MONDAY EVENING CONCERTS

Lawrence Morton

Interviewed by Adelaide Tusler

Completed under the auspices
of the
Oral History Program
University of California
Los Angeles

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INTRODUCTION

Lawrence Morton was born to Saul and Anna (Rosenfeld) Morton on July 13, 1904, in Duluth, Minnesota. His childhood was filled with music, as his mother was a talented pianist, and he began piano lessons by the time he was nine years old.

His training stood him in good stead when, after attending the University of Minnesota, he was forced by family finances to abandon a medical education, and he became an organist accompanying silent movies.

In the late twenties, Mr. Morton moved to New York to study organ under Pietro Yon. This background led to a brief career as a church organist. He moved to California in 1939.

Arrival in Los Angeles meant the beginning of several new careers for Mr. Morton. First, he became involved in the film industry as an orchestrator. In addition, he became a music critic, closely involved with the inner circle of local musicians. First writing for Script, then for a variety of local and national publications, including Modern Music, Counterpoint, and Frontier, Mr. Morton's "beat" included the rooftop concerts at the home of the Peter Yateses on Micheltorena Street in Silver Lake. As

critic--often a harsh one--and then as director, his involvement with Evenings on the Roof continued to grow. In 1952, when Peter Yates resigned the directorship of the concert series, Mr. Morton became executive director.

Under his directorship, the series, newly named the Monday Evening Concerts, grew in renown for astute programming of old and new music, as well as the high quality of performance. The works of Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, and especially Igor Stravinsky, often interpreted by his close friend Robert Craft, were featured along with American premieres of works by such composers as Pierre Boulez, Luigi Nono, and Karlheinz Stockhausen. American composers, especially residents of Southern California, have consistently found the concerts hospitable to their works. After years of moving from auditorium to auditorium, Monday Evening Concerts finally arrived in 1965 at its present home, the Leo S. Bing Theater of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

In the meantime, Mr. Morton added to his duties the artistic directorship of the Ojai Festivals, from 1954 to 1959 and 1967 to 1970, and the position of curator of music at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, which he has held since 1965.

Mr. Morton has been honored for his involvement with

music by Guggenheim Fellowships for the years 1959-60 and 1960-61; the Laurel Leaf Award of the American Composers Alliance, 1966; and, most recently, a citation from the city of Los Angeles, presented in 1971.

Criticism by Mr. Morton has appeared in Musical Quarterly, Film Music Notes, and Music Library Association Notes. In addition, he has written numerous liner notes for Capitol and Columbia record albums, as well as program notes for the Ojai Festivals, Los Angeles Philharmonic concerts, and Coleman concerts. He is the author of the article "Strawinsky" for the Fasquelle Encyclopédie de la Musique, published in Paris in 1961.

Mr. Morton retired from the directorship of the Monday Evening Concerts in 1971, but has not abandoned his close ties with the music community of Southern California.

In the following pages, which consist of a transciption of tape-recorded interviews made with the UCLA Oral History Program, Lawrence Morton describes in his own words the evolution of the Monday Evening Concerts during his twenty years as director, as well as reflecting on the music and musicians that have helped to shape the music scene in Southern California, and modern music everywhere. These recollections are part of the Oral History Program's Fine Arts Series. Records relating to

this interview are located in the office of the UCLA

Oral History Program.

Los Angeles
April 1973

Joel Gardner

INTERVIEW HISTORY

INTERVIEWER: Adelaide Tusler, Interviewer-Editor, UCLA Oral History Program. B.A., Music, UCLA; M.L.S., UCLA.

TIME AND SETTING OF INTERVIEW:

Place: Morton's apartment, 1113 N. Sweetzer Avenue, Los Angeles, California.

Dates: February 24-August 10, 1966. [February 24; March 10, 17, 23, 31; April 14, 21, 28; May 5, 26; June 2, 24; July 1, 13, 20, 27; August 3, 10.]

Time of day, length of sessions, and total number of recording hours: The interviews were conducted in the afternoon, and each session lasted approximately two and one-half hours, with one hour of taping. Total recording time: seventeen hours.

Persons present during interview: Morton and Tusler.

CONDUCT OF THE INTERVIEW:

The interviewer began by asking Mr. Morton to trace his musical activities before becoming associated with the Evenings on the Roof concerts. In speaking of specific performances and performers, the respondent often referred to reviews he had written for Script magazine. The narrative proceeded chronologically with a discussion of the seasons after he became executive director of the newly named Monday Evening Concerts. Mr. Morton used his program file in recollecting each season's offerings. In preparing for the interview, Mrs. Tusler also examined the minutes and official papers of the Southern California Chamber Music Society and other pertinent records of the concert series.

EDITING:

Editing was done by the interviewer. The verbatim transcript was edited for punctuation, paragraphing, correct spelling, and verification of proper and place names. Except for a blending of taped material of sides one and two of Tape V, this manuscript remains in the same order as recorded. Words or phrases added by the editor have been bracketed.

The edited transcript was returned to Mr. Morton for his review and approval. He made some corrections and also supplied spellings of names not previously verified.

The index and introduction were prepared by Joel Gardner, Editor, UCLA Oral History Program. The remaining front matter was prepared by the Program staff. Bernard Galm, Senior Editor, reviewed the manuscript prior to final typing.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

The original tape recordings and edited transcript of the interview are in the University Archives and are available under the regulations governing the use of permanent noncurrent records of the University.

A limited number of programs of Monday Evening Concerts have been deposited as Collection 965 in the Department of Special Collections, UCLA Research Library. Mr. Morton has indicated that he will add materials to the collection at a future date.

TAPE NUMBER: I, SIDE ONE

FEBRUARY 24, 1966

TUSLER: Mr. Morton, shall we begin with your telling something about where you were born, and how you got into the musical business?

MORTON: I can't say I came from a musical family, but my mother was a pianist of considerable ability, and through all my childhood days I heard Chopin played endlessly on the piano. In the city where I was born, Duluth, Minnesota, I believe that my mother had the distinction of introducing to that community Rachmaninoff's C-sharp Minor Prelude at a meeting of the Ladies' Matinee Musicale. That was the kind of music that I heard through all my childhood.

I began taking piano lessons when I was eight or nine years old. It was never intended that I would be a professional musician. At some point during my childhood I probably said, "When I grow up I'm going to be a doctor." That stuck with me, and when I went to the University of Minnesota, I entered as a premedic and did the two years of premedic and one year of medical school. But around that time the family had some financial misfortunes and I began to look for ways of earning

a little bit of money with my music. I did some work in college jazz bands and things of that sort, the usual thing.

TUSLER: You were still in Duluth, or were you in Minneapolis?

MORTON: No, we moved into Minneapolis when I was in my second year of high school, so I would have been maybe fourteen or fifteen.

I did somehow or other gravitate toward playing organ in silent movies and I did that for a number of years, gradually improving my musical tastes so that eventually I found that I could not stay in that kind of work very long. I decided to leave "commercial" work, went off to New York, and studied organ.

TUSLER: Whom did you study with?

MORTON: I studied with Pietro Yon, who was a great technician but whose musical taste I couldn't agree with at all. But I took the attitude that I would take from the teacher what I could get and leave my criticisms private.

TUSLER: Did he have a church position there at that time?

MORTON: Yes, he was at St. Pat's in New York, and I

used to go there every Sunday to hear him play--a couple of times he let me play the postlude, which was great fun because that was, as I remember, a very good organ. I don't know what I'd think of it now; I haven't heard it in many years, but our taste in organs has been changing in the last quarter of a century or so, and if that organ doesn't sound something like a Baroque organ, I don't think I'd like it very much. I knew it was not, however, anything like the organs I had been playing on in the theaters.

TUSLER: What were they, by the way? Were they the big Wurlitzer sort of thing with seventy-five different stops?

MORTON: That's right; they had the usual contraptions, and I must say that they were fun working with, because the possibilities of a variety of tone colors were almost inexhaustible. None of them has any great musical significance in a serious sense, but they were great for movie work where one had to imitate things that were going on on the screen, and that sort of thing.

It was fun, and I don't regret any of those years at all because certain things that I learned there have been invaluable, such as sight-reading. I think that when

I was twenty I was an expert, I could sight-read almost anything. Another thing that was very useful was that I developed a great skill in transposing. Sometimes a singer would come in to sing a pop song between the two movies, or between the comedy and the feature picture, and on a Saturday there would be a morning rehearsal--the singer would appear and give me a piece of music and say, "Well, you've got to play this in A-flat instead of B-flat." I became really quite expert at transposing at sight. I did most of this through the old system of movable _do_, solfeggio using a movable _do_. I would read the music as it was printed and simply think it through in terms of _sol-fa_ syllables, and then my hands would do it, the same _sol-fa_ syllables with a movable _do_, in another key. This became one of my big assets in the business.

TUSLER: Where did you think you were heading at that point? Were you hoping to have a concert career or were you thinking in terms of being a church organist?

MORTON: Well, I did have some notions about going into church music, and actually I did work in churches doing choral work and playing the organ for some years in Chicago, where I came after I left New York. This was

very disillusioning, however. When I had been still living in Minneapolis, I had had some contact with the old gentleman [F. Melius] Christiansen, who directed the St. Olaf Choir. He was a very rigid and, I dare say, a rather Bach-like man; and he had great contempt for everything that was going on in church music. He frequently used the term "garbage music." The standards of musical taste as practiced in most churches--and I was also doing a synagog job--were at a pretty low level, and efforts to elevate it were not always successful. It was the usual struggle, because church congregations are not in church for musical reasons; they want to be consoled by music rather than stimulated, so any attempt to do anything new or exciting didn't work very well. I was also putting my hand to composition at that time.

When I had been relieved of all the family obligations which had descended upon me after my parents were gone (the rest of the family had become adult), I decided I would come out to California, thinking in terms of the movie business. I did know a good deal about films, just from looking at them. I didn't know anything about the techniques, but I thought I would

like to take a hand at that, and I came to California in 1940.

TUSLER: Were you thinking of composing for the films?

MORTON: I wasn't particular. I must say I was at loose ends at that point, not knowing exactly what I wanted to do. People were not playing organ in movies anymore--oh, there was some going on, but I was tired of that. I was completely disillusioned about the possibilities of doing anything decent in church music. And I don't blame this entirely on the churches; it might have been my own shortcomings. I already had some predilection for modern music, and modern music of a kind that perhaps doesn't even belong in a church, I don't know. And then I did get very tired of the general religious atmosphere, because I was an agnostic certainly by inclination.

So I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do out here in California, but I knew that I wanted to get away from everything I had been doing, and I wanted a change in climate. Among other things, I had heard from friends who had moved out here that there was no hay fever in California, and that was something that I had suffered with miserably since I was about ten years old; if there

was no giant ragweed in California I thought that was a place that I would like to come to. That was very important because from about the middle of August until way into October, I had a pretty miserable time.

Well, anyway, I did come to California. Union regulations being what they were, there was nothing that I could do professionally for a considerable time. As I remember now, [I think] it was a year of residence that was required before you could do anything in the film or radio industry. I'm not absolutely sure of those regulations now, but I know that for a considerable time I was unable to do anything professionally.

TUSLER: What year was that?

MORTON: I came to California in 1940. Of course, by this time the war in Europe had already started, and everyone's attitude was a little bit different [from what] it had been beforehand. I was much agitated of course by general political-diplomatic issues. But I had resolved that I was going to have some sort of musical career.

One thing that I did get into fairly quickly after that was writing criticism for a little magazine in Beverly Hills called Script. This was a job that didn't

pay any money, but it was something to do and something that kept me in contact with music, and of course it meant free tickets to all the concerts that I wanted to go to.

TUSLER: How did you happen to get involved with that? Did you know Rob Wagner, had you met him?

MORTON: No, I met a girl who was working at Script; she was a sort of secretary and she simply called me one day and said, "We'd like to have some music criticism. It doesn't pay anything." I knew she herself was getting very little money, and I said, "Sure, I'd like to try it," though I hadn't done anything of that sort before.

I have a file of practically everything that I ever wrote for Script magazine, and it's that file that I referred to now when I was trying to find my first connection with Monday Evening Concerts, then known as Evenings on the Roof. That organization had been giving concerts since the spring of 1939. By the time I became aware of them, they had already moved from the original Roof to the Assistance League Playhouse, so this must have been their second or third season. I don't remember exactly the first concert that I went to, but I find

here in my file that on January 17, 1942, I had written a short review of a concert, though I don't think that this was the first concert I had gone to. I have nothing except this file of my articles that remind me of my first contact with the organization.

In this particular review I speak of Evenings on the Roof as "a cooperative enterprise that has been responsible for making known innumerable compositions not elsewhere heard in this community." I mention that they had moved into Hollywood for a new series of concerts, but just where in Hollywood I don't remember now. Maybe they had already left the Assistance League Playhouse and moved over to the KFWB [studio]. In any case, the concert that I am referring to was the opening program of a series.

Let me read here some of these comments: "The opening program was better in prospect than in actuality and proved once again that composers as great as Haydn, Purcell and Brahms can occasionally write on a level somewhat below their best. The Haydn and Purcell sonatas are not the kind of music that has brought honor and fame to the composers of Dido [and Aeneas] and the London Symphony, but since there is more Purcell to come in

later concerts there will be an opportunity to view this piece in relation to others of the composer's works." I must say I'm a little bit ashamed now of finding fault with Purcell and Haydn, but in those years I think I was perhaps more assured in my ignorance than I am nowadays in my greater knowledge. [laughter]

What I did find to praise on that program was Kurt Reher's playing of the Kodály Sonata for solo Cello. Kurt Reher, as you know, is now first cellist in the Philharmonic--he was in the Philharmonic once, went out into the commercial world, and then came back to the Philharmonic. He is certainly a great artist.

TUSLER: Perhaps he was just starting his career?

MORTON: Well, there are several people who I know were beginning their careers at that time--for instance, David Frisina, the concertmaster, was playing at the Evenings on the Roof in those years, and subsequently moved into the orchestra.

I did say in this article that the glory of the performance was more the performer's than the composer's. "The sonata is an unwieldy and windy piece which indicates more than anything else that Kodály

had mastered the technique of writing for the instrument. Its demands upon the performer are for epic execution, but its rewards are only an extremely sonorous sound and fury, and these are slight rewards indeed in return for the energy expended. But it was a genuine pleasure to hear Mr. Reher render such a work as a soloist after having watched him for so long in the second chair of the Philharmonic."

I think that I would probably stand by that opinion of the Kodály sonata; but, as I say, I don't know what Haydn and Purcell I had been listening to. My own activities subsequent to that in digging up older works of Haydn make me believe that there's a great deal more solid stuff there, and if the work that I'm speaking of happened to be one of the trio sonatas, I have an idea I might have been very wrong, and probably wrong in respect to the Purcell, too. I would hesitate now, I think, to belittle Haydn or Purcell.

That, I suppose, as far as my memory goes, might have been my introduction to Evenings on the Roof. I find another reference to it here in the following month, in February 1942: "Evenings on the Roof continues to hold forth on alternate Mondays at the Assistance

League Playhouse. There has been nothing to equal the brilliant performance of the Beethoven Septet at an early concert, unless it was David Frisina's playing of the G-minor Violin Concerto of Prokofiev. The last program was a dreary wasteland of lesser Beethoven pieces, but the next program is to be devoted to American compositions and promises at least to be exciting and interesting." I remember very well Frisina's playing of the G-minor Prokofiev. I think it was the only time I've heard it with piano accompaniment instead of with orchestra, and of course the effect was something quite unusual. In my childhood I had gone through a great repertoire of violin music with my older brother, who was a very talented musician but a very lazy player. He never practiced. As a matter of fact, that was one of my faults, too. We had great times in our youth going through vast amounts of violin-and-piano repertoire, never practicing any of it in order to achieve decent performances; sometimes when the passage work became very difficult we both used to improvise, you know, just get through a certain number of bars playing arpeggios or scales or whatever, just sensing that after a certain period we'd better get back to the music when

it got a little bit easier. But we did go through a tremendous repertoire. The Prokofiev Violin Concerto was new to me, I think; but then in 1942 it would have been because the piece was written only in 1935, and that was beyond the time when my brother and I would have been going through things. I might have heard it somewhere in the East in concert, but I don't recall it.

TUSLER: The article did state that they were in the Assistance League Playhouse that year.

MORTON: Yes. That was in '42.

TUSLER: Is that the same building that is presently there?

MORTON: Yes, in Hollywood on a little street close to Western Avenue.

The history of that part of the Roof's activities really belongs to Peter Yates, and I'm sure that he will have much to say about it. I'm concerned with it here only as the background for my own coming into the organization several years later. When I was invited to participate in the activities of the Roof, [it was] simply because during the years that I was writing for Script, [the Roof] gradually became more and more the

subject of my columns as the concerts became more and more interesting to me. They were teaching me a great deal about repertoire that I didn't know, and I was growing in awareness, I think, of performance quality.

TUSLER: Was the Evenings on the Roof quite well known at that time in the Los Angeles area? Were they well attended, as you recall? Was there a large core of loyal people who were supporting it?

MORTON: Well, my impression is that in that respect it's about what it is now--that is, there is a hard core [of supporters] but a very small one. When they moved from the Assistance League into the old KFWB studios on Sunset Boulevard, I remember one concert had to be piped from the main studio into an adjacent one in order to accommodate a very large crowd. I can remember a concert years later when we moved into the Ebell (the little concert hall upstairs in the Ebell) that was overcrowded, and I remember some resentment on the part of subscribers who couldn't find seats. The same sort of thing happened just a few weeks ago--I think it was January 10--at our own concert where we oversold and had people standing up, and there was some resentment. But these things happen. After one such

concert you may find yourself reduced to an audience of two hundred people the next time. I think in this respect the situation hasn't changed.

One cannot know in advance what is going to bring in an audience, and when you've got the audience there you cannot be quite sure why they have come. You don't know if it's for a performer or for the repertoire, or if it just happens to be a night when they had nothing else to do. As long as I've been connected with these concerts, I've never been able to have any notion about what brings an audience. Of course, if I knew, I could become the world's greatest impresario and run Mr. Hurok out of business. [laughter] But I think these things just remain mysteries.

TUSLER: Perhaps a questionnaire is not too useful, but have you ever attempted questioning an audience, asking them to fill out something on "Why did you come tonight?"

MORTON: I don't like audience questionnaires for several reasons. One thing I'm sure--if you ask them questions like that, they'll write a little note at the end asking why don't you play more Beethoven or more Schubert or Stravinsky or Schoenberg? I don't think that concerts should be given on the basis of what audiences want to

hear. Our job is to inform an audience, and this is of course one of the things that carries on from the earliest days when it was Evenings on the Roof. I think this is a real continuation, that it is still our job to discover what is new, or what is old but has not been played, and bring it to the attention of audiences. We can't always tell in advance if it's going to be good, but I think without question it has been interesting. In this respect, Evenings on the Roof established a policy that keeps on going.

TUSLER: That was the original purpose, wasn't it?

MORTON: Well, its original purpose was to give performers a chance to play, because in those years there was so little other chamber music going on in town that the musicians wanted a place where they could play serious music. That situation doesn't pertain any more at all. Many of them find that they have so many more opportunities to play that they are no longer so eager to play at our concerts. The younger people are, of course; and I would say that, in general, the age level of the performers stays about at what it always was--that is, the older people are less eager to play. For one thing, I think they find it less easy

to keep up with the newer trends in music, and the young people are more sympathetic and they're more eager to learn.

TUSLER: Their reputations aren't as established and it's an opportunity to perform?

MORTON: That's right.

TUSLER: Could you sketch in a little bit of what you know about the circumstances under which the Roof was originally organized?

MORTON: Yes. (Of course, I know this only by hearsay because the concerts had been going on for a few years before I became interested in them.) The philosophy behind the organization was that the performers should play pieces that they wanted to play, and the phrase used was "regardless of box office." The performers wanted to play and if they had an audience, fine, and if they didn't have an audience, that was all right, too. But I've always questioned this (and I've questioned it to Peter Yates, so I'm not talking behind his back): the moment you start to make up a program that makes a good program, you have an audience in mind. If you don't want to give a whole evening of Purcell violin sonatas, it isn't because someone might not want to play

them, but because it doesn't make a good program; and the moment you talk about making a program in terms of variety, or whatever the criterion is for a particular program, the moment you start to think of it in terms of a program, you're thinking of its effect. It would be pretty hard to listen to the Well-Tempered Clavier for a whole evening, even though that's as great music as anybody ever composed for the keyboard. Still, to hear it for a whole evening is a little bit too much to ask.

I think it was probably true, although I don't remember any exact statements to this effect, that one of the program ideas was to mix the new and the old on most programs. Somehow or other, that had become, whether intentionally or not, a general rule, and certainly it has been consciously cultivated in all the years that I've been connected with the organization. We used to say "half old and half new," taking, when I was first interested in the concerts, the year 1900 as a sort of artificial dividing line between the old and the new. But we've had to move that up because nowadays one can hardly consider Debussy and Ravel, for example, as new music, although it's very curious that pieces

like Schoenberg's opus 11 piano pieces or Stravinsky's Pribautki (which are 1914) still belong, I think, in the category of the new; but of course they were comparatively young men then. After a while I began to take World War I as a dividing line between the old and the new, and now it seems to me that a reasonable line between old and new is about the end of World War II. Webern, who died at just that time, now is almost standard repertoire. Some Webern that we played just a few months ago was what I would call a huge success, where in a performance ten years previously, half a program of Webern had been a problematical program.

Of course, I'm referring now to a comparatively small audience. If we should have six hundred people at a concert now, it is a very large audience. We've had it when Boulez was here; we had it last January 10, and I don't know why. It was not a program that seemed to me to be anything astounding, unless all of our programs are astounding; this was not more astounding, let's say. This is still a tiny portion of the musical public of Los Angeles County, when you think that the Philharmonic is playing to six thousand people a week, just for its home programs, then the most that we can

command is perhaps ten percent of that. Chamber music will not, of course, draw as widely as a symphony program, and our kind of chamber music, where we do play very new things, necessarily has a much smaller audience.

But I'm comforted with the thought that elsewhere in the world, audiences are no larger. For instance, I remember reading in the New Yorker a year or so ago a Paris report from Genêt on a Domaine Musical concert, and she exclaimed with considerable glee how wonderful it is that they now have about two hundred and fifty subscribers. Well, they give only four concerts a year at the Domaine Musical, and of course their hall is larger. This particular concert I believe was given at the Salle Pleyel, which is a huge auditorium, and they must have taken that because they did a big Stockhausen piece for three orchestras. I attended Domaine Musical concerts in Paris in 1960, and I would judge that the seating capacity of the regular hall was maybe a thousand, and it was full. But I found out that one way of getting a full hall in Paris is to give away a lot of tickets. I got free tickets, and I didn't even ask for them; I was simply informed that since I was a visitor in town and a musician there would be tickets

for me at the box office. So I went to the box office and picked up my tickets, and the line waiting for those tickets was huge. The line waiting to buy tickets was very small.

TUSLER: It's not a direct comparison between that and what you have here, because the audience you have here is really paying its way.

MORTON: Yes. The only free tickets we give are to the press and to the performers of the evening. Ours is a paying audience. But I would say one would expect Paris to come up with a larger audience than Los Angeles for new music. In New York, it was reported to me that when Gunther Schuller began his series at Carnegie Hall two or three years ago, how wonderful it was [to have] a full house. Well, a full house in little Carnegie means two hundred and fifty people. I asked a young man--I can't remember his name now, Japanese, who'd come through from Tokyo (he knew about our concerts and I knew something about his)--what they got by way of audience, and he said, "We have a wonderful audience. We get two to three hundred people." So I feel that the audiences that our concerts have had through the years, while they have varied extremely, are as good

an audience as one would expect to get anywhere in the world. There just is not a huge audience for this kind of music.

TUSLER: We started talking about Mr. Yates. Was he himself a musician? Was that part of the reason he got started in this, because he wanted to perform himself?

MORTON: No, he's not a performer, but his wife, Frances Mullen, was a fine pianist. At the beginning she played a great deal of music herself. Peter was, I suppose, what you would call an extremely gifted amateur; he was completely devoted to music in a nonprofessional way, and he had the spirit and idea and everything else that was necessary to carry this out. I would say that the community is very deeply obligated to him. Although he eventually retired from it and moved on to other things, he's still a member of the Board of Directors of the Monday Evening Concerts, and when he's in town he comes to meetings. He's still active in the musical world, though in a very different way.

TUSLER: Was it actually in their house where it was held?

