

# Wallersteiner, Rosa

## Music teacher, 2 Ulmer-Strasse

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**Rosa Wallersteiner**, born March 11, 1873 in Ravensburg, single, since 1925 in Laupheim, 1938/39 emigration to the USA.



***"The enjoyment finally reached its climax with the Fantasia in c-minor. The piano playing of Miss R. Wallerstein rippled with delicacy".***

That was the description of the climax of the Concordia choir's Beethoven celebration in the "Rabensaal" ballroom, which appeared in the local paper "Laupheimer Verkündiger" on November 11, 1927. The paper went on to praise this celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the composer's death as "a first-rate performance in Laupheim", with more than 150 participants: a men's choir and a women's choir, the amateurs' orchestra, and the above-mentioned Miss Wallersteiner. This musical occasion was also the first event in the newly-enlarged ballroom of the hotel "Raben" which – in the opinion of the paper – "will now be worthy of hosting any celebration".

*Rosa Wallersteiner in about 1925.*

(Photo: StA Sigmaringen, Wü 65/18, T5)

Rosa Wallersteiner arrived in Laupheim in November 1925 and lived there until 1930, and then again from 1933. She seems to have moved around considerably: in August 1930 she moved to Switzerland, and in September 1931 she sent her old passport (from which this photo was taken) from Vienna back to Laupheim as she needed a new one. Probably her high mobility was due to her profession: she earned her income with music, as a teacher and as a pianist. Her address "Ulmer Str.2" proves that in Laupheim she did not dispose of a flat of her own but lived at the hotel "Post", at least at the beginning.

The "non-professional" orchestra, which at the Beethoven celebration had played his Symphony No.1, became shortly afterwards a registered society and called itself the "Orchestral Society". The driving force behind this association was the entrepreneur Marco Bergmann, who served from its foundation on Jan. 30, 1928, as vice chairman and treasurer. The chairman was the Stadtschultheiss (mayor) Franz Konrad, and, as one of four active members, Rosa Wallersteiner was elected onto the board. The enthusiastic amateur musicians decided, for the future, to give three to four concerts per year, under the direction of Otto Lex from Ulm. They met weekly on Thursday evenings for rehearsals.



*Wedding of Leopold Wallersteiner and Elsa Bergmann on Nov.19, 1905, at the Hotel "Zum Kronprinz" .*

*First row, from the left: Dr.Eugenie Wallersteiner (Ravensburg), Dr.Gustav Oppenheim (Frankfurt/M.), the bridal couple Elsa and Leopold Wallersteiner, ?? , Henny Stern, Max Bergmann. Behind Eugenie, at the extreme left, stands Dr. Hugo Wallersteiner. The names of the other persons are unknown. Rosa Wallersteiner might be the lady at the left doorpost.*

The cultural heyday of the "golden twenties" in the Weimar Republic could now be seen in Laupheim on a smaller scale: an amateur orchestra with challenging aims – a courageous step for a small town of this size. Not much is known about the development of the association, but this tender plant certainly did not survive the year 1933, the beginning of the barbarous era in Germany. As mentioned, Rosa Wallersteiner lived a few years abroad and returned on March 30, 1933 again to Laupheim. Three days later, on April 2, she was arrested, without any known details about the reasons or the period of the arrest. And on account of the lack of information about Jews in the papers – at least nothing positive - there is no more news about her. In 1938/39 she succeeded in emigrating to the USA.

The founder of the orchestra, Marco Bergmann, and the pianist Rosa Wallersteiner must already have known each other earlier, at the latest, since 1905: in that year the merchant Leopold Wallersteiner from Biberach married Marco's cousin Elsa Bergmann from Laupheim. Later on, the family had a clothing shop in Ulm. Rosa was probably not a sister but a cousin of the bridegroom's. At the wedding party, which took place at the Hotel "Kronprinz", she is very likely to have participated as a guest: in the group picture the lady standing at the left doorpost of the "Kronprinz" might be Rosa. Her sister Dr. Eugenie Wallersteiner, on the extreme left of the front row, served as a wedding witness. So it can be presumed that from the time of this wedding she was renowned as a perfect pianist, and that the family connection to the Bergmann family caused Rosa Wallersteiner later to come to Laupheim.

Sources:

1. Staatsarchiv Sigmaringen, Wü 65/18, T5.
2. Stadtarchiv Laupheim F 9811 - Ia: Verzeichnis über Bevölkerungsbewegung in der jüdischen Gemeinde Laupheim ab 16. 6. 1933.
3. Laupheimer Verkündiger.