grün“, „Sigmund Bachrich“ and from the annual reports of the Vienna Conservatory of the Society of Friends of Music, collected by Dr. Lynne Heller, Archives of the Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst in Wien; Dokumentary Archives of the Austrian Resistance, online database, <http://www.doew.at>.



Expulsion from the Orchestra

„(...) effective the 24th of the month, the following members of the State Opera, who are of Jewish descent, are removed from their positions until further notice (...): Max Starkmann (...).”²

Immediately following the "Anschluss" of March 12, 1938, while Vienna was gripped by various violent acts against Jews, including waves of large scale incarceration, brutal confiscation and plundering of personal property and intimidation of all kinds, the Philharmonic musician Max Starkmann, after over 27 years of service with the Vienna State Opera and Vienna Philharmonic, was informed in writing on March 23, 1938, of his compulsory suspension. *"The administration of the Vienna State Opera informs you herewith of your immediate suspension until further notice. With German Greeting, Administration of the Vienna State Opera."*³ Starkmann was forced into retirement effective September 1, 1938, and fired retroactively at the end of December 1938.⁴ For only a few months he received a pension of about RM 300 from the State Theatre Administration as well as a small supplementary pension of RM 20 from the Vienna Philharmonic.⁵ On December 12, 1938, Starkmann declined the pension payment made earlier by the Nazi Property Transaction Office (Vermögensverkehrsstelle) in August 1938.⁶ Presumably this was because Starkmann had received a severance payment of three times or twelve times his last month's salary from the State Theatre Administration, which was also the case with others of his displaced Jewish colleagues. From the Vienna Philharmonic he was given a severance payment in the amount of RM 480.⁷

Max Starkmann was 58 years old when he was forced to relinquish his lengthy and successful career as an orchestral musician. Starkmann received his musical education at the Conservatory of the Society of Friends of Music in Vienna and joined the Vienna State Opera Orchestra and the Vienna Philharmonic on December 1, 1911. In the same year he married Elsa Schimmerling (born on August 25, 1887) both of them were members of the Jewish Community in Vienna.⁸ It is unknown if the Starkmanns had any children.

Eviction, Deportation und Murder

Shortly following the 'Anschluss' on March 12, 1938, numerous anti-Jewish laws became effective. By the end of the war, around 250 anti-Semitic laws had been enacted on what had

² Bericht der Staatsoperndirektion an die SThV, 24.3.1938, AdR, Direktion der Staatsoper, 367/38.

³ 23.3.1938, AdR, Direktion der Staatsoper 367/38.

⁴ „Urlaubskorrespondenz“, Wien, 19.8.1938, SThV, 2980/38; Kündigungsdekrete des Reichsstatthalters, 29.11.1938, AdR, SThV, 4219/38.

⁵ Vermögensverzeichnis, Max Starkmann, Wien, 22.8.1938, AdR, VA 5252.

⁶ Letter von Starkmann to the Vermögensverkehrsstelle, Wien, 12.12.1938, AdR, VA 5352.

⁷ Information on Starkmann, Dr. Silvia Kargl, HAdWPh (wie Anm. 1).

⁸ Information on Starkmann, Mag.a Sabine Loitfellner, IKG Wien (wie Anm. 1).



formerly been Austrian territory.⁹ These laws disenfranchised, isolated and discriminated against the Jewish population. Whether the Starkmanns – as was the case with many of their Philharmonic colleagues - contemplated immigration is not known by the author. In any event, Max und Elsa Starkmann remained in Vienna and it can be assumed that the couple's remaining years were characterized by demeaning experiences and occurrences. From 1938 on, they changed their place of residence at least three times. Originally Starkmann and his wife lived at Linke Wienzeile 14 in Vienna's 6th district. On July 14 and August 22, 1938, on the forms on which Max Starkmann was required to declare his property for the Nazi Property Transaction Office (Vermögensverkehrsstelle), he listed Königsklostergasse 3 in the 6th district as being his current address.¹⁰ According to Viennese historical housing records, the couple resided from May 30, 1940 until July 1, 1941, at Skodagasse 14-16 in the 8th district of Vienna. The last residence of the Starkmanns in Vienna is documented as an apartment at Rembrandtstrasse 6 in the 2nd district, where they lived from July 1, 1941, until their deportation to the extermination center Maly Trostinec near Minsk, on October 5, 1942.¹¹

In Vienna on October 5, 1942, Max und Elsa Starkmann were forced under the most demeaning of conditions to board a train as part of a mass transport to Maly Trostinec (about 18 km from Minsk). On the day of their removal they were one last time again required to make and sign a "declaration of assets" for "Jews evacuated to the eastern territories". On this form the Starkmanns stated that they had RM 120 in their possession.¹² Following this deportation and confiscation of their goods immediately upon their arrival in the extermination camp, they were murdered, as was the case for all others being deported. *The selected place of execution was in a pine woods a few kilometers from the former kolkhoz Maly Trostinec. (...) where it was customary to employ 80 to 100 men including uniformed police and members of the S.S.*¹³ The trains usually arrived between 4:00 and 7:00 AM in Minsk. As of August 1942, there was an additional set of tracks that went directly from Minsk to the extermination camp of Maly Trostinec, where the victims were unloaded, their money and valuables confiscated and immediately afterwards taken to mass graves which had been dug specifically for this purpose where they were shot. From June 1942 there were three additional mobile gas vans employed for the extermination of the victims. On October 9,

⁹ Erika Weinzierl, *Zu wenig Gerechte. Österreicher und die Judenverfolgung 1938 – 1945*, Graz-Wien-Köln 1986, 36.

¹⁰ Vermögensverzeichnis, Max Starkmann, AdR, VA 5252.

¹¹ Historische Meldeunterlagen zu Max Starkmann (wie Anm. 1); Information on Starkmann, Dr. Silvia Kargl, HAdWPh (wie Anm. 1).

¹² „Vermögensverzeichnis“, 5.10.1942, AdR, VA 5352.

¹³ Between May and October 1942 there were 16 trains with over 15.000 verfolgten Jewish men and women from Vienna, Königsberg, Theresienstadt and Cologne arrived in Minsk and at the command of Reinhard Heydrich, Head of the Security Police and the Security Service, immediately upon their arrival were murdered near Gutes Maly Trostinec. For more information: Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes, Online-Datenbank, www.doew.at.



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1942, only four days after their departure from Vienna, Mr. and Mrs. Starkmann thus suffered a violent death near Maly Trostinec.¹⁴

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Translation: Gloria McElheney

¹⁴ Ebd.