MORTON: Yes; it was called Evenings on the Roof because

it was a roof. It was a house on Micheltorena Street, and they built a big room on the roof, and they had two pianos up there and enough room to seat, I suppose, fifty or sixty people, and that's the way it began. After the first season or two they had more people than they could accommodate, and that's when they moved into the Assistance League. So there was that hard core of devoted people. There are people still subscribing to the concerts who had been going in those years. Of course, everything about the organization has changed since those early years, but certain ideas about repertoire have been consistent all the way through. The first concert, which of course I didn't hear, was an all-Bartók program--who played Bartók in 1939?--and a whole Bartók program was something quite unusual.

TUSLER: I suppose it was strictly on an unprofessional basis at that point, as far as charging for tickets in those early years.

MORTON: I think there was a ticket charge, but the performers didn't get any fee. It seems to me the idea of payment came in a little bit later. And, of course, the musicians are still inadequately paid. One would think that after twenty-eight years--we're in our twenty-eighth season--we would have a bank roll, but we don't.

We're still struggling with financial problems, but we're no different in that respect I suppose than the Philharmonic. At least they've dropped the phrase "Save Our Symphony," but this is what they're still doing. Everyone has to raise money, and it's a little bit harder for us than it is for some other organizations because we do not have a great popular appeal.

Our appeal right now, in the past couple of years, is interesting. I would say that almost half of our audience is an audience of students. I was reminded again this year of something that I hadn't noticed sufficiently, that if we give a program during final exams, the audience drops considerably; and I must be careful in the future to see that around the end of January, when exam period starts, to give programs (if we can think of them) that are going to appeal very strongly to the older rather than the younger generation, because the youngsters are simply going to stay home and study.

TUSLER: At this time, when you were writing for Script and they were at the Assistance League Playhouse, it was still called the Evenings on the Roof? It still carried the term over for quite a few years?

MORTON: Oh, yes. That term went until Peter dropped

out of the concerts, which would be the 1954-55 season. Monday Evening Concerts should be very well established as a name now, but you'd be surprised how many people still speak of it as the Roof. I've found myself doing it, because the Roof is an easy quick word to use, but to say Monday Evening Concerts is a little bit more difficult. We took the name "Monday Evening Concerts" because certain other organizations were beginning to give concerts on Monday evenings, which had regularly been our time; there was competition for Monday evenings--some of the larger organizations didn't pay any attention to our concerts--and it seemed to me to call them Monday Evening Concerts was to claim that evening as ours. Now, of course, the musical life of Los Angeles is so much greater than it was twenty years ago that we have a good deal of competition on Monday nights. Monday night remains a good time for us, however, because if we happen to be using Philharmonic musicians, they're almost always free. Monday is the off-day for the Philharmonic, and also Monday seems not to be so busy a night in the recording studios as other nights are. So it's a good night for musicians.

TUSLER: When did you first meet Mr. Yates? Did you know

him at the time when you were writing the articles for Script?

MORTON: I don't remember now when I first met Peter, or how I began to write more and more about those concerts and less and less about some of the other concerts in town. But I do remember that in those old days it was really a cooperative enterprise; I remember one evening at Peter's house when the musicians and I were there getting out a mailing. It was really cooperative, not only in the sense of bearing the financial burden but "cooperative" in the sense of doing the work. There were musicians putting stickers on the folders and stamping and addressing them, and so on; and that must have been fairly early, because even during the time that Peter was the head of the organization, he had to delegate some of the work to other people. It began to become, let's say, a real organization, rather than a "let's-all-get-together-and-do-something." Do you think I've fairly well explained the kind of organization it was?

TUSLER: Yes.

MORTON: That can be expanded by Peter. I'm sure he has a much better memory of it than I have.

In any case, my first official connection must have

been before I went into the Signal Corps during the war. I was invited to become a member of the board. They did have a Board of Directors by that time, and I can remember that Ed [Wolfgang] Rebner and Ingolf Dahl were the people who asked me to come in. What I did then was simply to come to meetings when they were called and discuss possibilities of repertoire and things of that sort.

TUSLER: When did you go into the Signal Corps?

MORTON: I don't remember exactly. It might have been '44. I had been drafted and rejected because of poor eyesight, but I went into a civilian branch of Signal Corps. I started out here at Santa Monica City College and then went up to Sacramento, to Kentfield in the Bay Area, and to San Mateo, where I went through a course of training that was supposed to end up in radar. But somewhere along the line it was decided that no civilians would be allowed into the radar project; so after I'd gone through all this training for what must have been a year, I was released with the advice that since the government had invested all this training and public funds in me, I ought to do something to further the war effort. When I came back to Los Angeles I went to work at Douglas

Aircraft. I worked a graveyard shift so that I could have my days for some sort of musical activity.

The only thing I remember about working at Douglas Aircraft, where I was soldering electrical connections, was that at the workbench just ahead of me Ruth St. Denis was working, also on the graveyard shift. I had known of Ruth St. Denis, of course, for years and years and had actually seen her dance. The thing that I so much admired was the grace of every movement that she made when she was soldering. If something would drop on the floor and she would pick it up, it was a beautiful act--just the way she moved. Of course, she was an elderly lady by that time.

TUSLER: Why was she doing this? Was it her way of contributing to the war?

MORTON: I'm sure, I'm sure. When rest period came, she used to walk over to some tables up against the wall and lie down to do some sort of relaxing exercises--I don't know what they were--and no one ever disturbed her. I have an idea that these might have had something to do with Indian customs of breathing, or something of that sort. She would spend that fifteen minutes relaxing or exercising, whatever it was, and then she'd return to work.

I didn't talk with her very much because there wasn't much time for talking, but we did have a nodding acquaintance and passed silly words now and then or just greetings. I much admired her, and I admired the way she dressed, too. I don't think she wore slacks; it seems to me she wore skirts, and I thought that was quite unusual because all the women working at the factory were wearing slacks.

TUSLER: Was she still dancing at that time?

MORTON: Oh, yes. Well, not just during those years, but a lot in that period. I remember she danced something at one of the churches where Arthur Leslie Jacobs was music director; she had put on some sort of religious dance. She must have been in marvelous physical condition.

Another thing I remember about working at Douglas was that with something like thirty-eight or thirty-nine dollars a week take-home pay, I was always incensed over what I read in the newspapers about the tremendous amounts of money that were being earned in the defense industry, and how defense workers were supporting all the jewelry stores on Hollywood Boulevard, and so on. Nobody that I knew in defense work was making anywhere near that

kind of money. But it didn't matter: one was there for reasons of patriotism. And my patriotism was superior, I think, to that of the aircraft company, because after I'd been working there for some time, a change was made in government contracts--instead of the cost-plus arrangement, the aircraft companies had to pay for labor instead of just adding it to what they charged the government, or something of that sort. All of a sudden it turned out that I was not necessary at all to the war effort. If the government paid me, I was necessary to the war effort; if the aircraft company had to pay me, then I was not necessary to the war effort. So I was discharged and I felt--well, I've done everything I could and I'll just return to musical life.

TUSLER: During this time you were still serving as a member of the board for the Roof?

MORTON: It seems to me that I was, but I may be wrong. It may not be until after the war that I came into it, because I'm sure I was still writing for Script magazine all through that period. I did work for the magazine right until the time that it became defunct.

All these years that I was writing for Script were, of course, very educating for me because I did go to

a lot more concerts than I would have under any other circumstances. I simply would not have spent as much money going to concerts as I did during those years. I went to the Philharmonic regularly and sat through concert after concert, even some of them that I thought were quite dull.

TUSLER: Were those the Klemperer years?

MORTON: No, these were the Wallenstein days. I remember Wallenstein's first concert, which was almost a disaster.

TUSLER: What happened?

MORTON: Well, it was a Brahms symphony that just fell apart. He must have been nervous, and the orchestra was unaccustomed to him. It was the kind of thing you'd almost expect from a debut. It was close to a disaster. Nevertheless, as he became used to the orchestra and the orchestra became used to him, it became a very, very good orchestra, and naturally he improved, too. I can remember some performances that were the equal of any that I hope to hear, although I think that he was a little bit uneven. At the time that a campaign against him was going on, I defended him, not wholeheartedly, but simply on the grounds that Los Angeles cannot attract a first-class

conductor--a Toscanini or anyone of that sort. The city was such that we were fated always to have a good second-class conductor, which simply meant that if you were going to change conductors you were going to exchange one kind of shortcoming for another. One of the things that I liked about Wallenstein's performances was that they were correct, generally speaking. Inspiration is something that I don't value particularly in conductors. If the music is inspired, that's quite enough for me, and the conductor's inspiration is certainly of secondary interest.

TUSLER: You just used the expression "a campaign against him." What did you mean by that?

MORTON: Well, we're talking now in the field of gossip, mind you. I was never on the inside of things, and I don't know what was transpiring, but I was aware that there was a very active campaign against him in the Daily News. Gradually the tone of criticism began to change even in the Los Angeles Times, and so I had the feeling (although I can't bear this out in any way) that at some point it was decided that Wallenstein had outlived his usefulness to the community, for whatever reasons. I suppose it was organized somewhere in the

Philharmonic offices. This is not surprising, either, because almost everywhere conductors, when they are new, are hailed as great, as remakers of the musical life in the community; then, after a while, one gets accustomed to them and finally one begins to get tired of them. This happened with Mitropoulos in New York--he was certainly not anywhere near as popular at the end of his career there as he was at the beginning; and one can see it also with Leonard Bernstein in New York right now. He was hailed at the beginning but people are becoming more and more critical of him now. This doesn't mean that he is getting any worse, it just means that people are always on the lookout for a change. Of course, on the other hand, there are people like Koussevitzky who held out for a long time in Boston. Actually there was no reason why Stokowski should not have continued in Philadelphia, and Ormandy has stuck it out for a long, long time in Philadelphia after Stokowski left. But elsewhere in the country there are frequent changes of conductors, and I think that they're all due to the same thing: that people do grow tired of a conductor and just want something fresh. I don't think that they know whether one conductor is better than another, because

outside of the great conductors, of which we have had very few, the fact that people will accept one second-rate conductor as well as another second-rate conductor simply means that they don't know the difference between them.

TUSLER: Of course, the symphony audience is not the type of audience which you are attended by.

MORTON: Oh, no.

TUSLER: They just don't have the musical knowledge to bring to the subject.

MORTON: Well, I'm not sure that I would say "knowledge," <u>that</u> they certainly don't have; but I don't think that is the factor. I don't think they have the curiosity nor do they have the necessarily cultivated taste; and, let's say, they are in general conservative audiences. But new music has always had to struggle for its existence, and chamber music has never been quite as popular as orchestra music, anyway. This country is a symphonic country; we're not an opera country, and we're not a chamber music country.

TAPE NUMBER: I, SIDE TWO

MARCH 10, 1966

TUSLER: In our last session, you said that you believed that you joined the board of the Evenings on the Roof in 1942, or in the early forties, but you were just saying that you think that actually happened a little bit later on.

MORTON: Yes, I'm sure now that it was later. I'm reading again from some of my old reviews, and I can tell by the tone of the reviews and by the subject matter that the concerts I'm speaking about right now were going on much earlier than the time when I became active on the board. I'm going back now to March 1942, and the concerts were still fairly new. This would have been the third or fourth season. The seasons were not accurately counted in those days because they would run a few concerts in the spring and call it a season; then they would start again in the fall and call it another season, so sometimes there were two seasons per year. That went on for a short time and then it became corrected, but I always speak of us now as being in our twenty-eighth year rather than the twenty-eighth season because the count is not accurate.

Actually, we don't even have a count of the number of concerts we have given. It would be very interesting to be able to say on the program this is our nine hundred and seventy-second concert, but we have no accurate count of them; we don't have an accurate list of all the repertoire, which just shows that the organization was very loose at the beginning and only began to be tightened up when the business of running the concerts became increasingly complicated.

TUSLER: Does anybody have a file of the programs at this date?

MORTON: No, I'm afraid not. Since I took over the concerts, I have been keeping a file listing every composition that has been played and giving its date; and I have a complete file of the programs from about 1952, I believe, and scattered ones before then.

Peter Yates's collection of programs is not by any means a complete collection and it may be at the very beginning that they didn't even have printed programs because it was a very small group and if there were maybe thirty or forty people at Peter Yates's house, there was probably no need for a printed program. Expense was a large factor then, as it is now, although

we of course are, from the standpoint of budget, light years away from what we were then.

Here in 1942 I had gone to a concert that I seem now to have enjoyed very much; there were compositions played by Roy Harris, Paul Creston, Busoni, and Samuel Barber. I complained that "this concert gave me the dubious pleasure of listening to a program that was uniformly interesting from beginning to end, and yet included not one composition of real merit." It was all interesting because all the music was new to me, but the works on the program were at best third- or fourth-rate pieces. The artists on this occasion were Frances Mullen (who is of course Mrs. Yates) and Kurt Reher. The Roy Harris piece was the Sonata for Piano, which was the piece, you may remember, that made Arthur Farwell stand up and say, "Hats off, gentlemen, here is a genius," quoting Schumann on Brahms. Paul Creston's piece was a viola sonata. For some reason or other I don't say who had played it, but I have an idea it might have been Kurt Reher's brother Sven, with whom he often appeared jointly on programs. Then there was a sonatina of Busoni, and to end with, Sam Barber's Cello Sonata, about which I said, "Mr. Reher's magnificent

playing almost obscured the banality of the material and the academicism of the workmanship." I think I'd probably stand by that now; Barber is a very accomplished composer and has a big public and a great success, but he is not what we call one of the significant composers of our time.

TUSLER: Were these premieres, or were they just being heard in Los Angeles for the first time?

MORTON: I think they were all being heard here for the first time. In those days, almost everything that we played was being heard here for the first time. In that time the premiere fever was not what it has become and which, I acknowledge, I am a victim of right now. It seems to have some publicity value or some interest for the public to know that they're hearing a premiere, or a Los Angeles premiere, and on our current programs we label everything as to whether it's a Los Angeles premiere or a world premiere; and when we're trying to sell ourselves to important people who might be in a position to give us some money, we always cite the number of premieres that we've had. It is a source of some pride, of course, to be able to say that in our history we've had eleven world premieres of Stravinsky

works. I think there are very few organizations that can count that many. Of course, we're not speaking of Stravinsky's very great works but of his smaller pieces, and some of these premieres were reinstrumentations of older works; but, nevertheless, they are premieres.

A short time later, the Reher brothers and Frisina played another concert, and there was one of the string trios of Beethoven about which I made a remark that was subsequently quoted (I must say it's a rather fatuous remark now, but it has something to do with the state of the world in 1942--I don't think I would stand by this any more, but I think it was rather amusing): "If you still doubt the morale-building potentiality of music, you should have heard David Frisina and the Brothers Reher play the first of the trios of Beethoven, opus 9. Whatever it is that happens to an audience when good music is beautifully played, happened here. I do not say that this audience would have been able to stand up to a Panzer division without fear after the performance, but I'm sure that it was capable of some unselfish if not heroic action." I certainly don't believe that for a minute! [laughter] But that was the state of mind in those war years.

On the same concert came one of the real events, a performance that I still remember of a piece that I think is a very, very important one--namely, Charles Ives's Third Sonata for Violin and Piano, which was played by Ingolf Dahl and Sol Babitz. I'm very glad that I noticed at that time the marvelous ending of that piece. "Its final pages," I wrote, "are perhaps the most haunting and melancholy written by an American." The thematic material is an old American hymn called "By the River" or "At the River," and Ives works on this material very nostalgically, as though he can't quite make up his mind to come to an end. It's one of those marvelous places that you see a classical example of in the end of Mahler's Song of the Earth, and also it's a mood that Aaron Copland has taken over from Ives--I don't know if he got it there, but it's the same sort of thing. This quiet reluctant ending is something that few composers can carry off, but Ives does it magnificently in this piece.

I remember that Ingolf Dahl at that time was working from a photograph of an Ives manuscript. Like all of Ives's manuscripts, this one had to be edited and put into practical shape; there was a great deal of work

there. Sol Babitz worked on the fiddle part. Subsequently their work was made permanent by publication in the New Music series, and I believe that's still regarded as the more or less official edition of the piece. I don't know if this was a first performance or not, but it was the first time that I had heard the piece, and I must say it was an unforgettable experience.

TUSLER: Had you heard any other Charles Ives at that time, or was this quite a new thing?

MORTON: It seems to me that I must have heard by this time the Concord Sonata, which Frances Mullen had made a sort of signature piece for herself. I imagine she must have played it in those early years seven or eight times, and that is of course one of the great Ives pieces. Frances was playing it almost every season for a while, way ahead of New York and other cities in the discovery of this Ives material. If my memory is correct, the materials were procured from Ives by Peter Yates, and if we had anything like an Ives renaissance in this city in those years, I think the credit for it must go to Peter Yates. I believe that some of the manuscripts that he got are now in the possession of the Los Angeles Public Library. Of course, nowadays, much of the Ives

stuff is being published.

TUSLER: Back then, in '42, he must not have been at all known.

MORTON: No, even the Eastern people were very slow to recognize him. Just the other night I heard a performance by the Young Musicians Foundation here of the Three Places in New England, and it was extraordinary to think that in 1965 the rented material was still brand-new, the piece had been played so little. Why that piece has not become a part of the standard repertoire I don't understand, because it's not only beautiful, it's astonishing. The performance given by the youngsters here was really magnificent.

I see in the next few weeks I'm still talking about the war and the affection most of us began to feel for the Russian composers, Shostakovich and Prokofiev--stimulated of course in part by the war-time activities.

TUSLER: Did the war have any perceptible effect on the attendance of the Evenings on the Roof?

MORTON: I don't know. Attendance records are even less accurate than any records of our repertoire.

Here's something that I'd quite forgotten about and something that I suppose should be discussed sometime:

in the summer of 1942 a Festival of Contemporary Music was given under the direction of Arthur Leslie Jacobs at the First Congregational Church. Those were big events, a weekend of new music. Some pieces there I believe had been taken over from the Evenings on the Roof repertoire.

Speaking of Ives here, just a short time later, I said, "So far we know only a few songs and the Third Violin Sonata, and the Fourth Sonata is now available on records." Then I comment on the fact that Ives's elbow thumping on the piano and the fact that he had been a very successful insurance man were commanding more attention than his music actually was. I say:

> It was time, in short, for Frances Mullen to play the whole of the Concord Piano Sonata, which she did at last week's Roof concert. Miss Mullen is a local prophetess for this important work, but I had never heard her play it again, for it is not a work to be fairly digested in one hearing. Some of it seems to me to be very dull and boring; some of it is exciting, parts of it very deeply moving; all of it is confusing. For one thing, it shifts its historical point of view so frequently that one has no sooner become accustomed to a modernistic dryness of style than the music spreads out in the florid pianism of the last century, and the musical ideas change with the style. The apparent formlessness of the music is disturbing, too, especially to those of us who have been brought up to expect an orderly

juxtaposition of related thoughts. The use of ragtime seems to me to be quite inept, but the use of hymn tunes is often inspired.

I don't know that I would change my opinion very much about that now, except to say that I think the piece is remarkable for the imagination that it shows. I'm less aware of its shortcomings than of its virtues now, and I don't think there's much point in saying how marvelous it was that Ives did these things before Schoenberg had settled on his atonality and before Stravinsky and the French had come on with polytonality, and so on. These things I don't think are quite so astounding; it's the quality of the music itself and the extraordinary freedom that he felt in his music and the great amount of invention that's there.

TUSLER: Was his music then considered the most avant-garde of the things that were being performed at the Roof, more so than Shostakovich, Prokofiev and some of the other names that you've mentioned?

MORTON: Oh, yes. I think that the current interest in Ives, which is greater now than it has been, simply indicates that that music is still very advanced. It's what Stravinsky would call "music which interests us

and consequently is modern." He says, "Modern music is what interests us." From that point of view, Ives is still a very, very remarkable composer, and I think he'll always be remarkable. His difficulty, I think, was well pointed out by Aaron Copland many years ago in an article in which he said that Ives's music was never submitted to the public during his own lifetime, that he never had had to pass the test of public performance. The chances are, I think, that he would have ignored public response to his music, that he knew what he wanted to do and he just went ahead and did it; and the condition of his manuscripts indicated that he was not actually thinking very much of public performance. The romantics would say that he was interested in self-expression, and maybe that's what he was interested in, I don't know; but certainly no composer ever left his manuscripts in such bad shape as Ives did.

Another big event in the series was that just a few weeks after Frances Mullen had played the Concord Sonata, she played the Diabelli Variations of Beethoven. That's a very good indication of the kind of thing that was going on at the Roof in those days. I don't think that I had ever heard a public performance of the Diabelli

Variations until I heard them here; I can't remember in all my concert going as a young man that I ever heard the Variations, and they were far too difficult for me to play myself. This return to old repertoire, in conjunction with the showing off of new repertoire, is what still constitutes the musical policy--if there is one--of these concerts.

TUSLER: Is the reason they're so seldom performed, the Diabelli Variations, their sheer difficulty?

MORTON: Yes; it's not only difficult for the performers but extremely difficult for the audience because the piece goes on for about forty-five minutes; the Hammerklavier Sonata is about the same length and that's not too often played. That's a long span of attention for an audience and there are very few artists who want to tackle it. I think I heard Schnabel play them in concert here, but I don't know of any other pianist who has done them. I suppose Serkin does, but I'm not sure. He's that kind of pianist, and I think he would undertake a piece like that.

TUSLER: Was Frances Mullen a very remarkable performer?

MORTON: Remarkable in the sense that she did tackle a lot of repertoire. She was technically always pretty

good, not a great artist, but a very, very competent artist, and she was a terribly hard worker. As the programs would show if you go through those early seasons, she was doing a tremendous amount of playing. Her repertoire was extensive. I can remember some performances where I was very deeply impressed by her playing, and other times when I was less impressed; but in this respect she is no different than any other pianist.

TUSLER: She hadn't really had a concert career, except largely, I suppose, in connection with the Evenings on the Roof or local performances?

MORTON: That's my impression. Of course, she had duties at home. She had three sons, and had to help Peter with the concerts (the practical things of it), keep a house going, practice and teach--she was a pretty busy woman.

Well, let's see where I next have something about the Roof.

TUSLER: This was all still over at the Assistance League Playhouse at this time?

MORTON: I have an idea that this must have been around the time the concerts moved over to the old KFWB. I'm

not sure because for some reason or other I don't mention the place. I was not actually functioning as a reporter when I was writing for Script; and since these reviews were coming out maybe a week or two after the performances, it wasn't necessary, I suppose, to mention the place and time.

TUSLER: You spoke before about the KFWB locale. What was this? The radio station had a concert hall in connection with it?

MORTON: Well, KFWB had a big property belonging to Warner Brothers, a little bit west of Gower on Sunset, a large white colonial building with columns in front. There was a rear entrance on the next street down, I don't remember the name of that street, just south of Sunset, and that was the entry into the studios. One of the studios there was made available for the concerts. I remember that it had a sloping floor, so it was a good place for concerts, and the acoustics were quite good. It was in those years that I remember seeing Klemperer at the concerts a good deal. He was the Philharmonic's conductor at that time; Buhlig also used to come. Buhlig did at least one of his Beethoven series over there at KFWB; I remember once that he shook his

finger at me for having written something unfavorable about his performance. The thing that I had complained of was that in playing the F-minor First Sonata he put as much, shall I say, demoniac splendor into it as he did in the later sonatas, and I thought this was an error. He shook his finger at me and said that I was wrong, that that demoniac quality was in the early Beethoven. Well, there's no question of being right or wrong there; I don't think that it was there. I will stick to my point, but I'm sure Buhlig would still stick to his. One of the things that I remember that disturbed me was at the very beginning of that piece he played a wrong note, and it just seemed to me that if he had been playing a little bit less demoniacally, he wouldn't have attacked that note from so high up in the air, and then he would have hit the right one instead of the wrong one.

TUSLER: But that was part of his style: to approach everything that way.

MORTON: Oh, yes, oh, yes. His concerts were always terribly important; it's not a question of whether you agree or not; one doesn't have to agree or disagree. They were all revelations of certain qualities that

Buhlig felt very strongly about. Richard Buhlig lived in Los Angeles for some time, I don't know how many years--he was European trained and a very fine pianist, although his concert career was limited by certain psychological problems he had in appearing before the public, and his concert career was perhaps not as glorious as it ought to have been, considering the quality of his playing. But he was very, very important as a teacher. Frances Mullen had studied with him, I believe, and there must have been at least four or five other people on the concerts who were students of his. The youngest one that I know of is Peter Hewitt, who is doing a great deal of playing around Los Angeles now and is on the faculty at Valley State. He has done not only the Concord Sonata for us but also the First Sonata, and he's played a great deal of other music, too. I believe he must have been one of the youngest of the Buhlig students.

