

Alfred Holy “Memoirs”
herausgegeben von Artis de Volt

(p. 27) Relations were especially cordial in the harp section. My two colleagues were among the most famous harpists of their time. They had been brought into the Royal Orchestra (Poenitz at 14, Posse at 18) by their teacher Grimm, who had been a pupil of Parish-Alvars. Since then the two had been united in a close friendship and I was proud to have become the third in their league. “Three such excellent harpists in one orchestra aren’t to be found anywhere else in the world,” said the old retired conductor Sucher.

Poenitz was a mortal kissed by all possible muses: harp artist, harmonium virtuoso, composer, very talented pastel painter, and skilled in many sports – hunting, fishing, bicycling, skiing, and skating. He lived a good life, pampered by his family in a cozy home in the west end of Berlin, he loved his tobacco and his beer (he called it his “cool blond” or, colored with raspberry, his “painted Laura”), but passed away when he was only 61. Lilli Lehmann, the famous soprano and daughter of a harpist from Prague, wrote for her former Bayreuth colleague a kind and heartfelt eulogy in the Lokalanzeiger. My “Elegy for Harp and Organ” is dedicated to him. Posse survived his friend by many years and reached the age of 75. Since Parish-Alvars, undoubtedly the greatest harpist that ever lived, nobody has even approached his virtuosity, except Posse. His pianissimo was enchanting, his ease with triads, octaves, and trills astonishing. These were results of his unceasing efforts to embark on a concert career, but his very early engagement in the Royal Orchestra, enthusiastically welcomed by his father, a military musician from Bromberg, destroyed his dreams of great concert tours. (Franz Poenitz was luckier in this regard; a small picture shows him as a child prodigy in a little suit with a white ruffled collar.) ...

Artis de Volt, eine amerikanische Harfenistin, die bei Alfred Holy studiert hat, gab 1985 dessen Memoiren, vervollständigt durch Briefe, eigene Erinnerungen und eine Liste seiner Kompositionen als Buch heraus.

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