TUSLER: And is Buhlig dead now?

MORTON: Yes. He passed away, and something of his musical tastes and interests can be discovered down at the Los Angeles Public Library, which got his music library after his death. All of his material is there as part of their collection, and it's always very interesting

for me to look around in the piano music and find something there from the library of Richard Buhlig.

TUSLER: It would be interesting, too, if it were marked with his personal markings.

MORTON: Some of it is, as I remember. He was a very important influence on music in those years, not only because he did play publicly occasionally but because he gave these Beethoven series; I don't know if he gave two or three for Evenings on the Roof. He went through the complete sonatas of Beethoven. He was a friend of Klemperer, and I remember that at his recitals Klemperer used to sit in the seventh or eighth row, always with scores, and I'm sure he was finding out things about Beethoven, which is an endless subject.

TUSLER: It's interesting that Klemperer was one of your fairly regular patrons in those days.

MORTON: Yes. A short time after that, Stravinsky became a very frequent visitor, and Wallenstein used to come whenever any of the Philharmonic people were appearing on our program. But I think Klemperer was the man who came purely for musical reasons; he was still interested in Beethoven and a thorough musician and full of curiosity. No one else in the city has demonstrated

that kind of interest.

Stravinsky's comment at one time was that he enjoyed coming to these concerts because they reminded him of a series that had been going on in St. Petersburg when he was a young man, which were different from our concerts principally in the sense that they were very well financed by very wealthy men. Our concerts, of course, have never been adequately financed. But from the standpoint of repertoire, the same kind of thing was going on--there was a mixture of old and new there, but more new than old--and it was at those concerts, I believe, that Stravinsky first heard the music of Debussy and Ravel. It would have been a little too early for Hindemith, but he mentioned a number of other composers: Scriabin I think was being played there; Prokofiev was being played and he also performed, but of course he was a few years later than Stravinsky.

Evidently our concerts reminded Stravinsky of the kind of thing that had been going on at St. Petersburg. Those concerts were terribly important to him in the discovery of new music, and particularly Western music, because during the period of domination by Rimsky-Korsakov, Mussorgsky, Borodin and so on, there was a great

concentration on their own Russian music since this was a nationalist movement of considerable significance. The international point of view was something that had to be especially cultivated. Of course, at that time we were almost at the end of the nationalist period in Russia, although Rimsky-Korsakov was still the grand old man, head of the conservatory and all that sort of thing.

TUSLER: This was when? Roughly between 1900 and 1910?

MORTON: Yes, just in those years. Those were the years when Diaghilev was on the rise, also; and while I've never heard it said, I have an idea that Diaghilev must have known about those concerts, though I don't believe he has mentioned them. Of course, Diaghilev at that time was more interested in art than he was in music, and the magazine that he had put out, the World of Art, was very active around that time. There's not a great deal of information available about those early years in St. Petersburg; they are mentioned in the Prokofiev biography and of course Stravinsky mentions them. Stravinsky has had more to say about them in private conversation and in the conversation books with Bob Craft, but in his own autobiography he didn't spend much time on

them.

One of his memories that influenced his dedication of a work to Monday Evening Concerts happened as follows: around '52 or '53, I think, we gave a performance of the Monteverdi Il Combattimento (as a matter of fact, we gave two performances of that work in that season), and Stravinsky was at the concert. On the way out after the concert--he was very excited by the Monteverdi which he enjoyed thoroughly and which he said he had first heard at the St. Petersburg concerts--he said, "The organization that can give me such pleasure by performing that piece is going to receive the dedication of my next work." That turned out to be the Shakespeare songs which he dedicated to Evenings on the Roof and which had their first performance the following season. I don't know if he'd been thinking about this before, but when he told me that after the concert I was of course very, very excited--you know, one doesn't know what to say to a man like Stravinsky on an occasion like that. You mumble some sort of "thank-you, that'll-be-wonderful," because you try not to show your excitement, and after all the piece hadn't arrived yet and one couldn't tell but what something would

happen and he'd find it necessary to dedicate the piece to somebody else for some other reason. But it did happen as he said, and it's interesting, I think, that the idea of the dedication to Evenings on the Roof came from this very exciting performance of Il Combattimento.

TUSLER: Is that an oratorio?

MORTON: No, it is in the special category of a dramatic madrigal. It comes from a collection that Monteverdi called Madrigals of Love and War. It should be staged as it was at its first performances in Venice, but we've never been able to do anything at all by way of stage presentations, and we just gave a concert performance of it. It's not too difficult to perform; it requires just a small string group. We used a quartet, plus a bass and harpsichord, and singers for the narrator's part, for the role of Tancred, and at the very end of the piece for the few words spoken by Clorinda as she dies. It's a marvelous piece and, of course, a very important piece historically, as Monteverdi was the originator of so many things in string technique.

TUSLER: It required no chorus.

MORTON: No, no. I can imagine a piece like that being staged with a grand setting by one of the Bibienas, for

instance, or just in a big room of one of the palaces. I don't know exactly where it was performed, but I was in a room at Mantua where the first performance of Monteverdi's Orfeo had been given. I had been touring in Italy in 1956 and arrived at Mantua and went to the palace of the Gonzagas with a guide. I was in a guided tour on that particular day, and because I had been seeing so much that was fresh and new to me, I didn't immediately connect the court at Mantua with Monteverdi. I usually think of Monteverdi in connection with Venice simply because we had done more of his sacred music and not so much of the dramatic music. The guide said something about, "This was a room in which a composer named Monteverdi had first performed an opera of his," and then of course I jumped. I found that I was standing just in front of a plaque that had been put in the wall by a Gonzaga duke to commemorate the service of Monteverdi at that court. I was utterly shaken to have been in the room, and also asked myself the question--why hadn't I been prepared for this? Well, it was just that the whole summer's trip had been so full of new things for me that I hadn't kept track of it. That was a very exciting moment. In the kind of room there,

I suppose one could seat maybe two hundred or two hundred and fifty people; it was a rather long, narrow room, with a perfectly flat floor and a very tiny stage place at one end. It's hard to imagine exactly what a production might have been like.

TUSLER: To digress a little further for a minute, has the Roof ever attempted to stage such a work as that, or Stravinsky's L'Histoire du Soldat, something that requires dancing or staging?

MORTON: It's been on our agenda for years and years and years. Stage productions of course are very expensive and very difficult, and we've never been able to do it, but I'm always hopeful. We have presently at the [Los Angeles County] museum a stage that would be adequate for it, and I look forward to the time when we will be able to do some stage productions. Mostly, I'd like to do an amount of the small baroque things such as these Monteverdi works, but one has to find the proper stage director, a choreographer, and so on. I approached one rather famous dancer on the subject of Il Combattimento at one time, and after listening to a recording and looking at the score, she said, "The trouble with this music is that there's no rhythm. I

couldn't possibly do motions to it." Well, it's just full of rhythm, but of course she was speaking of a special kind of rhythm that she didn't find danceable.

I see here in my clippings a reference to another Roof concert, the series of five vesper concerts that the Roof did in connection with the First Congregational Church, which I've mentioned before as having been the home of the Festival of Modern Music. Ingolf Dahl had appeared playing two Bach toccatas, and he was in those years a superb piano player--he still is, but he doesn't practice much any more and does less playing since he's busier composing and teaching. I remember those Bach concerts over at the church; they were given in the chapel, not in the main auditorium, and they were also revelatory in the sense that a great amount of comparatively unknown Bach pieces were being played, such as these fantasies. All of us of course were brought up on the Well-Tempered Clavier, and we know the suites which the orchestras play, and so on; but there is a large amount of lesser-known Bach material that was being displayed in these concerts. These were important concerts for us to hear. Public performances of it were quite rare.

The ninth of January, 1943, my column is headed with the remark: "With this edition, Lawrence Morton takes a temporary leave of absence from Script and is sent to Sacramento to continue his studies for civilian service with the Army Signal Corps." I had undertaken, before I left, to have some of my musical friends write occasional columns while I was gone, and I see here that I had lined up as guest columnists George Tremblay, the composer; Ingolf Dahl; Adolph Weiss; Hugo Friedhofer. I have a long period of absence here.

At the end of that column, however, I have some more comments about Evenings on the Roof in which I pointed out that the concerts were not drawing as many people as they ought to, for this really distinguished series, and advertised that the fifth year would begin on January 18, 1943, at the Assistance League Playhouse and that there would be twenty weekly concerts on Monday evenings. Nowadays we're only giving twelve, but there was so much less activity in the field of chamber music in those days than there is now that twenty concerts were not too hard to put together.

I mentioned the list of composers which I called "almost encyclopedic." Mozart and Bartok head the list,

the former with eleven chamber works and the latter with six; and there will be music by Debussy, Ives, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Busoni, Mahler, Schubert, Harris, Toch, Villa-Lobos, Hindemith, Copland, Reger, Brahms, Handel, and the local composers--Tremblay, Dahl and Strang. This is only a partial list but remarkable enough to demand the attention of everyone who loves the classics and has a healthy curiosity about the moderns. The concerts emphasize repertoire, but the quality of performance is not neglected. Last season some of the best playing ever heard in the city came from the stage of the Assistance League Playhouse. This season some of the same players will be back, notably Kurt Reher, Eudice Shapiro, Alex[ander] Murray, Virginia Majewski, and Louis Pressman, Joseph di Tullio, Maxine Furman, Eula Beal, Shibley Boyes." Some of these people, you see, are still active. Shibley now is the pianist of the Philharmonic; Joe di Tullio is still around town doing a great deal of playing; Alex Murray played with us two seasons ago; Eudice Shapiro plays with us quite regularly.

At this point I took off for the wars, so to speak, although I did continue to send articles in. I came

down to Los Angeles for a weekend on leave, and I heard Ingolf Dahl play the Copland sonata [for piano] privately. I remember that very, very well. The Copland sonata was written in '41; so it certainly was a new piece and quite an extraordinary piece. I read: "They will find in it Copland's most profound thoughts and most spacious utterances. They will find in it more than any pieces of recent years, music that transcends the nationalist tendencies of American composers and reaches for universality." I was already riding that horse, I see. I was not content that music be just American. It's a point which Ingolf Dahl and I still have friendly differences on after this many years.

By the end of 1943 I was sending in columns, some of them having to do with things I'd heard in San Francisco, but I think by the end of the year I must have been discharged from the service because I'm writing here about Mr. Wallenstein's taking over at the Philharmonic, which evidently must have been in the fall of 1943. My memory of how long I stayed in the service is not accurate. I'm surprised that I'm back here in the end of 1943 because it seems to me that I was forever up around the Sacramento-San Francisco neighborhood--when

I was not in San Francisco, trying to dash into the city on weekends to hear some music. I remember some of those performances quite well. I remember a Mahler performance; I remember the string section of the San Francisco orchestra playing the Grosse Fuge for full orchestra, which I'd never heard.

TUSLER: Who was conducting then?

MORTON: I think it must have been Monteux. I remember the music; I remember the conductor much less. I guess maybe that's my personal prejudice about conductors.

TUSLER: You have a prejudice against conductors?

MORTON: No, I won't say it's a prejudice--I'd say it might start as that, but now it's a conviction. I think that at some point in my musical life I began to be highly suspicious of conductors, and the suspicion remains. The number of great ones in our time, really great ones, is very, very limited; and I know now that even when I play records of some of Toscanini's performances I find myself being much more critical than I was in those days. The perfect conductor, of course, would only be myself, if I knew how to conduct. I know how music should go. [laughter] I have resented always, I think, the intrusion of interpretation into music, the conductor's own

personality coming forward; I have always been sorry that not very many conductors have a real sense of rhythm and tempo. This has always bothered me.

I remember listening to Bruno Walter at a rehearsal at which he kept telling people to sing, sing! That was his admonition to his strings all the time, and what he should have been doing, of course, was tell them to dance. He had many expressive qualities in his playing of Mozart that were quite wonderful, but never any real rhythmic qualities. This was a shortcoming on his part, I think, but it was not the show of egotism which most interpretation is on the part of conductors. The presence of the conductor's ego is a thing that disturbs me very much.

TUSLER: It really interferes with one's hearing of the music?

MORTON: Well, yes; but I suppose I must acknowledge that what it <u>does</u> interfere with mostly is my own feelings about the music. I listen subjectively, naturally, as I think everyone does; and if one is a serious musician and not a public performer, one tries to refine his taste and judgment at every point, because one doesn't have to be a success at it. A conductor has to be a success;

and this explains many of the things conductors do, but I don't think quite excuses them.

TUSLER: Yet the orchestra couldn't survive without him.

MORTON: No, of course not, of course not. My feeling is that almost all conductors are second-rate conductors. There aren't any first-rate conductors in our own century, with the possible exception of, say, Toscanini and Furtwängler. But I can find plenty of faults with their performances, too--for instance, in the use of ritards, putting ritards in the wrong places, overblowing cadences, but most of all, losing the kind of rhythmic life that I think is necessary. The classical place to miss the rhythm is, of course, Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. I've never heard that first movement played with rhythmic exactness. Stravinsky cites this problem in one of the conversation books: that the 6/8 rhythm in the Beethoven Seventh first movement is just simply not achieved. It degenerates almost always into a 2/4. I don't know how one is supposed to correct this; I should think that conductors would know, but they probably don't hear it, and I'm waiting for some conductor to act upon the suggestion that Stravinsky made in his book of conversations.

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TUSLER: I believe you have some material there that supplements what you said last time about Buhlig.

MORTON: Yes. I found a review from January 1944, in which I had made the specific criticism of Buhlig's performance. On this concert he had played four sonatas, which were the repertoire of his first program in the Beethoven cycle. I quote myself:

> Mr. Buhlig is a scholar, and I hope he will not consider it a journalistic impertinence for me to point out that since there is a time lapse of approximately a decade separating the early F-minor Sonata from the D-minor of 1802, the Beethoven who composed the former is by no means identical to the Beethoven who composed the latter. I found in Mr. Buhlig's readings no corresponding differentiation between these two of the many Beethovens. Specifically, I heard the F-minor played in a manner that was appropriate for the later works, full of that demoniacal drive and pressure that marked the mature composer's sonata movements, with an expenditure of physical energy commensurate with the emotional expenditure required for a grand work like the Waldstein. What I missed, then, was a historical perspective which would correspond with the chronological arrangement of the program. This lack might be quite disastrous with such a large-scale project as a cycle of thirty-two sonatas, and even in a project so relatively small as a single one of the eight concerts. A series of such concerts must be viewed as a museum project, an educational exhibit intended to demonstrate the birth, development and maturation of one of the world's greatest geniuses.

It was after reading this review that Mr. Buhlig at a subsequent concert shook his finger at me and pointed out to me that I was entirely wrong, that the demoniacal aspect of Beethoven was present in the early works. Well, maybe it is and maybe it isn't; I don't know that I would argue that nowadays. But the point is worth making, I think, that everything that was going on at Evenings on the Roof in those days was extremely stimulating, and I daresay that now that I'm an old man I would be much more sympathetic with Mr. Buhlig than I was then. It was at these concerts, the series of Beethoven, that we saw Klemperer at practically every concert unless he was out of town.

A little bit later I was in a mood that was also rather critical of the activities at the Roof, and this was the occasion of a performance of special character. One of the interesting things here is, as I pointed out, that "Evenings on the Roof answers the need for good concerts within the price range of those who can not contribute to the maintenance of the star system at $2.20 a ticket." So in 1944, $2.20 for a ticket to one of the big concerts downtown was considered an exorbitant price. Nowadays, the Monday Evening Concerts itself

charges $2.50 a ticket. But what I objected to in the concert was the performance of a tone drama for cello and piano on the subject of the archimperialists Maximilian and Carlota, where the music itself was evocative of the past as much as the historical background. I didn't mention the composer, which was I suppose the severest criticism I could have made; I didn't mention that this piece was by Charles Wakefield Cadman.

On the same program, Frances Mullen played six sonatas for piano by Lou Harrison, [who lived in] Southern California in those years. He is now living up near San Francisco, still composing, and we've done some of his works. He has always been a rather close friend of Peter and Frances Yates, and they've more or less championed his music. We did a couple of concertos of his I think three seasons ago, but even, you see, twenty years ago Frances Mullen was playing Harrison's pieces. I remember them quite well and I had a fairly good impression of them.

In general, in this whole series of articles, I'm of course delighted with Evenings on the Roof, although I found many things to criticize adversely. There was an established trio called the Philharmonic Trio, that

had Maxine Furman as pianist, Louis Pressman as violinist and Joe [Joseph] di Tullio as cellist. They played quite frequently at those concerts, and I was much impressed with their performance of the Beethoven Trio, opus 87. Especially I liked Miss Furman's piano playing, and now I don't mind saying that another thing that I admired about Miss Furman in those days was that she had a neck that was as beautiful as Eva Le Gallienne's and she always looked stunning at the piano. [laughter] She doesn't play any more, and I don't know what has happened to her in the last ten years or so.

TUSLER: Is Joe di Tullio with the Philharmonic now?

MORTON: No, there are many di Tullios in this city. It's a very large family, and they've married into the Reher family, so that is a very, very large aggregation of people. I suppose you'd find six or seven di Tullios listed in the musicians directory. Joe is not playing in the Philharmonic (he's doing mostly studio work), but his daughter, Louise, is one of the flutists in the Philharmonic. She's been playing for us for the past three or four years now. She's a very fine artist.

TUSLER: Did you mean this trio was established for the Evenings on the Roof, primarily?

MORTON: Yes. Oh, they played elsewhere, too, but I think that Peter Yates was always trying to get little groups to organize as permanent groups so that they would develop a spirit of ensemble playing. This group was established and played for several years; they always played good repertoire and they always played quite well.

Here I have a criticism of Eudice Shapiro, one of our very best violinists and really a first-class artist, but I comment here that I found her better as a soloist or half of a violin-piano team than as a leader of a quartet. As first fiddle in a quartet I complain here that I found her a bit aggressive, but as a soloist or in a duo, I found her much better. On this occasion she'd been playing a little sonatina by Werner Josten.

I have another reference here to Frances Mullen in which I point out that I find her performance of contemporary much better than her performance of classical music, and the works that occasioned this comment were the Evocations for piano by Carl Ruggles. Ruggles has also been a favorite of Peter and Frances Yates; unfortunately, he doesn't have very much repertoire. It's too bad, because he is celebrating his ninetieth birthday this year, and I wanted very much to get something

of his on our programs, but I haven't succeeded in finding any pianist who's prepared to do anything about those pieces. He lives in New England somewhere--Peter Yates visited him a year or so ago--and he's doing a great deal of painting now, I understand, and less composing. He doesn't have a large catalog of compositions. Nevertheless, he's a significant pioneer figure in American music.

TUSLER: What year are these reviews from that you've been quoting?

MORTON: I'm now up to 1944; as I said, it's the best source I have for reminders about Evenings on the Roof.

Here in May of '44 I was referring to a performance of a new sonata for violin and piano by Roy Harris. It was played by Rowland Leach and the composer Paul Pisk, who was at that time affiliated with Redlands University; they came into town to play this work for Evenings on the Roof. I found that Harris was still doing business with the same material that he had used for the Third Symphony, which I thought was rather unfortunate, but on the whole, at that time, I regarded Harris as a very important and distinguished American composer. But I did point out here that Aaron Copland--who at that time was

about on the same level as Harris, being our two leading American composers--was much less repetitive from one piece to another than Harris was. I think I would still stand by that opinion. But there again, we were hearing Harris fairly early in his career, and we already knew a great many of his works, not only from our own concerts but, as you know, the Third Symphony had been very popular, was played all over and was recorded by the Boston orchestra in those years. He profited from Koussevitzky's championship of American music, as Copland had, too.

Here's a rather amusing comment. This was in November of '44. Peter Yates had found an occasion to make a speech at the concerts; actually he was defending the policy of playing twentieth-century music. Obviously, even at that time there were a number of people who were opposed to contemporary music and just wanted to hear Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms, and Mr. Yates felt that he had to defend the policy. He did this, as I wrote, "most eloquently and convincingly, drawing upon incontrovertible historical arguments." This is rather amusing here: "I listened to Mr. Yates most attentively, not because I needed convincing but because he had listened to me make a speech just a few days earlier, and

from observing him during my speechmaking, I knew how disturbing it is to find a member of one's audience sleeping or perhaps only listening with eyes closed while one marshals one's best arguments and quotes the most distinguished authorities." [laughter] So I guess I paid attention to Peter, although he hadn't paid much attention to me.

Then I went on, after defending him and the general policy of the Roof, to point out that if he really meant what he was saying, why in the world had he programed a trio by Vincent d'Indy--"disinterred from the limbo where it has been so justly consigned?" [laughter] Also, I was not much in sympathy with the clarinet piece of Busoni. Busoni, however, is having a little bit of a revival right now; this is the year of Busoni's hundredth birthday and so we are having some Busoni on our own concert on April 4.

TUSLER: Do you know what form these criticisms took, which Mr. Yates felt compelled to refute in his speech?

MORTON: I don't know, but I suppose it must have been either direct remarks by people talking to him or perhaps from letters. But this is inevitable. Everyone has to defend contemporary music at some point or other.

TUSLER: Were the concerts getting much attention in the local press at this time, other than what you were doing in Script? Were they reviewed regularly in those days?

MORTON: Yes. Isabel Morse Jones was still the critic, I believe, of the Los Angeles Times; she was a very faithful attendant at the concerts and always wrote them up. Sometimes Shibley Boyes wrote for her when Mrs. Jones was busy at something else. I think this is just about now at the end of Mrs. Jones's tenure at the Times; she retired and went to Europe. It seems to me that Albert Goldberg came into the Times just about when Wallenstein took over the Philharmonic--I think that Wallenstein was already there by 1944, but I'm not absolutely sure. The other papers, too, paid attention to the Evenings on the Roof, but I think the Times has always been the most consistent. In the last dozen years, the Times has never failed, except once, I believe, to review our concerts. As I say, the reviews were in general not sympathetic, but I think the newspaper always recognized that they were important events in the city's musical life.

TUSLER: So it wasn't really from them that the criticism was coming but from members of the potential audience.

MORTON: I would gather so, yes. I don't remember now if Mildred Norton was writing in the old Daily News at that time. In general, my feeling is that she was sympathetic, but one can be sympathetic and still write unfavorably, as I'm demonstrating to myself as I go through these reviews. I'm a little bit surprised at how much I found to object to, and that being the case, why did they ever invite me to become a member of their board? [laughter] I found so many faults.

Here is a reference to a Hindemith quartet, played by Eudice Shapiro, Alfred Lustgarten, Virginia Majewski, and Victor Gottlieb. This was the quartet that became known as the American Art Quartet, and they had a very good career for some time. Of the people there, Eudice is the only one who is still playing serious music in concert halls, both for us and in many other places.

Here I refer to what I believe I mentioned last time, a performance by Ingolf Dahl and Sol Babitz of "new" works by Charles Ives. Again I refer to something I believe I mentioned last time: "Ives as a source for the music of Aaron Copland." Whatever the pieces were that Ingolf and Sol played at this time, I did find Copland's musical parentage there in several places.

TUSLER: You feel that he really was, quite literally, influenced by Ives?

MORTON: Yes, I think so. I don't know how Aaron Copland himself feels about it, but it's not a bad parentage and I would certainly, if I were a composer, not hesitate to acknowledge it.

I take something back now that I said a moment ago. Here's a reference in January 1945 to Bruno David Ussher; so I believe he must still have been at the Daily News, as critic. I think Mildred Norton had not yet arrived there.

In March 1945, I have some other references to Evenings on the Roof. The concerts were then at KFWB Studio Four and held every Monday night. I refer to a performance I remember very, very well: Alice Mock, soprano, and Shibley Boyes doing some songs by the Elizabethan composer John Dowland. I pointed out that this was an artistic event of very great importance, a beautiful performance, and my complaint is that if it had been [given by] a glamorous creature like Lily Pons, accompanied not by Shibley Boyes but by André Kostelanetz, and if the repertoire had been Lakme or Lucia instead of Dowland, there would have been a box-office crush. But for this there was not a

very large audience, and I thought that was a pity because this was one of the really revealing, informative, educating concerts that had taken place at the Roof, and was terribly important to me.

At this same concert, which must have been in the early part of March 1945, we had our first hearing of the Contrasts of Bela Bartók, played by Frances Mullen, Kalman Bloch, who is still first clarinetist in the symphony, and Manuel Compinsky, who is playing around town and is very active in music out at Mount St. Mary's in Brentwood. What I had to say about Bartók I would still hold to, I think: "He is at once the student of the past, the musicologist investigating folk music of his native Hungary and the Balkan countries, and the modernist composer breaking through the limitations of traditional melodic and harmonic procedures. He is the colorist, Debussy-inspired, working in the most attenuated hues, and at the same time the ingenious contriver of complex rhythms." I found it very satisfying music.

Then I had severe criticisms of the performance of the Prokofiev Seventh Piano Sonata, and I won't name the artist because I really thought she was pretty bad. I said that I would forgive wrong notes, as I still do,

in treacherous passages, but at this concert I happened to look over my shoulder at a neighbor who had the score, and I found that the performance was inaccurate in respect to tempo and rhythm and rubato and pedaling. So this was another occasion when I had to be grateful to the Roof for existing, but sorry about some of the performances. But that can still be said at our own concerts; we've had some performances recently in past seasons that I have not been entirely happy with.

Here is another concert that was a very strong one, and that was Kurt Reher, the cellist, and Shibley Boyes playing three Beethoven cello sonatas. I remember that that was a great event. I've always been sorry that Shibley Boyes has withdrawn from her concert career; she doesn't do anything now except [her work] with the Philharmonic. She doesn't want to do any chamber music any more, and it's a great pity because she was one of the best artists who ever appeared at these concerts--absolutely reliable, marvelous rhythmic sense. But she's interested in other things; she's interested in outdoor work and she's doing some painting and things like that.

Here's a nice reference to the situation in April 1945--I pointed out that Sara Carter, one of our better

young sopranos, had just sent me as a gift several packs of a popular brand of cigarettes (obviously cigarettes were still hard to get, as this was still war time), and I pointed out that there was no better way of securing the good will and admiration of an admittedly corruptible critic. [laughter] And I recommended it to other people.

TUSLER: She got a very favorable review, I hope.

MORTON: Well, I had already given her a favorable review for her performance of Pierrot Lunaire, and I pointed out that my confidence in her ability was not a bit shaken by the gift of the cigarettes. I don't remember whether anyone ever took up that suggestion, however.

TUSLER: Was she a well-known soprano in the area?

MORTON: She was doing both local opera work and singing with us. She did some very memorable performances. She sang the whole of the Hindemith Marienleben for us once with Ingolf Dahl, and she did Pierrot Lunaire, and I remember she did some Schubert, "The Shepherd on the Rock," with the clarinet. In general she was one of our most valuable singers. Her voice was not a great voice, but she was an extremely intelligent girl and very, very musical. It was always a great pleasure to work with

her. Here I refer again to her singing some early Schoenberg songs, which were not much to my liking as being among the very early songs, very postromantic, but again, that was an example of her working with unfamiliar repertoire that was very important for the concerts.

Then, a few months later, I refer to two youngish American composers, Gail Kubik and Ray Green. Kubik at that time was stationed here working with the Army's motion-picture unit in Culver City at the old Hal Roach Studios. He was writing film music there and writing other things, too, and his Sonatina for Violin and Piano had been played by Ingolf Dahl and Howard Colf, who is still a member of the Philharmonic orchestra. The Ray Green piece, which has been played since that time also, is a quartet for viola, clarinet, bassoon and piano, all rather low-pitched instruments, and I remember that it was a rather somber piece. Ray Green is less important than he was in those days, but he was a composer who was being shown to the public in evidence of the good work that the concerts were doing in those years.

In July 1945, I refer to a memorable concert when Alice Ehlers played the Goldberg Variations on the harpsichord, and I confessed here that it was the first time

I had ever heard the Goldberg Variations not played on the piano. I remember that I was fascinated by the difference of sound, and the performance was to me not only a revelation but a great pleasure. Since that time, of course, we've heard Mme. Ehlers play many, many times, and she still, although quite an old lady now, plays with wonderful spirit and verve.

TUSLER: Was this the first time she played for the Roof?

MORTON: That I don't remember. If she had played it would have been one of the major works because she was never called in to play anything less than a major piece. She not only played the Goldberg Variations, but I remember that at other times she played the Two- and Three-Part Inventions and the Italian Concerto, and a few seasons ago she did a concerto and, I believe, the Fifth Brandenburg at our concerts; and then there was a Bach series of all the Brandenburgs under Klemperer, and she played on that series, too. I don't remember exactly when Alice came to Los Angeles, but as long as she's been here, she's been connected with USC. She's been very important, not only as a performer but of course as a teacher, too.

What interests me, of course, in all this is the kind of repertoire that was being exposed to the public.

Here in September 1945, Andor Foldes, a Hungarian pianist, gave a concert. This was a sort of private recital at Peter Yates's roof; it was not part of the regular series. He played Bartók, Copland, [Elie] Siegmeister, Kodály, and [Jacques de] Menasce. It was a good program, interesting material; of the Bartók he played the early 1926 piano sonata, and he played Aaron Copland's sonata, which was still fairly new; the Siegmeister was a less significant piece, but again worth having and a great addition to our knowledge of what was going on in music. I suppose in the end I feel that the concerts were primarily educational, because I was certainly hearing more chamber music than I'd ever heard consistently in my whole life.

TUSLER: The point is that there was no other organization around that was making this music available at all, with any consistency.

MORTON: No. Even in classical music, you see, the concerts were able to get away from the normal trio-quartet repertoire, which is available from traveling groups, and undertake such pieces as the Beethoven Septet, which I mention here in November of '45 as being a very important piece of repertoire. Of course, it's interesting

about that piece--it was one of Beethoven's most successful pieces, and as he became older people used to ask him why he didn't write music like the Septet any more. I mentioned this to Stravinsky one time and he said, "Oh, yes, the Septet was Beethoven's Firebird." [laughter]

Then I remember that in 1945 there was a kind of working agreement between the Music Guild and Evenings on the Roof. I don't remember the details of it, but I did comment on this association as being something fairly important, that the Music Guild was going to take some hand in the deficit that Evenings on the Roof always incurred and that certain things could be worked out in collaboration, but that the program policy of the Roof would not in any way be influenced by what the Guild was doing, except I suppose if the Guild was going to present, say, some Mozart quartet, the Roof would be careful not to play the same quartet in the same season. (That's the kind of thing that we still observe. I regularly confer with the Coleman concert people and the Music Guild people to find out what is going on so that we have no conflict of dates or of repertoire.) I don't remember now how that collaboration worked out. It didn't last more than a season or two, but it was an indication of the place that

Evenings on the Roof had in the community, and the idea of collaborating with another organization was on the whole a good one.

TUSLER: The Music Guild's function was to bring traveling groups to sponsor a concert series that would give what--half a dozen performances or so during the year?

MORTON: They presented--oh, I don't remember--seven or eight, ten concerts a year, but they were all traveling groups and in general--and I think this is still true--the organization represents a fairly conservative, and I might even say a sort of Viennese taste. The backbone of their repertoire is in the great Vienna tradition. They occasionally have some new pieces, but what they're concentrating on there is first-class performances of the great masterpieces. That organization got started with a very good assist from Arthur Schnabel; I remember it was at a Schnabel concert, whether it was a Guild concert or not I don't remember, that I heard magnificent performances of opus 111 and great works of that kind. In a way, it was good for Evenings on the Roof to be associated with them. I think it was a good community idea, and artistically it couldn't have had any deleterious effect on either organization; yet I imagine that when it finally

dissolved it might have been over some practical matters like finances or the printing of the program, something of that sort.

TUSLER: I don't quite understand from what you said what form their collaboration took.

MORTON: I don't remember what it was. All that I refer to here is that they were going to have a hand in helping the finances of Evenings on the Roof. It seems to me that it was during that season also that some of the concerts were given out at Hancock Auditorium on the USC campus. It might have been that season or a subsequent one, but I think that was part of the work that went on during the association of the two groups.

Here I refer to--still in the fall of 1945--a composition by Ingolf Dahl. This is the Woodwind Quintet, which has since become a very successful and important piece in the literature, now published, of course, and played by woodwind groups all over the world. At the time, I remember I didn't care very much about it because it was more emotionally involved than most of Dahl's music and it has a style that he no longer indulges in, but here he was--twenty years ago--a fairly young composer. The piece has worn very well and is still popular. Almost all

the people who played in that quintet, by the way, with the exception of the horn player, Wendell Hoss, have disappeared from the local musical scene. Leonard Posella was the flutist, and he was at that time first flutist at the MGM Studios; he has retired, I believe. Loyd Rathbun, the oboe player, now is in the East and I don't think he's in music at all. The clarinetist, Alfred Peterson, I can't even place; I can't remember him. Adolph Weiss was the bassoonist; he has retired and now lives up in Ojai. The piece of his that I referred to is really quite an extraordinary piece, the Concerto for Bassoon and String Quartet. It was a virtuoso work that made the greatest demands on the player, and Weiss himself of course played the bassoon part. I think that was one of his very best pieces and it must have had three or four performances during the years.

Then there was a string quartet concert by the Vertchamp Quartet in December of 1945; I didn't care very much about that string quartet, but it did introduce two works to us, one by Ernst Toch and one by George Tremblay. Toch, as you know, died a couple of years ago. I don't remember which quartet this was, but I remember that as usual his music was very warm and sensitive, full of Viennese

feeling.

The other quartet was by George Tremblay, a composer who is still around. Most recently he's been composing large orchestral works, which have not been successful in getting performances except one which has been recorded. Tremblay is more or less of a hermit so far as musical life is concerned; he lives out in the Valley somewhere and he rarely comes in to hear concerts. I think he lives his musical life by way of phonograph records and radio. He was in those days a very exciting musician because he was one of the few people who was a real artist in improvisation. He could sit at the piano for hours. I can remember performances of his, usually aided by a glass of wine or something to loosen him up, that were actually brilliant, some of them employing jazz materials and twelve-tone materials, too. He studied with Schoenberg and always has been a twelve-tone composer. He was a very sophisticated musician, knew vast amounts of repertoire, and consequently at the piano was able to bring all these various elements together in a very convincing way. I speak of that because twenty years ago he was improvising not only privately but in concert, and when I think of what improvisation has become in the

last few years, as though it were something that no one else knew anything about, I think of George Tremblay and some of the marvelous things that he did. There is nothing new under the sun, after all.

He doesn't appear in public at all any more; he gave that up several years ago. Actually I can date that as being just around this time, in the late forties; during the war he gave up most musical activity and went to do some agricultural work. This had to do with his draft status, something of that sort. He was 4-F, but he went into some agricultural work or other out in the Valley, and he remained out there, decided he liked it, and never came back into the city. In recent years I've seen very, very little of him, but I know he's still teaching, and some of our best musicians have studied with him. He's evidently a first-class teacher.

TUSLER: Ernst Toch was a member of the Southern California community for a long time, wasn't he?

MORTON: Yes. He came over some time after the political trouble started in Europe, and he made his home here and began his work out here in the films, at Columbia Pictures, as I remember. I think at first because he was a "modern" composer, people in the industry thought of

him as a composer who would be very good for horror movies because dissonance goes with horror, you see, and he did score a number of pictures that were mysteries and things of that sort, not always with the approval of the authorities at the studios because sometimes his modernism went further than they would have liked, although from our point of view he was never an extremist at all. He was an advanced composer but never an avant-garde composer, or anything of that sort, and he must have done, oh, maybe a dozen movies or so, meanwhile of course continuing his other work in composition. By the time he had exhausted the possibilities in the movie industry, he began to compose more and more serious pieces; you remember toward the end of his life there was a sudden spurt of symphonic writing. He turned out three or four symphonies in comparatively few years, and it was a marvelous exhibition of a revival--or not even a revival of powers, but maybe a sudden development of his powers. He turned out a number of pieces then that were quite wonderful in his particular style of composition.

TUSLER: Now you've come to the end of 1945 with your file of reviews. During this time you were still reviewing for Script, you hadn't actually taken over any specific duties on the board of the Evenings on the Roof?

MORTON: No, I hadn't. As I see that I still have a file of several years to go, it seems rather surprising to me that I still haven't come intimately into the Evenings on the Roof picture. I have to wait and see when that actually happens, but the important thing is that these concerts were really vital to my own musical existence; I couldn't have kept my own interests alive. I was not doing any more playing in these years, but practically everything I was learning about new music was going on at those concerts. Then of course with friends, we'd get scores of the pieces that were being played and study them and discuss them.

I think that the organization still represents that quality of musical life in our community, that it is <u>the</u> place to hear new music, although what is new music now is of course very different [from what] it was twenty years ago. Some things that we regarded as rather advanced at that period have already become classics or conservative pieces, or some of the composers have dropped out of our interest and the country's interest generally. But the idea is that what is news in the musical world is to be found out at these concerts, far more than, say, the Music Guild, which <u>did</u> occasionally present a new piece.

They had the Schoenberg Third Quartet and Bartók had been played, but those were already more or less established masterpieces. The more adventurous things had to be heard at these concerts.

There was one season at the Philharmonic when Mr. Wallenstein introduced a number of new works, but it was not a successful season, and none of the pieces that he performed could be termed avant-garde. It's rather amazing that we're now in the midst of a season at the Philharmonic where we're hearing five Schoenberg pieces in one year. Every one of those pieces is at least a half a century old and only now are being played at the Philharmonic--and of course not being loved, not by any means. There is still resistance to pieces as old as Schoenberg's.

TUSLER: Who was, in those days, then, primarily responsible for the choice of the repertoire to be performed on the Roof? Was it Yates and his wife themselves who made the determining selection of pieces?

MORTON: Yes. I would say that at least they inspired the choice of pieces. The motto at that time was that the concerts were being given for the pleasure of the performers, and they would play what they wanted to play regardless of audience. Well, this was not quite true,

because I remember Peter Yates told me once that one of our distinguished cellists wanted to play the "Berceuse" from Jocelyn by Godard, and he complained that if you leave the musicians up to their own choice they come up with some pretty bad music.

But I would say that while the choice might not represent the Yateses' taste, at least they were constantly encouraging the players to look up the best repertoire, and they knew more about repertoire than most of the musicians. This is still the case. Most of the new repertoire that's found for our concerts now is found by myself or by the musicians who are most active in the [organization]--Leonard Stein, Ingolf Dahl, Karl Kohn, and so on. Those are the people who know the most about repertoire, and undoubtedly there were people in the earlier days who discussed repertoire with Peter Yates, too. Now the problem isn't always to find repertoire but sometimes to find the performers who are willing to learn the new and difficult things, and sometimes encourage the formation of standing groups that will undertake to play not only the new things, but get some really good performances of the older things, too.

On the whole, the guiding light was of course the

Yateses. But I wouldn't say that the repertoire necessarily represented their tastes any more than the current repertoire represents my tastes. There's a lot of music going on that I don't happen to like; but I don't have to like it, I just have to see that it gets performed if it's representative of anything that is important in the world of music. I suppose if I were going to program only pieces I like I'd not be able to get more than two or three concerts a year. [laughter]

TUSLER: One thing that interests me as you've spot-checked through these reviews, and I realize that you haven't given by any means everything that was performed, is that, though there was a lot of performance of the classics and the lesser-known things among them and a lot of the new things, there have been very few times that you've mentioned things from earlier than Mozart, perhaps. You mentioned John Dowland, and I think once you mentioned Monteverdi, but that may have come at a later time.

MORTON: The Monteverdi, I believe, did come at a later time. Well, this is a reflection of what has happened to musical life in Los Angeles. In the years when the Roof concerts began, there had been no systematic series of concerts that had been successful, that had lasted

for very long; in those years one could play Beethoven, Mozart, Brahms--I won't say as novelties, but still as pieces that were not exhausted. But when the Music Guild started and other organizations around town began to play more and more of the classical repertoire, the need for performing it at our concerts grew less and less. Since the Evenings on the Roof intended to perform a function that was not being performed elsewhere in the city, they could very well go into a great deal of old repertoire, and actually the percentage of old repertoire was considerably larger in those days than it is now. I say to our performers from time to time who want to play some classical pieces, "Yes, sure, it's a great piece, maybe we ought to have it, but don't forget that the Juilliard Quartet is going to be in town this season and they're going to play so-and-so." While I wouldn't make any real point about the Juilliard Quartet being a better quartet than we can muster in our own city, the point is that I would like to protect the players if I possibly can from the terrible comparisons that the newspaper critics are likely to make. I think that in general a local quartet is not given the attention, isn't analyzed as seriously, isn't listened to as acutely, as a quartet with an international reputation. I don't see why our local musicians

should subject themselves to that kind of comparison if they can play something else that will not bring out that comparison.

That's why the whole field of contemporary music has belonged to our concerts and is where we've done our best work, I think. Baroque music, the earlier pieces that you mentioned, [appeared more often] as we began to abandon more and more the classical and romantic periods; looking for old music, we went further and further back.

TAPE NUMBER: II, SIDE TWO

MARCH 23, 1966

TUSLER: We're still in the year 1946, briefly surveying the repertoire in the Evenings on the Roof concerts from your file of Script reviews.

MORTON: That's right. In January, I have some references to music by Harold Shapero, Charles Ives and Paul Hindemith. Ives continues, as you see, to be a fairly solid item in the repertoire, and Hindemith, too. This is about the time that Hindemith was writing a big series of sonatas, starting at the top of the orchestra score page with flute, and going right down the list of instruments--sonatas for flute, alto flute, oboe, English horn, and so on. This was, of course, a boon for repertoire in concerts such as these.

But let me finish first about the Ives and Shapero pieces. Harold Shapero was a young man in those years, twenty years ago, and he was in the Aaron Copland circle in the East. He wrote a four-hand piano sonata that has always been a favorite, and Ingolf Dahl was more or less the champion of this piece. He gave several performances of it during the years; as a matter of fact, it was repeated at one of our concerts only a few seasons ago. A

very bright interesting piece in the neoclassical style. I think this was probably the first time that Shapero had been on these programs. I remember a discussion I had outside the concert hall with Ingolf Dahl after the performance. Although it was in neoclassical style, the sonata was fairly irregular in terms of rhythm, and I remember saying to Ingolf Dahl that it seemed to me the music was limping along as though it were a wagon on three wheels. Ingolf made a remark that I'm afraid I don't quite remember--it had something to do with symmetry, that the phrases were not symmetrically built--and I countered with the remark that I didn't know that asymmetry was any more of a virtue in itself than symmetry had been a virtue in other kinds of music. Why I remember that I don't know, but I can see ourselves standing in front of the KFWB studio discussing it, and I know that Ingolf was smiling because I can see him as clearly as though he were here.

The Ives on that program was the First Sonata for Violin and Piano, and I point out that there's no use in applying the usual criteria of music to Ives because he was just too independent a composer. The phrase that I use here is, "The sonata has no homogeneity whatever. It rambles midst pleasures and palaces; it reminisces over

the history and scenery and people of New England. It is diffuse and unorganized, and yet it has the unmistakable mark of a composer who is both original and profound, a mark which is as personal as a fingerprint." I think I'd stick with that; I've been looking at some Ives recently and he is of course a very, very uneven composer. But his ideas are always original and fresh, and impractical. A performance of a good Ives work is an important experience.

TUSLER: Is it still being performed today as much as it was at that time?

MORTON: Oh, yes. Right now there is a big Ives movement going on again, a sort of revival. You remember the Fourth Symphony was played just a few months ago in New York, with a special grant from one of the foundations to guarantee sufficient rehearsal, because it was a very, very difficult piece to put together. We're going to have some new Ives pieces on our concert just a few weeks from now.

At this particular concert, however, the big event was a work I think I referred to last time, the Hindemith song cycle Das Marienleben, with the poems by Rilke dealing with the life of Mary. It was performed here by Sara Carter and Ingolf Dahl. I have a rather long and detailed review of that piece, dealing not only with the music but

with the poetry, because the poetry itself is quite extraordinary, although I'm not skillful enough in German to understand the fine poetic points of it. I know the poems mostly through the translation by M. D. Herter Norton.

There are marvelous things in this piece, some of which I regret to say were edited out by Hindemith when he made his revision of the work. I've always preferred the original version to the revised version. I mention here one of the places that was most striking and which unfortunately Hindemith took out. It has to do with the song, "The Annunciation to Mary," and the lines are, "Not that an angel entered, mark this, was she startled, little as others start when a ray of sun or the moon by night busies itself about a room would she have been startled by the shape in which the angel went."* The music at this point is quite extraordinary in that it sounds at the top of the piano like tiny trumpets; it gives you the sense of distance and also has a sort of impersonal quality, for this angel is not a person. It's a very, very beautiful moment, a tiny motive of only about four or five notes which is repeated in various tonalities. I thought this

*Norton translation not available for verification. [Ed.]

was one of the most poetic and beautiful conceptions in the whole work. Hindemith, however, didn't agree, because it's gone in the new version.

A few years later, it must have been around 1955 or '56 when I was directing the Ojai Festivals, I invited Nan Merriman, our great Los Angeles mezzo, to come to Ojai and sing it provided she would sing the original version, and she did. I can remember--Ingolf played the piano for her, by the way--how marvelously she sang that whole cycle, and this particular song, "The Annunciation," was really one of the high points.

This was a great evening for Evenings on the Roof, because it was the first opportunity we had had to hear the Marienleben, although Ingolf Dahl had known it for many years when he was still going to school in Zurich. The piece was written in the 1920s, so it was already twenty years late in coming to Los Angeles, but it needed someone like Ingolf Dahl to push a performance. And we were fortunate in having Sara Carter. It's one of the most difficult pieces, not only from the standpoint of notes--the pitches are hard to find; it's an extremely dissonant piece--but because it runs for something like forty or forty-five minutes, and there's continuous

singing. So one needs endurance, and the songs get more and more difficult toward the end. That was a memorable concert. It must have been in January '46, because the review was from the issue January 19. See what an opportunity Evenings on the Roof had and was making good use of.

Now it seems to me almost a shame that I should have been able to write in February of '46 that I was hearing for the first time a Mozart quintet for violin, two violas, bass and horn. It's not a normal combination of instruments, and so one wouldn't expect to hear it at the normal chamber music concerts. Here was a performance by a violinist who's still very active in the studios, Anatol Kaminsky, Abraham Weiss, Leon Fleitman, Wendell Hoss was the horn, and the bass player was [Schull] Lipschutz, a great artist who'd been in the symphony for a number of years. Wendell Hoss, one of the great horn players in this community, is now a rather elderly man of perhaps seventy, but he's still playing and he's still playing very, very well. Lipschutz has since passed away. But this was a marvelous occasion.

We've had that quintet several times since this first time in '46; an extraordinary piece. The last time we

had it I remember that Wendell Hoss was still doing the horn part, and I can remember that backstage with me at that time was a young man whose name I don't recall--he was helping to move the piano and arranging chairs on the stage and so on. He was a horn student, and he sat backstage in a chair holding an imaginary horn in front of him and going through all the finger motions, and when he wasn't miming the horn part he was conducting. I remember that after the first movement, Wendell Hoss got out of his chair and came backstage and said that this boy would have to stop, he couldn't play because he could see every motion he was going through and it so disturbed him that it was almost like working in front of a mirror.

At this same concert I remember that Ingolf Dahl introduced us to, of all things, some music by Grieg, a composer who is not likely to be included in our repertoire. Ingolf had come across some dances by Grieg that were based on folk material, and he was so amazed by them that he thought they ought to be heard. And they were quite amazing, because at that time, quite without any scholarship of the type that we associate with, say, Bartók, Grieg was handling this folk material in an extremely advanced and interesting way. Ingolf, of course,

heard in this town.

As a matter of fact, in talking to Leonard Stein just a few weeks ago, apropos of the Schoenberg music that Mehta is doing this season with the Philharmonic--unfortunately we haven't heard the Violin Concerto here yet--I suggested to Leonard, "What about doing it with the piano accompaniment?" Just so we'd have a chance to hear the piece. Leonard was very much opposed to that. He said, "No, that's not our responsibility; that's the responsibility of the orchestra--they should get that piece played."

And there are a few violinists around who do play it. But judging by the audience reception of the earlier Schoenberg pieces this season at the Philharmonic, I think it will be a long time before we're going to hear that concerto.

TUSLER: They weren't too well received.

MORTON: No.

TUSLER: By the public, do you mean, or by the reviewers?

MORTON: By both, and also there are members of the orchestra who dislike very much playing that sort of music.

I have some adverse remarks about the concerts in

March of '46. I think I mentioned at one time that one of the basic principles of these concerts was that the musicians should play what they wanted to play without regard for audience. I don't think this was ever a dominating feature because, as I think I said, the taste of some of the players was so bad that they would have come up with awful music, and from time to time they did; in March of '46 I made some comments about such an event when Sven Reher, one of our very best violists, came up with what I called "a very shabby piece" entitled Concert Piece by Enesco, a Rumanian composer. I was not only interested in music in those years, I was interested in politics, and I pointed out that the appointment of this Rumanian composer to the Roof's roster of creative artists "is on a par with President Truman's appointment of Edwin Pauley to his cabinet. Fortunately we escaped Mr. Pauley, but we had to accept Mr. Enesco, whose transactions with the materials of music are very well oiled but contribute very little to the public weal." Not a bad sentence, I think. [laughter]

On that same program, Paul Bergstrom, a very good cellist who had just come back from the service, played the Fifth Sonata for solo cello by Bach. I've always

always having some attachment toward Scandinavian composers, was very happy to find these Grieg pieces that were not at all like the Grieg that we ordinarily hear, not sentimental--I refer in the review to Debussy's description of Grieg's music as "pink bonbons stuffed with snow." These Norwegian dances were not of that character, however; they were quite strong, rather brittle and brilliantly written for the piano.

Also on this program we had the funeral music that Paul Hindemith had written for the death of King George VI, but we had it in the performance for viola and piano instead of viola and string orchestra. Abraham Weiss played the viola with Shibley Boyes at the piano. It's a very beautiful piece. That kind of thing, the playing of transcriptions, is no longer a part of our activity at the concerts; we don't do any transcriptions whatever unless they have been especially made by the composer himself. And I daresay this is Hindemith's own arrangement, but the piece really needs the string orchestra. I've been a little bit tougher about that sort of thing than Peter Yates had been; he had gone so far at one time as to play one movement of the Schoenberg Violin Concerto with piano, and that's the only time it's been

contended that these solo pieces are not good concert pieces, and I've never enjoyed listening to them in concert; but I do know that they're masterpieces.

TUSLER: How should they be performed?

MORTON: Oh, maybe at home for a small group of friends, something of that sort. I supported my argument here by a long quote from George Bernard Shaw, who wrote about a performance of one of the solo violin sonatas by Joachim in London around the 1880s. I'll read this because what Shaw wrote about that performance I think is very funny: "Joachim scraped away frantically, making a sound after which an attempt to grate a nutmeg effectively on a boot sole would have been as the strain of an Aeolian harp. The notes, which were musical enough to have any discernible pitch at all, were mostly out of tune. Had he been an unknown player introducing an unknown composer, he would not have escaped with his life. The dignified artistic career of Joachim and the grandeur of Bach's reputation had so hypnotized us that we took an abominable noise for the music of the spheres." [laughter] Then I went on to say that Mr. Bergstrom's performance was not that bad, and I doubt if Joachim's was.

TUSLER: Why is it better to perform these works in a

small intimate situation than in a concert situation? What comes through?

MORTON: Well, it's not entirely a question of the music. First of all, there's not much sonority, and in a large concert hall I think that most performers are likely to force their tone because they know that they're going to have difficulty--not that this was being played in a large hall, but just the fact that there's a large audience I think has a psychological effect.

Then there's always the question of style. We really don't know, I think, how to play Bach. First of all, we don't have Bach's instruments, and what we have learned in recent years about Bach's violins, for instance, indicates that their sound must have been very much smaller than the sound of the present-day violin. The shape of the bridge had something to do with how one would draw the bow across the four strings to get a four-part chord; it must have sounded very different. Our whole school of string playing descends from teachers such as Leopold Auer, and we'd like the violin always to sound the way Heifetz's sounds, for instance, and this is not the proper sound for music of the late baroque period.

I think that the sonatas all require a long attention

span, and they do not have the kind of variety that we expect in music nowadays. This is partly a question of time, largely a question of performance style, and it's a question of the kind of music it is, which is intimate and profound. One must give attention to all kinds of details which the atmosphere of a concert hall is not proper for. They have become now virtuoso pieces in which performers want to show off their technique, and of course are showing off a technique that is not correct for this kind of music. I find them on the whole rather boring to listen to in a concert hall, but if you can sit at home and have a pause between movements, have a cup of coffee or a drink alongside, it just seems to me it's an atmosphere that is more conducive [to hearing] this kind of music.

Also at the concert there was a guest pianist, Andor Foldes, a Hungarian who devoted himself largely to the exposition of contemporary music, and he was playing some Bartók. He was playing Bartók all over the world, including the concertos. He was visiting in town and I remember we met him at a gathering at Peter Yates's house, and he did play part of a concert. He was a very brilliant player, a showy player, and I think the general

scale of his performance was always the scale of playing a large concerto against a huge orchestra even when he played solo pieces; I found it not at all good piano playing for this kind of music.

TUSLER: It was something rather unusual to have a person of international reputation appearing at the Evenings on the Roof concerts. Usually it was the local artist, who may have been of an equal caliber but without the reputation.

MORTON: Yes, that was extraordinary. We have done that kind of thing occasionally through the years, mostly because there was repertoire that we didn't have--we were not interested in presenting virtuosi of any kind; but he was offering Bartók and also a piece by Kurt List, Variations on a Theme by Alban Berg. He is a composer who has passed away now, very much involved with the twelve-tone system, not a great composer but a very accomplished one. This may possibly have been the only time a piece of List's got on our programs. It must have been that, plus the Bartók, that encouraged Peter Yates and the others to have them on our concert.

TUSLER: I don't suppose there ever could be an honorarium for that kind of figure--there wasn't that kind of a budget.

MORTON: No, I'm sure that he wasn't paid at all. That sort of thing still happens when we have guests from out of town--mostly, nowadays, composers--who perform and we do not pay them any honorarium that's commensurate with their work or what they get elsewhere. I think it's generally understood that these concerts are not rich, and we do not try particularly to get out-of-town performers, but if there are composers who want their works performed and offer to come out and supervise or take part in the performances, we're delighted to have them and sorry that we can't pay them. In this past season, for instance, we've had visits from two composers who conducted their own works--Charles Wuorinen and Harvey Sollberger. They both came from New York during a vacation at Columbia University where they teach; they were able to get grants through some university fund which took care of their transportation and hotel bills while they were here; so they came out at their own expense because they were eager to have performances of their works on the West Coast, and particularly at our concerts. The visits that we've had from Stockhausen and from Boulez have not involved any payment whatsoever, although I always try to give them a present of some sort because I think

payment of any money would be an insult considering what their normal fees are.

TUSLER: Are there any difficulties with the union on any of this, or do they make special dispensations?

MORTON: We've had very good relations with the union and they've been sympathetic on the whole. From the very beginning, the union agreed to the cooperative basis on which the concerts were originally run. The financial arrangements have changed throughout the years. The union allowed a special way of payment, which was payment by the work rather than by the evening's engagement, and that went on for many years. Then they insisted on an increase in that rate per work, and from time to time they have obliged us to raise our fees. Right now we are paying the normal chamber-music fee regardless of how many works a performer participates in. Right now we are living up to the ordinary union regulations as set down for any chamber-music concert; that's why through the years the greatest increase in our budget has become musicians' fees. It's a little bit more than half our total budget right now.

The musicians, of course, are underpaid. We say that musicians are willing to work at Monday Evening

Concerts for the pleasure of playing, though that is less the situation now than it used to be; and our meeting minimum standards of the union is simply an indication of this, that the musicians are still willing to make a sacrifice, because under the chamber-music rules of the union, rehearsals are not paid for, so musicians only get the union scale for the concert. That much of a sacrifice they will make.

Now the situation as it exists today is such that instead of paying them the minimum scale, we ought to be paying them way over scale as a sort of bonus. It simply represents the development of music in the community: the opportunities to play are so much greater that musicians don't need these concerts in the same way that they needed them before, although there are many performers around town who keep on saying to us that these concerts have been most important for them, not only in terms of their own opportunity to appear before the public, but also in keeping up with new techniques of composition and consequently of performance. They've all had to extend the range of their instruments, for instance; people are writing higher notes than they used to write before, and there are all

kinds of technical problems that are introduced to new music. The players do say that this is a great help to them in their commercial work.

This is particularly true of one man who plays clarinet, bass clarinet and saxophone. He hasn't been particularly active in recent years; but this season he did play saxophone for us, and he said to me after the performance, "It was really good for me to come back to these concerts. They're most important to me in that I have learned a great deal about the technique of my own instrument from being obliged to play this kind of music."

There are people amongst our musicians who are interested in music as an art and not just as a livelihood, and these are of course the kind of people we have to count on, the people who do perform for us mostly.

TUSLER: Under the copyright law don't you have to also pay for the music itself?

MORTON: Yes, and this is becoming an increasingly difficult problem for us. Music which can be purchased over the counter can be played without any fee, but most contemporary music is not being published in this way, particularly for chamber groups of, say, five instruments and over. The scores may sometimes be purchased but

the parts are on rental, and rental of music can run anywhere from $15 or $20 for a performance up to $100. Some difficult big choral works, such as the Dallapiccola Songs of the Prisoners, where you need choral parts plus instrumental parts, the rental fee is around, I believe, $125 or $150.

New music, of course, is more and more costly to us, simply because the cost of engraving or printing this music is so much higher than it used to be, and that has to do with the notation. You just can't write a staff nowadays and put a few notes on it, as one could do in earlier times. There are all kinds of tricks of notation, so that scores have to be drawn. It's a question of calligraphy, and some of these scores are as attractive as a Japanese drawing. It's very difficult to reproduce them except by having them drawn by hand very, very carefully and going through a photolithograph process. So even when these scores are for sale they're frightfully expensive. For instance, one movement of Boulez's Third Piano Sonata, which comes in a huge format with cutouts and so on, costs $18, and that's for one movement. So our budget for music purchases and rental is ten times what it was in the early days of the Roof.

TUSLER: Do you then have a library of these things?

MORTON: No. The ones that are on rental have to go back to the publisher, but sometimes we do purchase music and I've given, on behalf of the organization, most of this music away, some to the public library, some to the university libraries, always with the provision that we may call on it for use whenever we want it. There's no point in having it sit here in our office on file; it's much better to have it at some library where it can be used. I am avoiding the establishment of a library, although I do keep a list of the pieces we have purchased and given away; so if we do have a performance again, we know where to get the material. Of course, I'll have to confess that some of the things we have purchased have somehow found their way into my personal library. [laughter] But it's made up for because I've bought a lot of music on my own that's used in the concerts.

In June of 1946, I refer to a postseason tribute to Bela Bartók (I believe this must be just shortly after his death), the Second String Quartet, one that is still fairly in the late romantic tradition but still modern music, of course. I wrote a long review of that quartet, but the important thing for our purposes right now is that

it was with performances of pieces of this sort during that period that the American Art Quartet became established as a first-rate ensemble. Its personnel at that time was Eudice Shapiro, Marvin Limonick, Virginia Majewski and Victor Gottlieb. They had already been performing for several years, and they had had a very good opportunity at the Music Guild when, I believe, the London Quartet had been obliged to cancel a performance with Schnabel at the piano because of the illness of one of the members. The American Art Quartet stepped in and took its place and did a brilliant job, and they were at this time established as a first-rate ensemble.

On the same concert, this Bartók concert, Frances Mullen played the Piano Sonata, and Eudice Shapiro and Ingolf Dahl played the Second Rhapsody, which is a great piece. I concluded the review with the remark that this was "a great concert. Those who missed it should be reminded that they deprived themselves of a rare and wonderful experience." The concerts were certainly avant-garde, way ahead of everybody else in presenting the music of this great composer.

It was just previous to this that Bartók had been here. He came to town to give a piano recital at the

Ebell Theater, and he had a tiny audience. It was really tragic to sit in the audience with so few people, and then the next day to read the reviews that were really shameful, as though Bartók were a nonentity. He was of course one of the great figures. Though the audience was very small, it was fairly enthusiastic, and a nice thing happened during the intermission--the Hungarian community here (I don't know how large a one it is) was making much of the event, and at the intermission time, a group of young girls, children, dressed in Hungarian national costumes, came on stage and presented Bartók with a large bouquet. He was, I'm sure, touched and pleased, but he was not a demonstrative person and he behaved with great solemnity, didn't smile. I don't know that there's a picture of Bartók smiling; he was just a solemn man. He was also as beautiful as Toscanini. I think they were the two most beautiful faces of musicians in our time. I remember that many of the photos of Bartók I liked very much showed his face in various planes, something like an Assyrian sculpture in relief. In one photograph in particular, the light was focussed in such a way that he had many planes or surfaces on his profile, and it was very, very beautiful. Those of us who were interested in Bartók's music at that time were of course frightfully angry when we read the

reviews of this concert, and we were ashamed of the Los Angeles public for not having shown up.

TUSLER: What did the reviews complain of?

MORTON: Just that his music was modern; it was too dissonant--they couldn't stand that--and it was rather noisy too. He played some of his rather barbaric pieces, and it was just too much for these tender, unsophisticated ears. Of course, our own audience, which was accustomed to this sort of music, was not large enough to fill the Ebell Theater.

TUSLER: Was he a good performer?

MORTON: Oh, yes, yes, a very good performer. But the point actually was not how good a pianist he was; the attitude should have been: here is this great man in town, and if he plays a wrong note or you don't like his finger technique or anything of that sort, this is completely beside the point. You go there to hear an important composer doing his own music.

In the fall of the year 1946, when the concerts began again, there seems to have been a concert that allowed for a string orchestra, because I refer here to a performance of a Handel concerto grosso to open the program, and I went into this work with some detail simply because

it was extraordinary to have a piece of this sort on a Roof program. Also, a work by Miaskovsky was played, Sinfonietta for string orchestra, which was a newly published work; [Eric] De Lamarter's Serenade near Taos was played, and the Concerto Grosso of Ernest Bloch.

At the second concert of the season, there was music by Walter Piston, a Mozart piano sonata and the Archduke Trio, which I would say was a typical program. Again, the performance of the trio was given by the Philharmonic Trio, which I mentioned last time, with Maxine Furman at the piano, though there was a change of personnel--Martin Black was the violinist and Joseph di Tullio was continuing on cello.

It was just at this time that Peter Yates published a little booklet called the Fourth Report. He had written previous reports about the activities of the Roof in the magazine Arts and Architecture, for which he still contributes a monthly column--that's been going on for, I suppose, twenty-five years now. The Fourth Report was a booklet of sixteen pages, which gave a brief history and also summarized the repertoire that had been played so far. That repertoire, in double columns, runs already to a little over four pages, and it's really

quite extraordinary, the amount of music that had been covered in the concerts in those seasons.

Take a look, for instance, at the amount of Schubert that had been played already: seven piano sonatas had been done; the four Impromptus of opus 90; a small piano piece, the Fantasy for piano duet; the Fantasy for violin and piano; the Grand Duo for violin and piano; two piano trios; the A-minor Quartet; the Quartet Movement; the Cello Quintet; the Octet; and the complete Winterreise. Just next to that in the catalog is the Schoenberg repertoire that had been played in those seven or eight seasons: the Three Piano Pieces, opus 11; the Six Piano Pieces, opus 19; the Piano Suite, opus 23; the Dance Suite, opus 25; the Piano Pieces, opus 33 and 33A; the Variations on a recitative for organ, played in a transcription for two pianos; the first and second movements of the Violin Concerto; the Suite, opus 29; Pierrot Lunaire; Songs from opus 2, opus 3, opus 6; and the complete Hanging Gardens.

TUSLER: Does the list indicate whether they were Los Angeles premieres or not?

MORTON: I'm sure all the Schoenberg pieces were, practically sure; maybe some of the piano pieces had been previously played. Whether they were premieres is not listed here. Incidentally, showing the catholicity of

taste, here is Ravel: Gaspard de la Nuit, Sonatina, Le Tombeau de Couperin, the Duo for Violin and Cello, and the Piano Trio. The Duo for Violin and Cello is an extremely difficult piece, not at all in the popular Ravel vein, an exceedingly dissonant and difficult piece and not a surefire hit at all. In the list of composers here, there is a tremendous list of Mozart's music; Stravinsky; Bartók has a long list. The repertoire, even at that time, was way ahead of what had been going on anywhere in the city and ahead of what was going on anyplace else in the country.

There are some quotes from reviews at the end of this--very good reviews by the late Alfred Price Quinn, Shibley Boyes, who was writing occasionally as a substitute for Isabel Morse Jones on the Times, and also C. Sharpless Hickman, who was at that time writing on the Times. Here are quotes, for instance, from Dr. Otto Klemperer: "I consider the Evenings on the Roof to be a very fine institution. The programs give the audience both new and old music in excellent performance. I think they should be supported in every respect." Alfred Wallenstein made some complimentary remarks about the concerts; he was not vitally interested in them, but he was interested

to the extent that some of his own players from the orchestra took part in the concerts. There is even a quote from me--a rather extravagant one, I'm afraid. Nevertheless, the concerts had already made a reputation in the community and were highly regarded by important people.

TUSLER: I take it these publications were brought out from time to time. Were they done by Mr. Yates at his own instigation and at his own expense, or were they financed by the Roof?

MORTON: I remember that these were supposed to cost ten cents at the time, but I don't know how they were financed. This is called at the end, "A Roof publication of 5,000 copies for Evenings on the Roof." There were no subsequent publications, although Peter Yates gave subsequent reports in Arts and Architecture.

I continue for several more years writing reviews in Script. The reviews do go on through several more years, and I will refer to them from time to time; but from now on I think I will take my attention away from my Script articles and go into the published programs, where I can make a rapid review of repertoire.

It seems to me that along around 1952 is when I began to take an active part in the management and direction

of the concerts. Some time before that I became a member of the board, but I cannot find any reference to the exact year. I was invited to become a member of the board simply on the basis of the not always favorable, but always sympathetic--and I hope always intelligent--reviews that I had been writing in Script. I was by this time a rather close personal friend of many of the leading musicians on the roster of the Roof; and I was convinced, in spite of performances or repertoire that didn't please me from time to time, that this was without question the most important organization in the community, certainly outside of New York, for the performance of music that was not being performed elsewhere, both old and new. Such things as the Buhlig series of Beethoven sonatas, even though I was not a great fan of Buhlig, were terribly important, and even in some performances that I didn't like particularly, I always learned something. It was never my intention to go to any concert to agree with the performance, because the only performance I would like of anything would be a performance I would give myself. I was not a performer, but one thinks always in terms of "how would I do this if I were conducting it or playing it." In this respect, any performance of any work not given

by myself is likely to fall short of what I regard as the proper performance. All criticism is of course subjective, and I think properly so.

In any case, I was delighted, and I must say flattered, when I was invited to become a member of the board. I began to work mostly in the field of repertoire because repertoire has always been the primary concern: to find new pieces or to find old pieces that were not hackneyed.

TUSLER: That invitation came from Mr. Yates?

MORTON: I don't remember if it came directly from him, or if it came from the committee. I don't remember exactly how it happened, but I was certainly glad to be there and to be in on the inside workings of the organization. I thought I could probably exert some influence there, but most of all I thought I could probably be of some help--and I think that they probably felt that I could be.

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TUSLER: Mr. Morton, last week we mentioned briefly something about the Roof's program file, which is, I understand, incomplete, and you have only a certain rough assortment here which is also not complete. Is that right?

MORTON: Yes, that's right. The earliest batch of programs that I have is from the 1946-47 season which was called the ninth season. (Those numbers are not quite right because at the beginning I believe they started out with a series of six concerts or four concerts and they called it a season; so at the beginning there might have been two seasons in one calendar year. The number of the season does not exactly correspond to the number of years that the concerts have been running.) One reason my file of programs is not complete is that from time to time I've loaned them out to people who want to study our repertoire and then I don't get them back. I should be handling all this stuff as a library would handle it.

I have from this season, 1946-47, a file that must include maybe only a dozen concerts. Of course, we were giving a lot more concerts in those years than we do now. For instance, here's a program of December 9, 1946, where

we had a rather large cast consisting of the Pacific Sinfonietta conducted by Manuel Compinsky. Manuel was very active in the concerts in those years and then he got busy with other things, but he is a faithful member of our audience. On this program I see the Bartók Contrasts for violin, clarinet and piano. It's not listed as a first performance so I daresay this might have been already the second or third performance. The big piece on that program was The Chinese Flute of Ernst Toch for chamber symphony and soprano. The singer was Alice Mock, who is of course not singing so much any more but is doing a great deal of teaching; I think she's on the faculty at USC.

A program on the following Monday, December 16, I think I mentioned already, the Dowland songs sung by Alice Mock. I believe this was my first introduction to the songs of Dowland, and I remember that performance very well because Alice Mock had just exactly the right kind of voice for it and she sang with beautiful style. It was done with piano although it was originally written for lute or smaller keyboard instrument but in any case, I was very happy about it. On that same program, Ingolf Dahl played Aaron Copland's Piano Sonata. I think that

Ingolf played the best performance of that sonata I've ever heard, as I think back on the many other performances I've heard.

TUSLER: Better than Copland's own?

MORTON: Copland's own performance of the Piano Sonata I don't think I heard. I heard the Variations and I heard him play the Fantasy privately, but I never heard Aaron play the sonata and I don't think that he did very much, because Leo Smit was championing that work and still does play it. And then the Stravinsky Octet was on that program.

An interesting thing on this program is an ad for Evenings on the Roof recordings. I'd quite forgotten about those, but they were put out by the Alco Recording Company which was a project of the Compinsky family. It was Manuel and his sister Sarah and his brother, Alec, the cellist--he's passed away. I don't know that that project ever turned out to be a very successful one, but the repertoire was excellent. On one record there was music by Charles Ives played by Sol Babitz, violin, and Ingolf Dahl, piano: "Barn Dance" and the "Revival" from the Second Sonata. This is before the day of long-playing records; that's why only those small pieces were there. There was another record of Kurt Reher playing the

Hindemith Unaccompanied Cello Sonata that he had played in the 1940 and 1942 seasons, and one work called "Holiday for Four" by Ray Green, that was recorded by Abraham Weiss, Alfred Peterson, Adolph Weiss and Maxine Furman.

TUSLER: Were these put out under an Evenings on the Roof label?

MORTON: Yes, I believe they were; although the company was Alco Recording Company, I'm quite sure that those must have been issued as Evening on the Roof recordings. I don't think it went very much further than that, probably as most small record companies get into trouble in the matter of distribution, but in any case it was a good project and it got started then.

TUSLER: Were the records made from the actual performances?

MORTON: No, I think they were studio recordings.

This is the season when the concerts were being given at the Ebell Theater. I don't remember what year we moved into the Ebell Theater, but certainly we were there by the beginning of the 1946-47 season. What I'm looking for now in the file of programs is to try to find out exactly when Mary Jeannette Brown came into the organization as executive secretary.

During the early years, the whole business was being

carried out at Peter Yates's house with the help of his wife, of course, and in the organization were a number of hard workers, particularly a man named Al Spires, who served as sort of treasurer-bookkeeper, took care of the financial business; his wife, Elizabeth [Reames Spires], was a pianist and also played on some of the concerts. They were Peter's right-hand people. What happened to them, I'm not quite sure. In any case, the affairs of the organization became so complex that Peter had to have professional help, and around this time Mary Jeannette Brown came in as executive secretary at a ridiculously small fee. She did the telephoning and the things that Peter and Frances could no longer carry on, because you must remember that Peter was a businessman and was not available during the day at his office.

TUSLER: What did he do?

MORTON: Peter worked for the State of California Department of Employment, and his office was in downtown Los Angeles.

TUSLER: Spires and these other people that you mentioned, were not professional help?

MORTON: Oh, no, this was volunteer work. Among the other people who were doing volunteer work (I'd been in on some of the mailing sessions at Peter's house by this

time) were Volya Cossack, a pianist and a very hard worker in the organization, Shibley Boyes, and of course Ingolf and Etta Dahl. There was no professional help of any kind. I think that Mary Jeannette Brown was the first paid employee that they had.

Somehow or other it seems to me that this might possibly have coincided with the organization of the Southern California Chamber Music Society, which became a sponsoring group. That, of course, is still the sponsoring group of the organization and it seems to me that it was founded in the year 1946 and incorporated under the proper state laws as a tax-exempt, educational, nonprofit corporation. Mr. Oscar Moss was the leading spirit in that group, and I think that since the Chamber Music Society was going to guarantee the deficit of the concerts, it became necessary at that time to have a more business-like organization. I believe this was one of the reasons we had finally to come around to a paid executive secretary.

TUSLER: Was it formed primarily for the Evenings on the Roof, or did it also sponsor its own concerts or other organizations as well?

MORTON: No, it was formed for the support of Evenings on the Roof, and actually I think it was the intention of

the Mosses to carry on other charitable activities through the Chamber Music Society. I believe that they did establish a scholarship at USC, and I think that that was probably another activity of the Chamber Music Society; but of course that was done very quietly and very privately because Mr. Moss was never one to look around for publicity or any sort of acknowledgement.

The first season that I have any record of Mary Jeannette Brown's activity was the 1949-50 season, but I'm sure she'd been active before then. I recognize her handwriting on this folder addressed to me, so I know that she was active then, and on the program it even gives her address in West Los Angeles (she was receiving ticket subscriptions). So at least by that time she had taken over all the detail work of managing the concerts.

The big event of the 1949-50 season was the Szigeti concert, when he offered to play three unaccompanied Bach sonatas. It was his contribution to the organization, and we did make a good sum of money on it, I don't remember exactly how much. The concert had the A-minor Sonata, the C-major Sonata, and the F-minor, on January 9, 1950. That was really a major event. In that same season, Izler Solomon conducted a very, very interesting concert consisting of the Chamber Concerto of Alban Berg for piano,

violin, and thirteen winds, and ended the concert with the Mozart E-flat Serenade. That was also a very important concert.

Now, I know at this time that I was a member of the Board of Directors of the organization, but I still do not remember exactly how I came in or precisely when. Mary Jeannette Brown was, as I say, doing all of the planning, the getting together of the programs--of course, in close consultation with Peter Yates.

TUSLER: How was the board formed? What was the arrangement for that? Was it requested by Mr. Yates?

MORTON: I don't know exactly how it began, but it was a self-perpetuating board and I think the musicians chose their own members. There was some turnover every year. The main idea was that the group should continue being a cooperative group where the musicians had certain responsibilities, had to sell tickets and had to do lots of other things. The board met infrequently, but they did discuss such things as repertoire, financial arrangements between the players and the organization, the size of the budget, how much they thought they could possibly spend because naturally the more musicians you have the more expensive the program is.

One of the great programs around that time that I don't find here was the program on which Roger Wagner and Ingolf Dahl conducted respectively the Pope Marcellus Mass and the Stravinsky Noces. That was a remarkable program. The season 1950-51 was an extraordinary season also because there was a regular series of fourteen concerts and a special Mozart series of six concerts. Two benefit concerts were played by Joseph Schuster. He did the five Beethoven sonatas with Shibley Boyes at the piano. I believe that that season probably has the attendance record of all time for the sale of season tickets. It was an extraordinary season and it was very good. That was called the thirteenth season, and the list of performers is given here on the preseason bulletin. This was the season of the Palestrina and the Stravinsky Noces.

The season opened with the performance of the Messiaen Quartet for the End of Time. I remember that very well because someone had to go up and make a speech to apologize that there were not enough chairs in the hall. This was the little hall in the Ebell, not the Ebell Theater but the chamber-music hall, and some people who had bought season tickets could not find seats, whereas some people who had just bought single admissions did have seats. I

suppose a "clambake" is the proper term for it. Many people were unhappy, but that whole season was very well attended and represents first-class work on the part of Mary Jeannette. I think also that was our last season at the Ebell.

TUSLER: Was it considered quite an improvement when you moved from the KFWB place down to the Ebell Theater?

MORTON: Yes, of course; but the financial situation became a little tight because the Ebell was more expensive, although I must say that whatever it cost then is a tiny bit of what it costs now. The Ebell is a rather expensive theater now.

I see a couple of other works during that season that are worth mentioning. In those years there was an annual program called "Southern California Composers," or "Los Angeles Composers," and in this particular concert, which was in December, 1950, the composers were Lowndes Maury, Albert Harris, Edward Rebner, Gil[bert] Grau, and Gerald Strang. Lou Maury is still very active, although he hasn't done much at our concerts in recent years, but he has a piano school in the Valley, and he's a subscriber and comes regularly to the concerts. Albert Harris is still a patron of the concerts. Ed Rebner--or as his name was originally, Wolfgang--has gone back to Germany. He's

been living there since around 1955, I imagine; I visited him in Munich in 1959. He was very active here in the films as a pianist; he was a first-class musician and he composed and played at our concerts. Some of the best performances I can remember involved him. I remember a Schubert trio that he played with Eudice Shapiro and Victor Gottlieb that was one of the great performances. Gilbert Grau had a wind octet; he is not so active any more in these circles, but he is still working in television and films. Gerald Strang of course is still around and very active musically; he's gone mostly into electronic music nowadays. He was at Long Beach State College, then went out to the San Fernando Valley, and now he's back in Long Beach again.

There was an amount of Schoenberg being played. I see [Leon] Kirchner was here at that time and he played his Duo for Violin and Piano with Eudice Shapiro. He had just come out here from the East and had a number of concerts at City College here, but he was already beginning to turn quite a bit toward orchestral music.

I forgot to say that on the Mozart series there were usually two works of Mozart and one contemporary work in between. This particular concert on October 9 had Ives; the previous one had had Hindemith; and November 13

was the Schoenberg First Quartet.

TUSLER: Was the Mozart series an attempt to play all of Mozart's chamber music?

MORTON: Oh, no. That would have taken years to do. The idea was to play some of the Mozart pieces, some of the standard ones and some of the less familiar ones. For instance, I remember very well the performance of the Clarinet Quintet with Kalman Bloch, and then I remember too that we had some of the viola quintets. People could buy either the Mozart series or they could buy the regular series or they could buy the two combined, and here at the end of that program is a list of the subscribers. As you can see it's really a very long list. That was really one of the biggest years.

In the season of 1951-52 we moved into West Hollywood Auditorium, and this was because the Ebell was getting just too expensive for us. By this time, I was more and more active, but I don't believe I had become coordinator yet. Mary Jeannette Brown was still the executive secretary, and I remember working out this series of programs with her, where we decided to have two series of concerts--Series A of thirteen concerts and Series B of thirteen concerts. That's just twice as many concerts as we are

giving now; and they're published here, as you see, in the chart where the red was the Series A and the blue was the Series B.

TUSLER: Why is it that you're giving only half as many concerts now? Is that for financial reasons?

MORTON: Well, there are several reasons. One is that the amount of musical activity going on in the city has increased so much. In the early years there was no competition; of course, the Music Guild was on but they were programing very conservative repertoire played by traveling groups. But nowadays there's so much going on musically, with the establishment of community orchestras all around; every little city--Burbank, Glendale and so on--has its own orchestra, and there are chamber music series going on in the various community centers and colleges. There are so many musical opportunities for performance that the musicians don't need the concerts in the way they needed them before. Of course, budget became another factor.

This season, the 1951-52 season, ended with a project that I was personally responsible for--namely, a performance of the Bach Art of Fugue, with every Contrapunctus orchestrated by a different composer in Los Angeles. It

was an idea that we had borrowed from Ingolf Dahl who had done this in his orchestration class at USC with his students. We had orchestrations of the fugues by Ellis Kohs, the first one; Tedesco was in it; Don Christlieb, who helped me organize it--he was a bassoon player and he actually organized the whole group of players; my brother Arthur did one; I did two; David Raksin did one; I believe Ingolf Dahl did not because he was too busy at school that year. Of course, some of them didn't need any arrangement, the two for double harpsichords and one for string quartet. I made my debut as conductor in Los Angeles on this occasion. It was very easy to conduct because it was 4/4 and D-minor all evening long. [laughter] I made one mistake; fortunately, the horn players didn't do what my hands instructed them to do, and they played correctly in spite of me. I discovered that if one has a good enough orchestra, one can conduct. [laughter]

TUSLER: Did the composers get together and agree on a certain instrumentation beforehand?

MORTON: Well, we had the Los Angeles Woodwinds available. This was a group that had been organized by Don Christlieb, and it was quite an extraordinary group. We had in

it four of each of the woodwinds--four flutes, but four different flutes: that is, an E-flat piccolo, a regular piccolo, a regular flute and an alto flute. I believe we also had a bass flute, but there were four players in any case. In the oboe family, we had the oboe, oboe d'amore, English horn, and a bass oboe. In the bassoons, we had a contrabassoon; and then for some of the big fugues toward the end, we had a brass group--trumpets, trombones and horns--and we used a solo string quartet and two harpsichords. Everyone had to work with that group. I made a chart limiting some of the smaller fugues to some of the smaller instrumental groups, so that we had a constant change of instrumentation; the full group, I believe, was used only in two fugues. I think they were no. 11 and the final one. The final one, of course, is unfinished and we ended with the Bach chorale to finish off.

TUSLER: How did it come off as an entity, did it make sense musically?

MORTON: Well, it was an interesting experiment--no, not an experiment, but it was an attempt to present it in a certain way. No one knows exactly how to do the Art of Fugue--Tovey says, of course, it's playable on keyboard.

I know in earlier years it had been arranged for two pianos by Wesley Kuhnle, and I believe that he and Buhlig played it. Roy Harris has a string-quartet version. There are many possible ways of doing it, and no one knows what's authentic. This was no attempt to be authentic whatsoever; this was simply an attempt to show the music in a new light. My own opinion is now that I wouldn't be interested again in doing Bach that way; I'm not sure how it should be done, if it should be done at all, but it's an attempt that I would not be interested in repeating. I'd like to do the Art of Fugue again at our concerts, but I don't know how. I think to listen to it on the keyboard for a whole evening, since it is a long work, can be a little bit boring. Well, some day someone will get a new idea for a way of performing it.

TUSLER: Who played the harpsichords for it?

MORTON: Carol Rosenstiel was one--there were only the two fugues for which Bach needed two harpsichords--and Frances Mullen played the other. We had some staging problems here; I remember the harpsichords had to be on the floor below the stage because we couldn't get everyone on the stage. That worked out all right. The string players were the American Art Quartet. That was an exciting

season.

Now we come to the 1952-53 season, and this was the last season that Mary Jeannette Brown was responsible for--she went off to New York after that to have another career. She arranged these programs before she left, but her place then was taken by William Hume who served for a couple of years as executive secretary. The main idea of that 1952-53 season was a retrospective series of the music of Arnold Schoenberg, who had died in 1951. This was Mary Jeannette's final and no doubt greatest contribution, arranging these four Schoenberg concerts and the other concerts on the regular series.

The Schoenberg concerts were really quite extraordinary, when you think of the works that were done. This was possible, in part, because Robert Craft was now living in Los Angeles with Stravinsky, and he was able to undertake conducting such works as the Serenade and the Suite for septet, opus 29, and various other works. The list of Schoenberg works performed here is really quite extraordinary. I don't think there's any place in the world where that much Schoenberg had been done in a series of this sort. I see here the Piano Pieces, opus 11; the Book of the Hanging Gardens; the Six Piano Pieces, opus 19; and the Serenade. On another program, the Second

String Quartet, the Piano Pieces, opus 23, Herzgewächse, and the Suite for septet. Then the Ode to Napoleon; the cantata A Lover's Wish, from opus 27; The New Classicism, from opus 28; and the Fourth String Quartet. Then the Wind Quintet and Pierrot Lunaire.

TUSLER: These were separate programs that were entirely devoted to Schoenberg.

MORTON: Yes. They were included in the series, but those four programs were just Schoenberg works. The big production of that season was the Prisoners' Songs by Dallapiccola, for which Charles Hirt of USC brought in his big chorus. That's a very large work for chorus, two pianos, two harps and a big percussion section. So that was a very, very notable year.

TUSLER: How were the Schoenberg concerts received, was there a lot of enthusiasm?

MORTON: I'm afraid I don't remember exactly what happened there. I know for me, myself, it was a season of very, very great importance. Ordinarily I'm not much in favor of one-composer programs, but since Schoenberg had died the previous year it was certainly appropriate. I see also a program that I was responsible for--we did Stravinsky's Renard and Pribautki, and the Mozart Divertimento for three strings. That was a great program, and

I think Renard was a first performance here.

Bill Hume was acting as executive secretary now, but he was a young man, very much less experienced than Mary Jeannette Brown, and while I don't see my own name listed here as an official, I was certainly on the board. I remember that I worked very closely with Bill Hume and was responsible for the organization of a number of those programs. By the 1953-54 season, Bill Hume is still in charge, but as I look at these programs and look at the setup, the printing and so on, I see that my hand is there. I remember working on so many of these things. We had that season eighteen concerts. We're already down, you see, from the twenty-six we had had at the Ebell.

This was a year in which we tried a new system--that is, instead of selling season tickets we sold coupon books, so that you could buy a card of eighteen admissions for $13.50, and you could use those admissions any time you wanted, or you could buy a card of ten admissions for $9.00. This was a financial disaster. People would buy a card of ten admissions and gather their friends together and use the whole card, for one evening. Instead of paying the regular admission price of $1.50, they would get in for 90 cents. I remember how angry I used

to be when I'd see people come to the box office and buy a card with no intention of supporting the concerts at any other time. I can't say they had no intention, but at least what they were looking for was a bargain rather than a way of helping the organization.

TUSLER: Then I suppose the most striking concerts were the ones that were overjammed, and the others weren't properly attended.

MORTON: That's right; that's exactly what happened. This was also a year when we had some marvelous events--one was when we joined with USC (this was Peter Yates's plan) to present an evening of music by Ingolf Dahl. He had been away the previous year on sabbatical and was coming back to USC, and of course as one of the old faithful, the old guard of Evenings on the Roof, it was a very nice thing to give him an evening. That concert was held at USC, and we played a whole evening of Ingolf's music, ending with his Saxophone Concerto.

One of the other especially big evenings was the evening that we did the Mendelssohn Octet for Strings and the Monteverdi Il Combattimento. That was the evening Stravinsky was in the audience and listened to Il Combattimento. It was on this occasion that he said to me

after the concert, "An organization that puts on a program like that is going to be the dedicatee of my next piece," which turned out to be the Shakespeare songs that we did the next season.

Here again, Bob Craft was very, very active; I see that he conducted four or five concerts that season, and we were able to bring off some rather stunning things, such as the Stravinsky jazz, when we played Ragtime, Tango, Piano Rag-Music, the world premiere of the Preludium; we played the Ebony Concerto for the first time in Los Angeles. Stravinsky had made some special arrangements of some of these pieces because originally they called for Hungarian cymbalom, an instrument which is not available here, and he rewrote some of those parts for piano, as he also did for Renard.

TUSLER: Did he, himself, ever actually conduct on the Roof programs?

MORTON: No. He attended quite regularly when he was in the city, not off on tour, and was really a devoted concert-goer.

That same season we did his Cantata, and we gave the first West Coast performance of the Septet, which he had already tried out earlier in the year at Peter Yates's

house. We got a group together. Stravinsky wanted to hear his Septet before it was performed in Washington, and we got a group together at Peter's house and went through it. It was a surprise to all of us because Stravinsky was then, you see, getting into serial writing and the sounds were quite different than any we had heard before. I remember Craft conducted that rehearsal performance; Stravinsky was there, of course, and that was a very exciting evening. We performed it in March--this trial at Peter's house must have taken place in the fall. Its premiere was given at Dumbarton Oaks.

TUSLER: Did he change it after he heard it in the trial performance?

MORTON: I think he did make a few changes but nothing of any great significance.

That same season was the famous introduction to Los Angeles of the music of Webern. We had half a program of Webern, conducted by Craft. I remember that some of the negotiations for that program went on at the home of Oscar Moss. Craft was eager to make a whole evening, do practically the complete works of Webern in one evening. I remember I opposed it very strongly. I still didn't like this idea of one-composer evenings, and it

seemed to me that if each of these tiny Webern pieces was supposed to have the content of a large piece, one simply couldn't go through that many pieces in an evening. In the end, we settled for half a program, and the other half of the program was also one of the great events of the season, the Couperin First Tenebrae Service for tenor continuo. Richard Robinson sang it beautifully.

That was a marvelous, marvelous season; some less exciting pieces, of course. I see the name of Jolivet here and I remember the Jolivet Piano Sonata being a terrible disappointment. La Bonne Chanson of Fauré was [given in the version] with string quartet and voice, and I remember I was very unhappy with that, but I suppose it's a masterpiece of its kind. I remember here another program: I had come across some Bach pieces that were in the Gesellschaft, but not available in performing editions. We had four Bach pieces and for the first time we had Cantata 152, which is a gloriously melodic piece. We've done Cantata 152 I think three times altogether; it's a real favorite. It has just bass and soprano and a few instruments. Also on that program we did the Schütz Fili mi, Absalon with four trombones. That was the beginning of our Schütz kick, and we were on it for several seasons.

TUSLER: Who sang in the Schütz?

MORTON: That was Marvin Hayes, a young baritone who was just finishing his work at USC, and shortly after that he left. He's still singing but working mostly in New York. He went to Europe later and he's having a very good career. We had a group of four trombones that we were using in those seasons, really quite a remarkable group.

It was sometime during the 1953-54 season that Bill Hume left the organization in the midst of the season because of some other work that he had. He had been a part-time instructor at Occidental College, and in the middle of the season he had to leave. At that time, I took over as director, and now it's thirteen years. This was in the middle of the 1953-54 season.

TUSLER: What had been Bill Hume's connection with the group before he became the executive secretary? Had he been on the board?

MORTON: No, he'd not been on the board. He was a young man and was studying composition with George Tremblay. He was in the Music Department at Occidental but not full time and was also doing some work in the Department of Speech. He is now, and has been for several years, the director of all the activities going on in Thorne Hall

at Occidental; he selects those programs. He doesn't compose any more so far as I know. I don't know what he's doing with his music. But whatever it was that obliged him to leave, he did; so the last part of the season was my work.

Of course, with the end of 1954 we come to the end of Evenings on the Roof--it became Monday Evening Concerts. At the end of this season, Peter Yates retired completely. He had been in effect retired because he and Frances did no more of the actual work. Of course, everyone discussed the projects with Peter, but he had actually retired from the labors; and when he retired entirely at the end of the season he took with him the only property that the organization had, its name. But his arrangement, his agreement with the players, with the organization through all the years was that the name belonged to him and that the organization as operated could belong to the musicians if they wanted it, as they did. Although there were some very stormy times between, you might say, management and labor, and although the management was not operating for profit and the people who were labor were not being properly paid (they were paying themselves; it was that sort of organization),

nevertheless, there were some very, very stormy times then about the financial responsibilities and about the repertoire, about the general principles of organization--who should be on a committee, and should the committee have the say, and so on. All that sort of thing was going on, and there were some very rough meetings.

TUSLER: Because there wasn't really a formal organization or a formal constitution, or whatever, to control it all?

MORTON: No, and there still isn't; there never has been. One could see through the years, in the arrangements between the management and the musicians, that the musicians themselves were withdrawing more and more from everything except their playing; of course to prepare a program is a lot of work and that's why they wouldn't show up at mailing sessions, for instance. They couldn't take time to sell tickets and so on; they were just busy getting the music ready. And this was proper; it was a normal development, I think. As the organization grew, the audiences were becoming--well, they were increasing with ups and downs, you know; it was a fluctuating thing. Finding places to give the concerts [was a problem]--you see, we're now [in 1954] at West Hollywood Park and we've traveled around a good deal, and it isn't until now [1966] that we have a permanent home at the Los Angeles County

Museum.

The only stabilizing factor was the Southern California Chamber Music Society, and of course there were difficulties there, too. The one faithful person was Mr. Oscar Moss, who was president of the society and who was by this time making sufficient contributions in terms of money to solidify the financial standing of the concerts. But he had his difficulties, too. For instance, there was one man, a very wealthy man, who was perfectly willing to contribute to the deficit but only on the condition that he be able to sit on the program committee. He was a man who was very much opposed to contemporary music, and Mr. Moss had stuck with the point all the time that artistic matters were the business of the musicians and that the function of the Chamber Music Society was to guarantee the financial operation. So he had to turn down the considerable financial assistance from this man because there could be no compromise with the program policy, which had to be the work of the musicians.

TUSLER: And it still was, primarily, at this time the work of the musicians?

MORTON: Oh, yes, with much prodding from the very beginning from Peter and Frances. Mary Jeannette Brown had the

same problems, in trying very hard to get the musicians to be content with the best music, and of course always looking for new music, because as I know now even more than ever, the musicians themselves are not aware of, don't keep up with, new repertoire; they don't read catalogs, they don't read the magazines to see what's being played and what's being composed elsewhere.

When I took over the job completely I inherited, of course, the files, and I saw the evidence of a great deal of research that Mary Jeannette Brown had been doing--correspondence with composers, with composers' organizations in the East and with libraries and whatnot--always on the search for new repertoire. This was one of the things that I had helped with when I was just a member of the board, and it's really one of the most time-consuming and difficult things to do. Nowadays it's particularly difficult because when you get diagrammatic scores or aleatoric scores you can't judge their quality in advance of the performance. You look at the score and you can't tell if this is a good piece or not, and since advanced scores are advanced because they are hard to comprehend in terms of previous music, the selection of new music has been particularly difficult in respect to everything

since the Second World War. The choice of music, the judgment on music, figuring out what this means, how you play this and so on, has become increasingly difficult until, as I say, now if I pick up a diagrammatic score I haven't any idea if it's going to be any good or not. I have to judge on the basis of reports I've heard from other people or generally what I know of a composer, and some of these things turn out to be not very good. Some of them are excellent, and vice versa.

When Peter resigned and left the organization, I remember at the last concert of the year he came out on the stage and made a little farewell speech and told the audience that I would be taking over completely. In discussions with Mr. Moss, since we had to find a new name, we decided on Monday Evening Concerts because we were already running into conflicts of date with other organizations, particularly the Music Guild, which had started as a Wednesday night organization but in order to accommodate the traveling groups that it was engaging had sometimes to take other days. Sometimes there were conflicts with Monday Evening Concerts, and we wanted to put a claim on Mondays because that had been our day from the very beginning. We thought this might be one way of solidifying our date.

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TUSLER: I believe the point where we are now is where you took over as manager of the Monday Evening Concerts.

MORTON: That's right. This is the first season under the name of Monday Evening Concerts. As I mentioned before, we chose that name because there were so many activities in town now that there was beginning to be some conflict of dates, and we decided we were going to put our claim on Monday evening, which we had already been using for some sixteen years.

The series began on September 20, 1954. I think I'll say a word about the organization itself at the time. We made it clear to the public by letter to our subscribers and by announcements to the press that Monday Evening Concerts was a continuation of Evenings on the Roof, that there would be no essential change in program policy, that the concerts would continue presenting unusual music, new and old, as it had for many years, and that the general scale of prices for season tickets, single admissions and so on, would remain in the same area.

The musicians were no longer operating, shall we say, as a cooperative; they were cooperative, but the organization was no longer a cooperative organization. The concerts were from this point managed entirely from the top; the musicians had no obligations whatsoever except to learn the pieces and perform them.

The sponsoring organization was the Southern California Chamber Music Society, which had been organized, as I mentioned before, in 1946 to support the concerts. In actual practice, the society consisted of Mr. Oscar Moss, who was one of the founders of it and now the president, and a few of the people who had also been in the society at the time it was organized. Some of them had dropped away, at least two that I know of, because they were opposed to the amount of new music that was done; they were traditionalists and wanted to hear the old repertoire. One of them subsequently became very active with the Music Guild, which was presenting the kind of music he liked best. I mentioned also another gentleman who had offered to share the annual deficit with Mr. Moss, provided he could sit on the program committee, but Mr. Moss rejected that, saying that the musicians alone were to be responsible for the artistic

policy. In the end [the society] was Mr. Moss, with a fairly large sum of money, and other people who became members and subscribed amounts of money in excess of the cost of season tickets. That was where our income was coming from.

We had continued having the cooperation of the Musicians' Union, Local 47; we had a special wage scale that pertained only to these concerts. At this time we were still paying the musicians on what we called a unit system, but already the character of the music was changing so that it was very difficult to work out programs in terms of payments for units, because units were becoming very small--the music of Webern, for instance, and as I'll point out in a minute, we were going quite deeply into some Renaissance and Baroque music.

TUSLER: Maybe you should go over that again, the meaning of the unit system.

MORTON: Well, in order to pay the musicians somewhat according to the amount of work they did, a unit system had been instituted some time before whereby a musician was paid ten dollars per unit on the program. A unit was defined approximately as a major work of, say, the size of a Beethoven sonata, which usually meant a piece

about twenty minutes long. No musician would be paid more than four units on a program even if he happened to play five or six, which would of course have made a very long program, though if a major work turned out to be only ten minutes long, it would be very easy to have six major works on a program. But in no case was any musician to receive more than forty dollars. This made it possible for the concerts to engage more musicians per concert than it would be able to engage if it had to pay the standard union fee per evening, and this was a concession that had been made to us by the union many years before and it did pertain until, I believe, 1959 or '60.

TUSLER: Did the plan come out of the Roof or out of the union?

MORTON: It came out of the union. I think it was probably Peter Yates's idea to start with, but that had already been going on for some time. Again, Peter Yates will be able to give the [details].

TUSLER: Did the foundation play a greater part now in the Monday Evening Concerts, with this reorganization?

MORTON: No. Financially, it stood about where it had stood for previous seasons--that is, it was to guarantee

the deficit, and most of this, as it turned out, came from Oscar Moss's pocket. But the society itself never did anything except take care of the deficit.

TUSLER: They had nothing to do with setting up the program committee or any of the other functions like that.

MORTON: No. As a matter of fact, I always discussed the season's plans with Mr. Moss so he would know in advance something about the size of the season that was being projected, and he would watch carefully to see that we didn't go beyond what seemed to be possible to achieve in the way of income from ticket sales. But he never said anything about artistic policy, and certainly by next time I want to say something about him in connection with his passing and a concert that we produced in his memory.

Well, for the season 1954, which was at the West Hollywood Park on San Vicente, our season subscriptions were $9.60 for twelve concerts, which meant about 80 cents a concert. Single admissions were $1.50 and student tickets were 75 cents.

By this time, my address had become the address of the concerts; previously, of course, it had been Mary Jeannette Brown's and then Bill Hume's, and it had been

mine now, off and on, for the previous couple of seasons. But now it was definitely. I had the position of executive director.

I should say one other thing: that during this season and a couple of succeeding seasons, I was working very closely with Robert Craft, and he had what I suppose I must now view as an inordinate number of appearances per season. But he did have repertoire ideas that were far more interesting than anyone else's, and there was no point in holding any of these ideas in reserve as long as they were his and they were good ideas. I know that I was very much criticized for giving Craft so much to do during these concerts, but it seemed to me perfectly reasonable that if he had the ideas and was interested in doing the work, why not go ahead with it? So during these years, these couple of seasons, Bob Craft and I were having a sort of holiday with the music of Schütz, Bach, Monteverdi, some Gabrieli and other early Baroque, late Renaissance composers.

The first program featured the first performance of Stravinsky's piece in memory of Dylan Thomas. I should say also that such things as premieres of Stravinsky works would not have come to us without Bob Craft's interest in the concerts because it was he that would ask Stravinsky

for them, and in the previous seasons we had already had a number--we'd had the Shakespeare songs, which I mentioned before and which were dedicated to Evenings on the Roof.

Incidentally, I suppose I might as well mention that when Evenings on the Roof went out of existence as a concert-giving organization and was taken over by Monday Evening Concerts, Stravinsky himself was rather irritated. He said he hadn't meant that his Shakespeare songs should be dedicated to an organization that was already dying, and that he felt that as long as he had dedicated a work to Evenings on the Roof he would have hoped that Evenings on the Roof would have kept on going. (Well, the concerts did, but the name didn't.) He felt that the dedication was to the organization rather than to any individual or anything of that sort. Consequently, he was disappointed that after Evenings on the Roof had appeared as the dedicatee, it went out of existence. Well, it's a small point.

TUSLER: I wonder if a lot of people didn't rather feel that way when the change was made, that it was the death of something?

MORTON: Well, in a sense it was, but it was the death

only of the--well, I can't even say the death of the name, because Peter Yates kept on with some other activities, particularly on KPFK, where he continued to use the name; but the name was his and he was legally entitled to take it off with him. Of course, it's been hard to establish the name Monday Evening Concerts. There are many, many people around who still speak of it as the Roof. For many years I was making that error myself. Well, in any case, we were now Monday Evening Concerts, for better or for worse.

TUSLER: Before we get on into the programs of this season, I would like to ask you to describe something more about the organization itself, aside from Mr. Moss's foundation. How was the actual working part of it structured? I mean, how did you, for instance, become the executive director? What was the channel? What was the process involved?

MORTON: Well, there was some controversy within the organization that involved Mr. Moss and Peter Yates; in a way it was an aftermath of the retirement of Bill Hume from the directorship. I must say that insofar as these happenings were not entirely pleasant, I'm glad to say that I've forgotten most of the details. At the final

concert of the previous season, Peter Yates had made a show of continuing friendship for the organization by going out on the stage and announcing that he was retiring and that he was taking the name with him, and that the concerts would continue under my direction. He brought me out on stage and there was an amount of applause and so on; and everything seemed to be friendly, and it was friendly. The differences of opinion were about policy, about how to run the concerts, and so on, and there never was any serious personal animosity anywhere.

But actually as this season began, I was willing to recognize, as I think Peter Yates was not, that the musicians did not want a cooperative organization. They didn't want to do any more work; all they wanted to do was play. Since I had found that the musicians themselves had very few notions about new repertoire, it just seemed much better to me that the organization should be run by the top openly, where previously it had been run from the top while the illusion of cooperation was there. I don't think Peter Yates would agree with that, but this was my very, very strong feeling. I think Mr. Moss felt, in some ways, very much the same about the Southern California

Chamber Music Society, that he was the major donor and as long as he was willing to supply money for the deficit he, as he undertook those chores, also undertook the responsibility of being the society, and in effect he was. I never discussed any of the concert business with anyone except Mr. Moss; I mean, from the business end there was no one else to whom I was accountable, and as I say, the musicians were happy to be relieved of the responsibility.

As a matter of fact, some time earlier--I don't remember the exact year of this--there was a determined effort on the part of the musicians to take over the complete direction of the organization. This was during the time that Mary Jeannette Brown was executive secretary. I think there were probably some political overtones here, but I had said at that time, well, if they want to do it, let them do it. There was a series of meetings, and in the end they had complete control. I announced that if they had complete control they were now going to undertake to do all the work, and while I myself would have nothing further to do with the organization from the standpoint of doing any work, I would still be glad to consult with the individuals about

repertoire and so on.

Immediately, when they found out that they had to do all the work, they were through. I remember the next morning a delegation came to call on me and asked me if I wouldn't resume, and I said, "Oh, I don't know--why don't you go over and talk to Peter Yates about it?" Well, they threw the whole thing back in Peter Yates's lap, and then we just simply resumed the way we had been before.

TUSLER: What was your position at that time?

MORTON: I was called coordinator, which presumably was someone operating between Peter Yates and Mary Jeannette Brown, who was executive director. You might say it was an advisory position, that's all, because I knew a great deal about music and I had been working closely with Mary Jeannette Brown.

TUSLER: It had mostly to do with the programing and lining up the musicians for the performance?

MORTON: That's right. Mostly repertoire. I don't remember exactly how this particular job became established. It was because Peter was gradually retiring from active work. He had done his job over a long period of time and he was just tired of it. He wanted to do other things,

although he of course wanted the concerts to continue.

TUSLER: Where was the board in all this?

MORTON: Well, there was a board of musicians, but I don't see them named anywhere on our literature. It seems to me that probably even our letterheads, of which I don't have a copy, probably carried no one's name except the name of the executive director. I suppose there must have been a board, but actually it was more or less of a personal operation, with Mr. Moss being at the financial head of the Southern California Chamber Music Society, and myself doing all the work.

TUSLER: This is after you'd taken over, now, as executive director.

MORTON: Yes. Now, of course, both Mary Jeannette Brown and Bill Hume had been paid a very small amount of money, and when I took it over I simply got that small amount of money myself. It was, of course, a ridiculously low salary, but it was musically very, very satisfying and I had other income from other jobs. This was, at that time, not quite a full-time job as it's since become.

TUSLER: Were you still reviewing at that time, or had that discontinued?

MORTON: I think I was doing some writing. The magazine,

Script, had gone out of existence I think before this time, but I was writing for other magazines and doing some writing for other sources of income. With the 1954 season, I was getting whatever salary was available from the concerts and I was running them by myself, but of course always in very close cooperation with the musicians, particularly the most creative ones who had program ideas, such as Bob Craft and Ingolf Dahl and Leonard Stein. Those people, I suppose, must have been considered as board members--I just don't have any literature on it and I've forgotten those details.

TUSLER: Is there a board presently?

MORTON: Oh, yes.

TUSLER: This is something that evolves a little bit later, and we'll get to this as you discuss it.

MORTON: Maybe so. I'll look some of this up in the minutes of the Southern California Chamber Music Society. Of course, for legal reasons, since we were a State of California corporation--educational, tax-deductible and so on--there were certain legal records that had to be kept, and I can look those up. I think that the status of the board can be found there.

TUSLER: There was no such thing, then, at this time, as

a program committee?

MORTON: No. There has never been, at least in my time, anything like a program committee, although in earlier days there were meetings involving a great number of musicians where program ideas were discussed. As I remember those meetings, it was the same people, such as Peter, Mary Jeannette Brown, Ingolf Dahl, Edward Rebner was still around in those years, the same people coming up with the ideas because they were the people who knew the literature and were keeping in touch with new things as they were published. We were all reading magazines, of course, to find out what was going on in New York and in the music centers of Europe, and so we knew most about what repertoire was available and consequently we were always the ones who could make the suggestions.

TUSLER: But it wasn't a really formally organized sort of thing, as you remember?

MORTON: No. Our formal organization has been just sufficient to satisfy the laws of California as a nonprofit educational corporation, and of course all our financial reports have been filed properly. Mr. Moss was both a lawyer and a public accountant (his business was some sort of investment business; I never understood quite

what it was), but his secretary took care of all of those legal things, and then subsequently his son, Conrad Moss, who is now a judge of the Superior Court, took care of some of these details for us. Now we have other machinery for taking care of them. But all those things have been very faithfully carried out according to the requirements of the law. But in every other way, the organization has always been very loose and informal; and I won't say haphazard, but we take our ideas where we can find them. While I want to claim credit for lots of the ideas, I can't claim them all because both Craft and Ingolf Dahl, I think, have been the most creative people until recent years, when Karl Kohn from Pomona has been more active; he is a source of many, many good ideas. Organizationally, there's not much to say about these concerts because, as I say, we're loose.

TUSLER: That's just what I wanted to know. Do you have the minutes, by the way?

MORTON: Yes, I have them, but they're put away. I only take them out about once or twice a year to file minutes of the annual board meeting. I'll look them up for next time.

So, in this season of 1954-55, we began with the

premiere of Stravinsky's In Memoriam Dylan Thomas, and an amount of Baroque music by Purcell, Gabrieli, Gesualdo, Schütz, Bach. At the opening concert, which was entitled "A Dylan Thomas Memorial Program," since Thomas had died just the previous year, we had the good fortune of bringing in Aldous Huxley to speak a word about Dylan Thomas. I remember we had a very large crowd; poets from all over town were there, and I remember that in preparation for this concert, a great many poets had been sending their poetry to us thinking that it would be appropriate to read it. Of course, almost every one of them had to bring in the famous poem that Thomas had written about the death of his father that had the refrain line, "Rage, rage against the dying of the light." Everybody was quoting that line as though Dylan Thomas had composed only one poem in his whole life.

Well, we began with Gabrieli, Purcell's Music for the Funeral of Queen Mary, a ricercar by Willaert, and because we had four trombones for the funeral music and four trombones for the Stravinsky, we did the Schütz Fili mi, Absalon, which is for bass voice with four trombones. This was our four-trombone period, and I remember that I had arranged a number of pieces for that

combination of instruments.

Huxley spoke about Dylan Thomas, spoke very, very touchingly, of course. Huxley came into the picture through Stravinsky through Craft, although Huxley and Stravinsky had been coming to the concerts regularly and they'd often be seen sitting together down in the front row. Then we had recordings of three poems of Dylan Thomas recited by himself, and this of course was something very dramatic, very exciting, and very beautiful, followed by the premiere of the Stravinsky _In Memoriam_. Then we had an intermission, repeated the Stravinsky because it's not a long work, and ended the program with Bach's Cantata 106, _Gottes Zeit ist der Allerbeste Zeit_.

TUSLER: Marvelous program.

MORTON: It was. Stravinsky was very happy with it. He liked very much having his own works performed in the context of old music rather than other new music, of course; and to have had Huxley there was a great treat because he not only spoke so beautifully, but he also was such a marvelous man to look at. One of the most beautiful heads, I suppose, that any man has ever had.

TUSLER: Is there a copy of that speech or a tape recording of it?

MORTON: It was not taped, because according to the union regulations we're not allowed to do any taping. It seems to me that this little memorial speech about Thomas was subsequently printed in Esquire magazine--I'm not sure about that. I'm quite sure that Bob Craft has a typewritten copy of it. That was really a very brilliant evening, and for the rest of that season we had a number of literary people coming to the concerts. But gradually their interest lagged; not very many of them stayed on, although I still have in my mailing file a number of address cards with the notation up in the right-hand corner, "D.T. concert," which means unfortunately "delirium tremens" but also the initials for Dylan Thomas, who had drunk himself to death.

TUSLER: Who were some of the literary people who were your supporters?

MORTON: Well, in those years, again it was the Stravinsky-Huxley combine; Christopher Isherwood used to come, though I'm quite sure that he hated music, but being an Englishman of course he was a close friend of Huxley. Gerald Heard used to come quite a bit. They never came

alone; they always brought friends with them. Then there were lesser literary people whose names didn't mean much to me except that they identified themselves to me as literary people. Many of them were would-be poets who wanted to have their poetry read also, you see, right along with Dylan Thomas's.

TUSLER: Why did you think that Isherwood hated music?

MORTON: Well, I used to see him rather frequently at Stravinsky's house and he made remarks about not liking music, and subsequently it seems to me that he wrote something [on this subject]. Craft and [I agreed] that Isherwood was not to be counted as interested in music at all.

That was a very marvelous opening of the season. For the next concert we had another first performance of Stravinsky, which meant that Craft was once again concerned in the concert. The piece that we had this time was a revision of one of Stravinsky's earlier pieces, the Four Peasant Songs for unaccompanied women's voices, which had originally been published I think in the early 1930s, although the pieces had been written in Switzerland around the time of the First World War. They were Russian humorous texts, probably taken from

one of the early Russian authors whom Stravinsky was interested in at the time. These four choruses for women's voices were revised, some of the songs were lengthened a little bit, and they were now given [an instrumental] setting of four horns. The horn parts were fantastically difficult. There was a lot of rehearsing to get those ready. They were sung and were very, very successful. Subsequently they were recorded in the album of Stravinsky's chamber music, along with the Dylan Thomas and the Shakespeare songs which we had done the previous season.

We introduced at this concert also the young German composer Giselher Klebe, a piece of his called Roman Elegies, after poems of Goethe, for speaker, piano, harpsichord, and double bass. The speaker for this was William Schallert, who is I believe the son of the Schallert of the Times, who had been active in theatrical circles around here. We of course had to have the poems translated into English, and it was a recitation job. Leonard Stein was in charge of that performance.

TUSLER: He directed it?

MORTON: Well, it wasn't actually conducted because it was not that big a piece, but Leonard led it from the

piano. Then, just to show our broadmindedness, we played a suite for wind instruments by Richard Strauss, whose name has not often appeared on our concerts, but this was a piece for thirteen wind instruments and it seemed a good idea to put it on. Also on this program we gave the first performance of a Sonatina Giocosa for double bass and piano by Halsey Stevens--the double bass being there, you see, because we needed it for the Klebe and also in the Strauss. This was played by Henry Lewis, who was at that time a fairly fresh member of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and already indicating the talent that subsequently brought him into the conducting business.

TUSLER: He's the assistant conductor now, isn't he?

MORTON: No, he's not, not this season; he retired at the end of last season and went on to other things. He played the sonatina with great flair; of course, he was a marvelous bass player. I don't know if he plays the instrument any more. Halsey Stevens had written this piece for Monday Evening Concerts and it was dedicated to Monday Evening Concerts; so we were very honored by that and glad to give the first performance.

The same situation exists now with a young bass

player in the Philharmonic, a very talented boy named Tom Pedrini. He has played at our concerts a great deal; he's in the orchestra and still working toward a higher degree, a master's or a doctorate, at the university. I think it's very possible that Henry was still working at the university, maybe toward a master's.

The next program still continued with a great deal of old music and some new music. Of the old music we had Telemann and Monteverdi and Schütz. The Monteverdi was one of the very, very beautiful small pieces called "Zefiro torna" for two tenors and continuo, a piece which Nadia Boulanger had recorded on that old, old album, and a piece which became very close to me. I remember that in 1956 when I went to Europe with the Stravinskys and Craft for the summer, when we got into the Mediterranean (we went by boat and stopped at Lisbon) and I saw my first dolphins, Craft and I were standing on the edge of the deck looking at the water, and Mr. and Mrs. Stravinsky were stitting just behind us. Almost automatically, without any preconceived planning Craft and I began to sing "Zefiro torna," because we were in the right atmosphere for it. It's very Mediterranean music. Well, Stravinsky laughed about that; he thought it was

very funny.

The new music on that program was a piece by Igor Markevitch, Serenade for violin, clarinet and bassoon, which was a Los Angeles premiere. It turned out to be a very disappointing piece. Markevitch was beginning to make his mark in Europe by this time as a conductor; he had written this piece in 1930 but it had never been played here, and in 1930 he was supposed to be a promising composer. I hadn't heard about the piece before, but it was listed in a catalog somewhere and I thought, well, let's do it, and we did, but with not very happy results. Then we had the Second Rhapsody of Bartók since Bartók was still a good composer for us, even at this time, and Bob Craft did the New Classicism of Schoenberg, for voices, viola, cello and piano. This was a sort of propaganda piece in which Schoenberg voiced his disapproval of the neoclassical movement, and it may have been aimed directly against Stravinsky, who was of course the figure in the neoclassical movement. Nevertheless, we did it, Craft being very much interested in Schoenberg's music at this time as well as in Stravinsky's. That was a distinguished program but, as I look at it now, I think a little bit choppy with its great variety

of music. Then we also had a Bach solo cantata for tenor, bassoon, and continuo, Ich weiss dass mein Erlöser lebt. Dick Robinson sang it, and we've done that cantata once or twice since that time. André Previn was pianist on that program.

I must mention here--since we talked about "Zefiro torna," which is a sonnet by Petrarch--that I looked it up in a book of Petrarch sonnets in English and printed it in the program, whereupon Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco who was in the audience pointed out to me that there were two sonnets of Petrarch beginning with the words zefiro torna and that I had been so careless as to print the translation of the wrong one. [laughter] This same situation has occurred this year apropos of the performance of the Schoenberg Serenade. Schoenberg says that the vocal movement in the Serenade is a setting of Sonnet no. 237 or 213, and I had gone to a book of English translations and discovered that the text that Schoenberg used was not Sonnet no. 213 or 237, whatever that number is, in the English translations, although we had printed the text incorrectly at previous programs. This year, however, I double checked and found out that the sonnet might have been that number in the German edition but

was not in the English edition--I don't know what it is in the original Petrarch, nor do I know who set up the numbering system on Petrarch sonnets. In any case, this time we did have the correct poem with the correct number, although it was not the number that Schoenberg had specified. Well, you see, I did learn something out of the mistake about "Zefiro torna."

The following program--we're in November now--we're with Schütz again for the third consecutive program. We did three of the Sacred Symphonies; we did some Bartók Violin Duos, twelve of them, and I remember they were a big hit; we did five Schoenberg songs, two of the early ones from 1907, and three of the very late ones from 1933, which were I believe published posthumously--at least they are listed here as a first Los Angeles performance, sung by Margery MacKay. By this time also an early quintet for piano and strings had been discovered--it's not included in the regular [list] of his works--a work that he had probably rejected; but we did perform it there with Leonard Stein leading from the piano. Then we closed the program with another Bach cantata, no. 131. So you see the general flavor of these programs now--a lot of Bach, a lot of Schütz, a lot of Monteverdi, Renaissance

music, and the new music centering around Schoenberg, Bartók and Webern.

Now we come to an important concert in our history, one that we produced in collaboration with USC and the ISCM [International Society for Contemporary Music] local chapter which had been reactivated through the work of Ellis Kohs out at USC. The program was sizable and one that we could not quite have financed by ourselves, so we were glad to do it in collaboration with these two other organizations. This was a program, of course, of contemporary music, and the composers were Klebe, Harold Shapero, Stravinsky, Ravel and Schoenberg. The Klebe was the String Quartet, opus 9; the Harold Shapero was an extraordinary set of variations in C Minor. The two Stravinsky works were the songs for soprano and nine instruments, including the three Japanese Lyrics, which had been originally composed in 1912-13, for two flutes, two clarinets, string quartet and piano. As you remember, Ravel had written three songs to poems of Mallarmé for that same combination of instruments, so they grouped themselves together very nicely [for the] program. And then just at that time Stravinsky had reorchestrated two early songs to poems by Balmont for this same combination of instruments, so that with that group of instruments

we had the Stravinsky Japanese Lyrics, the two Balmont songs and the Mallarmé songs. After intermission we had the Stravinsky Three Souvenirs of Childhood, songs with a small instrumental combination, which had never been played in this country in the instrumental versions though I'm sure had been sung in the piano version; and the Chamber Symphony, opus 9, of Schoenberg.

Well, this was a very, very good concert with first-class repertoire. But we ran into a disaster--namely, Bob Craft came down with a very bad case of the flu, and on the afternoon of the concert I was faced with either canceling the concert or finding some other way of bringing it off. It had all been rehearsed; everything was in pretty good shape. At the last minute, I thought of asking Ingolf Dahl to conduct the Stravinsky and Ravel pieces because he was, as he still is, a Stravinsky buff and knew the music quite well, although he didn't know intimately the orchestral setting of the Three Songs of Childhood. I called John Barnett, who was at that time assistant conductor of the Philharmonic, assisting Wallenstein, and who was doing a lot of other things around town, and asked him if he thought he could possibly get through the Chamber Symphony. Well, we had a rehearsal

at USC at five or six o'clock that evening. The musicians of course were ready; the conductors were less ready, simply because they hadn't done the rehearsals. But the concert did come off and Craft spent the evening home in bed. It came through quite well. The Schoenberg was perhaps the work that suffered most because it was the longest and required great concentration, and Barnett had said all that he'd possibly have time to do would be to run through it at a rehearsal and work out a few particularly difficult points; otherwise, he was simply going to conduct the time and the rhythm as indicated, because he couldn't possibly have time to work on it. Well, it came off. It was not a great performance of the Schoenberg, but it was a performance.

TUSLER: Was Barnett particularly good at doing modern music?

MORTON: No. Well, I won't say that he wasn't good at it, I would simply say that it has not been one of his specialties. But the opus 9 of Schoenberg is a fairly conservative piece, although harmonically it is difficult; it's full of subtleties, of course, that would be worked out in a fine performance, and Barnett didn't know exactly what Craft had rehearsed. So it was one

of those occasions, you know--Pagliacci, the show must go on, and it went on.

On this concert, I should point out that Marilyn Horne was one of the performers. She performed very frequently for us in those years, both in the group of singers who were doing the Gesualdo madrigals and doing solo pieces with us. She sang the Three Souvenirs of Childhood and subsequently recorded them, I believe, in that same album of chamber music.

TUSLER: Was she already a good performer then?

MORTON: Oh, yes, she had a beautiful voice. The point at issue between us and her at that point was that we were trying to convince her she belonged in the category of a high mezzo-soprano. She felt that she was a soprano because she did have the high notes--the quality of the voice is of course mezzo. Well, she's doing both soprano and mezzo-soprano things nowadays, but the quality of the voice was there and it was very, very beautiful.

TUSLER: This was before she had the reputation that she now has.

MORTON: Oh, yes. She was still a student, maybe a graduate student, but she was still working with Mrs. Koldofsky out at the university and was not by any means a

mature singer. She was a youngster, but the quality of the voice was there from the very beginning. It is an extraordinary voice. Well, maybe it's not up to me to say so, but certainly in the work that she did with us, she first became acquainted with contemporary repertoire and the very old repertoire, such as the Gesualdo things. I suppose that Monday Evening Concerts can certainly claim to have had some formative influence on her career.

At that time, there was a quartet in town called the Musart Quartet, consisting of Ralph Schaeffer, Leonard Atkins, Albert Falkove, and Emmet Sargeant. They'd been doing quite a bit of playing around town and were a pretty good quartet, but like all the quartets that spring up around town, they didn't last very long. This group was good and they did undertake, on this particular program, a rather difficult piece like the Klebe and then of course played the string quartet parts in all the other works.

Our source at that time for woodwind players was a very good group called the Los Angeles Woodwinds, organized by Don Christlieb, the bassoon player, and with them we had been able to play such exciting things as the big Serenade of Mozart, K. 361, which we had done a

couple of seasons back, and a big performance of the Art of Fugue, which we had done a few seasons previously (I think I mentioned that last time), and the Strauss Serenade that I mentioned on our earlier program. For this program we needed a large woodwind group for the Schoenberg. We worked almost entirely with that group as our source of woodwind players, and they were first-rate, good players, such as Bill Ulyate on bass clarinet, Hugo Raimondi on E-flat clarinet, George Hyde on horn, Arthur Gleghorn on flute, and so on. Those were all the very best players in town.

I'll go on now to the program of December 6, because that was a high point also; it was Schütz's Christmas Story in the very good edition by Arthur Mendel. We preceded it by a mass of Josquin des Prés, and the chorus was the Pomona College Glee Club under William Russell. I remember the Schütz performance as being one of the most exciting events in our whole history of concerts. It's a full half program, maybe forty-five or fifty minutes.

Immediately after that performance, Craft, the Stravinskys and I got on an airplane and flew to San Francisco. I remember that as we got on the plane and

sat down, Stravinsky began to sing the final chorus; and the three of us, Craft and Stravinsky and I, just had a marvelous time all the way up to San Francisco singing that final chorus, faking it, of course, but having a marvelous time. Stravinsky was conducting Petrouchka up there for one of the ballet companies, I forget which one, and we spent a week in San Francisco having a very, very good time. From time to time, when I see Stravinsky, we talk about the Schütz. He always refers to this performance and to this particular piece by the thing that interested him particularly in this final chorus, the hemiolas, the switch from two to three in the rhythms. Of course, the whole piece is so beautiful and so joyful, and full of such wonderful characterizations of the various participants in the drama, such as the four trombones for Herod, and that sort of thing.

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APRIL 21, 1966

TUSLER: When we were interrupted last time, you were still describing the repertoire given in your first season as executive director, the 1954-55 season.

MORTON: That's right. We had just finished the Christmas concert on December 6, and I'll proceed by looking at some of these programs now from January through the rest of that season.

We began with a program involving Ingolf Dahl and his friend and colleague, John Crown. They had had a project for a long time of wanting to do something about the Busoni Fantasia Contrapuntistica for two pianos, which exists altogether I believe in four versions, or in at least three, and the last and hugest of them is the version for two pianos. They had pondered very deeply the possibilities of doing this piece, which is a colossus. It's the high point, I suppose, of Busoni's development of Bach-like material. So Ingolf and John opened the postholiday season with this marvelous piece.

Ingolf was also interested at that time, largely through work that he had been doing with the Collegium Musicum at USC, in a couple of other pieces, particularly

one by John Dowland for alto, strings and continuo called From Silent Night, and a very marvelous piece that was new to almost all of us by Johann Christian Bach. This was a Lamento for the same instrumentation as the Dowland--alto, strings and continuo. The alto was a young lady named Teresa Hemmings, who had a rather pretty voice, not a great voice by any means, but it was very pleasant. She sang with good style. I think this was the only season she was with us, and I don't know what happened to her later. Also on this program, Ingolf and Milton Thomas played Ingolf's Divertimento for viola and piano, which had won the prize of the Society for the Publication of American Music, a big four-movement work which we repeated this season.

TUSLER: Had John Crown done very much work for the Evenings on the Roof before?

MORTON: Occasionally. He was not a steady performer. He's always been a very busy man at the university; he had a very large teaching schedule and is head of the piano department [at USC], so his teaching always took a great deal of time. He was doing a lot of things with orchestras around this state, some of those smaller orchestras, and playing recitals elsewhere, so that while

he's been, I would say, a more than occasional performer at the concerts, he has not been one of the dedicated and committed people, such as, say, Ingolf Dahl had been.

That program ended with the Brahms B-flat Sextet, opus 18. I remember that occasion because while I was looking for material last year for our concerts, I began to go through old programs to find what in the classical repertoire hadn't been repeated for a long time, and we did that sextet again last season. Here's a situation of musicians who were active for some time and then disappeared [from our scene]. Dorothy Wade and Donald Stewart were the violinists. Dorothy Wade played with us quite regularly through the years, and then about three or four years ago just dropped out of activity with us--I won't say out of boredom, but rather tired of it all. Last year she came back and played a very interesting program with us, and I hope that she'll be back with us again next year because she's one of the very best local violinists. Donald Stewart I remember only the name. Barbara Simons was the second viola; Milton Thomas was the first. Of course, Milton is still very active with us and Barbara Simons, a close friend of Dorothy Wade, is now very active, I believe, with the Santa Monica Community Symphony Orchestra.

The two cellists on that program, Alexander Reisman and Virgil Gates, have not been active with us at all in many years. I think Reisman is on the faculty at UCLA now in the Extension Department. Virgil Gates, I believe, plays very little any more and is in the electronic business.

The next concert, the end of January, had a quartet called the Coriolan String Quartet. That was another attempt to keep a local organization going, and the Coriolan Quartet was in existence over a period of maybe six or seven years. The guiding light in that group was a viola player, Abraham Weiss. He was the most faithful member of the group. The violinists were Bernard Kundell and Esther Rabiroff, and David Pratt was the cellist. That quartet has not been in existence for many years, although Abe Weiss does occasionally get some of his friends together and organize, you might say, an ad hoc chamber ensemble. They played Hindemith's String Quartet no. 6, a first Los Angeles performance. They had already been in existence in the times of the Roof concerts, and they will continue to show up in the next couple of seasons.

The big part of that program was given by the Alice

Ehlers Baroque Ensemble. Alice Ehlers had organized a group at USC, and she herself was playing the harpsichord, but her student Hans Lampl conducted. Since that time he of course has graduated; he has been at some Midwestern university for a few years and is now teaching at Long Beach State College, I believe.

It was a marvelous repertoire that she put together, music by Franz Tunder, Marc-Antoine Charpentier, J. S. Bach, Handel, Purcell, and Carissimi. It was a rather large ensemble. The singers were Phyllis Althof, Marilyn Horne, Margery MacKay, Lincoln Clark, whom I don't remember, and Paul Salamunovich, who is now a choral conductor and doesn't sing very much, although in those years he did a good deal of singing with us. The ensemble was seven wind players and the Trojan String Quartet, which was the student quartet on the USC campus. It would be interesting to observe that the first violinist in that quartet was Robert Gerle, who is now a rather important concert violinist under the management of Sol Hurok, no less. There was a chorus of perhaps twenty-odd voices.

The astounding works on that program, to me, were the Tunder choral aria, "Wachet Auf," which Marilyn Horne sang, and the Charpentier Dialog between Mary Magdalene and Jesus. That was sung by Margery MacKay and Paul

Salamunovich. The Carissimi oratorio was the Judgment of Solomon, with four solo roles plus chorus and instruments; that was also an astounding piece. Phyllis Althof sang the Handel cantata Lucretia, which we've had twice since that time. It's a huge work of perhaps fifteen minutes, alternating recitatives and arias, just with continuo accompaniment. On this occasion, however, Hans Lampl enlarged the accompaniment and provided parts for a string quartet, which was a legitimate thing to do, and it came off fairly well, but in subsequent performances we've stayed with the original, doing it just with continuo. Well, that was a marvelous concert, the kind that we never could have put on by ourselves because of the chorus and the large number of instruments.

TUSLER: Did Alice Ehlers put this group together from among her students?

MORTON: Yes, just her advanced students; or if they weren't her students, they were in the Music Department out there. For instance, Marilyn Horne and Phyllis Althof were never actually students of Alice Ehlers, but I think that Alice Ehlers must have been conducting the Collegium Musicum around that period, or maybe she and Ingolf did it together.

TUSLER: I think she started it and then Mr. Dahl took it over.

MORTON: That's probably so, yes.

TUSLER: Was this an organization that went on for several years?

MORTON: Oh, you know, nothing on the campus goes for several years because the personnel changes. In this case, I'm quite sure that this was Hans Lampl's last year, or very close to it. The name, the Alice Ehlers Baroque Ensemble, was a name that they took for the few occasions when they were doing this music around town.

In February we were back with the USC Wind Chamber Ensemble. We had been in touch with a number of the youngsters who had been playing there, but mostly with William Schaeffer who is director of the band there; he was wanting to get his group into community activity instead of limiting it to the campus, and he had some fairly interesting repertoire that we were very glad to have. We were, in any case, in those years cooperating very closely with USC because so many of our people were connected with the USC campus, there being much more practical music out there than on the UCLA campus.

TUSLER: Many USC people have shown up on the programs

and rarely a name from the UCLA campus.

MORTON: Yes. USC is a school of music and UCLA is a music department and interested mostly in musicology and education. They played the Sonata pian' e forte of Gabrieli, a marvelous piece, one of the great pieces of the early part of the 1600s; Morning Music of Hindemith for brass quartet, a piece which we revived just a year ago for the dedication ceremonies at the museum; Nonet for Brass by Wallingford Riegger; a quintet by Carl Nielsen; Petzold's Six Pieces for Brass; and I think I already made my speech about Richard Strauss, but here he is again with the E-flat Serenade, opus 7, for thirteen wind instruments.

That was an interesting program, and the piece put in for variety was the Quintet for piano and strings by, of all people, Hans Pfitzner. He had not previously been on our programs as far as I remember and certainly has not been on since. This represented again our search for romantic or postromantic music that was not being done to death in the regular concert halls. Hans Pfitzner is celebrated mostly for an opera on the subject of Palestrina, which was I think probably produced during the 1920s. His dates are 1869-1949, and I remember that this ancient man was one of the propaganda tools of the

Nazis; looking around for untainted, pure Aryan composers, they took Pfitzner as one of their great composers. He was a very respectable composer; I don't know anything about his personal politics, but in any case the situation was such that he fitted in with [the regime]. He was already a pretty old man at the time that the political troubles began over there. I remember that this was not a very great piece, this quintet, but as I say, it represented our attempt to find some fresh repertoire of a kind that was not very plentiful for us.

In the next program on February 21, Bob Craft was again leading things. He came up with some wonderful pieces, particularly a Mozart piece, originally for two clarinets and three basset horns, an Adagio, a piece of around eleven or twelve minutes and one of the pieces of the big series Mozart had done for the Masonic rituals that he was so interested in in the 1780s. We had to perform it with five clarinets because there are no basset horns around here. As I remember, we used an alto clarinet, which is an E-flat instrument, and it is not a satisfactory instrument from the standpoint of intonation, but we had used it in connection with a performance of the big Serenade, K. 361, and we had marvelous clarinetists around, such as Mitchell Lurie, who was the first

clarinetist on the piece, and we had Hugo Raimondi and Morris Crawford, Edmund Chassman and Merritt Buxbaum. Buxbaum is now with the symphony; Ed Chassman plays around town; Mitchell Lurie is--well, he's too young to call him the grand old man of the clarinet here, but he is a great artist. In this unbelievably marvelous piece I remember I was shocked and chagrined with the review in the Times--I don't remember if it was by Albert Goldberg or not. This piece is a clear masterpiece. An Adagio lasting eleven minutes is a lot of slow music, and it was dismissed as a work that was obscure because it isn't worth reviving, which is just the opposite of the truth--it's a real masterpiece! That was one of the most important pieces of repertoire that we uncovered.

Then we had the Goethe-Lieder of Dallapiccola. We had been in touch with Dallapiccola rather intimately in those years, mostly through Bob Craft's having met him in Italy during one of his trips over there, and Dallapiccola seemed to be the man who was the answer to what Virgil Thomson had prophesied. Just after the war, Virgil Thomson went to Europe to see what had happened to European music during those years and he found of course that serial music, twelve-tone music, was the dominating force; and

I remember his writing that if the twelve-tone system ever takes on any charm or grace, which according to him it never had during the period of the domination by the Vienna group, it would come out of Italy. And sure enough, it seemed to us that Dallapiccola was just that, and in a certain sense it was true.

The Goethe-Lieder is for soprano with three clarinets, and it was a very, very difficult piece to learn, harder in those days of course than it is now; but Marni Nixon was singing a great deal with us during those years, and for her it was not difficult at all with her sense of absolute pitch, so she learned the piece quite readily. The clarinet parts were difficult, and I remember a horror when the music arrived from Italy--the clarinet parts were all in C, they were not transposed at all, and Craft and I had to transpose all the parts. It was possible, of course, for the clarinetists to transpose as they played, but this is a very risky thing to do with difficult music. If one were going to play, say, a classical work and the clarinets happened to be in the wrong key, the transpositions are not difficult--the harmonic system being what it is and everyone being familiar with it--one can take the chance. But with this kind of music, it was not feasible

at all. This was a development of one of the things that Schoenberg had started, to write the instruments where they sounded and not in the keys necessary for transposing.

TUSLER: That seems a curious and impractical thing to do. Why did Schoenberg do that?

MORTON: I haven't any idea. I can understand doing it in a score for the conductor, but not in the parts. Nevertheless, we've had this trouble constantly with Schoenberg pieces. When we did the Schoenberg Septet, the published parts were in C. About three or four years ago we were doing that piece, and it was very hard because there was some mix-up in the rights to the Schoenberg music. This was around the time that Mrs. Schoenberg had declined to renew her contract with Universal of Vienna, who were Schoenberg's publishers. She wanted to keep the American rights herself; however, she did not have the music of the Septet, and we had to get it from Europe. The parts came, and all the clarinet parts were in C. We were in a hurry because it took so long for them to arrive from Europe--although I had asked to have them sent airmail, they came surface mail, which took something like five weeks--and we were almost in despair, almost ready to give up the performance when they finally arrived. And then, to get the clarinet parts transposed to the right keys--that is, an

E-flat clarinet, a B-flat clarinet and a bass clarinet--was a bigger job than I could tackle; I didn't have enough time, and we had a professional copyist do it. I remember that our bill for copying was close to a hundred dollars. So I treasure those parts now.

We had on this program also a Stravinsky premiere, that is, the Four Russian Songs for soprano, flute, harp and guitar, which were rearrangements of songs that he had composed around 1915, '16, '17 and '18, I believe, "The Drake," "A Russian Spiritual," "Geese and Swans," and "Tilimbom." The new arrangement Stravinsky had made was part of the process which he was going through in those years of getting new editions of his works out for copyright reasons; although these works had been published by Chester in London and were protected in England, they were not protected in the United States because of that same old copyright situation. Stravinsky at the time he composed these was a Russian citizen and Russia was not part of the Geneva convention, nor was the United States, so he rearranged many works of that period and they were published in new editions. Well, these songs are in the Russian style in which he was composing during his Swiss years. Marni Nixon sang them, and they were absolutely marvelous and a big hit. Just shortly after that they

were recorded, and I think that record is still available.

The new work on that program was Ernst Krenek's Parvula Corona Musicalis [ad honorem Johannes Sebastiani Bach], for string trio, a first performance here in Los Angeles. It was one of those involved, contrapuntal, serious pieces of Krenek and it had a literary background. The title translated is A Little Musical Wreath, in honor of J. S. Bach, composed in the twelve-tone technique by Ernst Krenek. He does all this in Latin; Krenek is a great scholar of old languages, and I imagine he can sit down and write in Latin just about as easily as he can in English. This piece is conceived as a wreath of small pieces dedicated to the art of Bach. It begins with a statement of the twelve-tone row and then he composed a sinfonia, using the four basic forms of the row. Then he has a section that he calls "Invocations," using a twelve-tone row deriving from the original row by taking every fifth note and going around in a circle until you have used all [the tones]. Then he cites other musical ideas, such as the main theme of the Art of Fugue and also the theme of Beethoven's opus 132 and 131, which are anagrams really of the B-A-C-H theme. He used also the principal motive of Tristan and Isolde as the opening of the prelude and he cites finally the theme of the Grosse Fuge of Beethoven. Then he wrote a

whole series of little contrapuntal exercises, canons at the various intervals and so on, and I think altogether there must have been about twelve or thirteen of those. Then for the wreath itself, the "Corona," he took the series and its inversions and went around the cycle of all the transpositions in various keys and so on. And then finally there is a sort of epilogue in which the anagrams of the name B-A-C-H occur in various harmonizations derived from the four forms of the row.

Well, that's a typical Krenek involvement in the mechanics and the mathematics of the music, and he accomplished all this with great skill, marvelous craft and ease. As I remember now, the piece was perhaps too long and depended too much on your recognition of all the processes that were going on, rather than on the sheer sound of it.

There was a choral group in town headed by Rudolph Saltzer. He had perhaps twenty singers, and they were doing quite a bit of singing around town. He was very ambitious and a pretty good choral director; he's still in this community somewhere because I saw him by accident out at a concert at UCLA at the beginning of this season. He gave us a program of some very, very interesting material

by Sweelinck, Ockeghem, some Bartók folk songs for chorus and piano, and a work by a young student who had come out of USC, named Tikey Zes. This was a pastoral suite for mixed voices, flute and viola. I had heard this at USC. It was a very attractive piece and had been performed also on the Berkeley campus. He'd been a student of Ingolf Dahl. So there were four good-sized works that the Rudy Saltzer Singers performed for us.

We ended the season on March 28 by doing a concert jointly with the ISCM, the International Society for Contemporary Music. The Los Angeles chapter is one of the few in America that has tried very hard to keep active; it was in a state of, let's say, hibernation for a long, long time and came back into activity largely through the interest of Ellis Kohs. We did a program in conjunction with them, and of course that was an all-contemporary program. We had [Peter] Fricker, Alban Berg, Leon Kirchner, René Leibowitz, Paul Hindemith as composers on that program. The Fricker piece was a string quartet that was played by the Trojan Quartet from USC; the Berg was the Four Songs, opus 2, and of course that brought Leonard Stein into activity as pianist. The singer there was Dorothy Ledger, who had a very beautiful mezzo-contralto voice. She was singing quite a bit in the community around

that time, and I don't know what has happened to her in recent years.

The Kirchner piece was the Trio in Two Movements, which had been played at the Coleman concerts a season or two previously before that. Leon Kirchner at that time was at Mills College, and he came down with two of his colleagues, Nathan Rubin, the violinist, and Bonnie Hampton, cellist. They came down from San Francisco just to play this work. This past season we had the Mills College performing group down in March, and Nathan Rubin and Bonnie Hampton are still on the Mills campus, still doing the same kind of new music they were doing then. They're marvelous performers. Nathan Rubin is a first-class violinist, and Bonnie Hampton was a huge success here last month when she played a piece of Davidovsky's for cello and tape, Synchronism no. 2 or 3, I've forgotten which one.

There are three Synchronisms by Davidovsky, one for flute and tape, one for cello and tape, and one for four or five instruments and tape. We've had two of those on our programs, and the third one for flute and tape is going to be played I believe this coming Saturday at another ISCM concert at USC again. Davidovsky is, I think, right now the most skillful of the composers who is combining instruments and tape. The program that we had last month

(Bonnie Hampton's performance of the Davidovsky) was the high point of the concert, both because of the piece and because of her performance, which was really stunning.

TUSLER: What is on the tape?

MORTON: Well, there are electrically generated sounds. It's not cello music that has been previously taped; it's electronic music. Davidovsky is working at Columbia University on that joint Princeton-Columbia project. But we're talking about eleven years later--I'm still talking about 1955--and I brought this up simply because Nathan Rubin and Bonnie Hampton were here at that time.

The René Leibowitz piece was very interesting. He, by the way, had been in the city for a visit and was doing something on the UCLA campus, and I think he gave a lecture for the Composers' Council. We all met him, particularly at a party at Robert Nelson's house. (Bob was not at that time, I think, head of the music department.) Leibowitz after the war turned out to be, at least for a while, the leading French exponent of the twelve-tone system. He was the head of a group, and he put out a couple of books around that time about Schoenberg and Webern and Berg, working of course without adequate materials; the books are full of errors of a kind that couldn't be helped, simply because the music was not available and he was

reporting on reports in some cases, rather than reporting on the music itself. But he was very influential in spreading the gospel of twelve-tone music.

He's not, I don't think, a terribly distinguished composer, but this piece, called Explanation of Metaphors, was very interesting. It involved a narrator, two pianos, harp and percussion, the kind of musical ensemble that has since that time been very common, to simply avoid the ordinary combination of string trio and piano quartet and so on, investigating what can be done with other timbres. This particular combination of two pianos and harp and percussion is extremely interesting. William Schallert was the narrator--we came across him previously in some other program. He's no longer around the city; he's a theater man and he's gone away. The text of this was by Raymond Queneau and Leibowitz himself made the English version. All the Frenchmen now--especially Boulez--are using texts that are extremely difficult; I suppose you could describe all of them as being post-Mallarmé. This was a difficult text. The performance was an extremely interesting one. I've been considering the possibility of reviving that piece, but I can't find anyone who is terribly interested in it. Leonard Stein conducted

and prepared it. After intermission we had Hindemith's Septet for winds.

TUSLER: This brings the 1954-55 season to a close. The next season, which is 1955-56, was the time when Mr. Oscar Moss, the director of the Southern California Chamber Music Society, died--is that right?

MORTON: Yes. It was sometime during the summer. I had gone downtown to Mr. Moss's office to have a general talk with him about the coming season and of course about money matters and so on. At that time, during the summer, he and his family were living at Newport Beach where they had a summer home. Mr. Moss used to come into town for two or three days, attend to his business affairs, and then go back to the beach and stay out there. When he came into town, he of course went to the Moss home here. As I say, I went down to his office on Wilshire Boulevard, and we went over to the Ambassador Hotel and had lunch; we talked, came to a general agreement about what the next season would be, and so on.

Two days later, I had a call from his daughter-in-law, who told me he had passed away. This was a terrible shock. It seems that while he was in town he had gone to his home here to go to bed, and some time during the night evidently took ill, had a thrombosis and passed away.

He was alone. When he didn't return to the beach as per schedule the family began to worry, and finally they discovered what had happened. The daughter-in-law called me and told me what had taken place, and I remember I just sat in my chair, not knowing what in the world to do or think.

I was of course concerned about the concerts because Mr. Moss was the head of our Chamber Music Society, our financial guarantor, and of course there was nothing I could do--I couldn't call the family and ask what to do. But typical of the kind of patron that Oscar Moss was and the kind of family that the Moss family was, it wasn't more than a couple of hours later that the daughter-in-law, Mrs. Conrad Moss, called me and said that the family wanted me to know that in any case the concerts were to go on as usual and the financial backing would be there. It was typical that the Moss family would think of other things than their own grief at that particular time. Of course, it was a terrible shock to them.

TUSLER: He wasn't an old man, was he?

MORTON: No. I don't know how old he was, but I would guess that he was in his sixties. His two sons were grown. Conrad Moss, the eldest son, was a lawyer and was operating in the firm that Mr. Moss himself had been active in as lawyer

and accountant. Mr. Oscar Moss had left that business for the finance business--I don't know precisely what the nature of that business was. The other boy, Larry, was I believe at this time on the faculty at Mills College, though I'm not absolutely certain of that. Larry had been a graduate of USC in music (composition), had gone up to Mills to study with Kirchner, had had a Fulbright and some other grants, and was on the road to being a composer and educator. Just now this week and next week he's having altogether something like five or six performances of his works in the East, including an opera called The Brute, and some other pieces. He's on the faculty at Yale; so he's an accomplished man who has found his place in musical life.

TUSLER: Mr. Oscar Moss was not in any way a musician himself?

MORTON: No, he was not a musician, but he was interested in music and liked it, and I think there was probably a closeness in the relationship between him and Larry. But in general the Moss family were interested in, sympathetic to and helpful to the arts.

TUSLER: Were they active in any other musical organizations?

MORTON: Yes; because of the son Larry's tenancy at USC,

there had been a scholarship set up there. I believe that scholarship is still going on, as an Oscar Moss memorial scholarship.

As soon as Mrs. Moss had let it be known through her daughter-in-law that the concerts were to go on, I thought first in terms of a memorial of some sort. Mr. Moss had been an extraordinary patron in every way. Well, in addition to my duties at Monday Evening Concerts, I had just finished my second year as director of the Ojai Festival. With Bob Craft as conductor, we had pondered two years about performing the Monteverdi Vespers, a great work on the same level as the St. Matthew Passion, a large full evening's work. There is not what I regard as a very good edition of it, and in preparing this work, Craft and I had worked on various problems and had made our own edition, based on the [G. F.] Malipiero complete works and using in some ways the [Hans] Redlich edition which was published by Universal and referring to the recording of that under Redlich's direction and to another recording that had been made by [Leo] Schrade. I felt that there could be no more suitable memorial to Oscar Moss than to repeat here what we had done at Ojai.

I eventually spoke with Mrs. Moss about it and she agreed that it would be an appropriate thing to do, and

so we began our season with the performance of the Monteverdi Vespers. Again, we had a beautiful cast, including Marilyn Horne and Grace-Lynne Martin and Cora Lauridsen and Richard Robinson, Paul Salamunovich, and the two basses were Howard Chitjian and Charles Scharbach.

I would like to put into the record here the few paragraphs of comment about Mr. Moss. I wrote this and rewrote it, I suppose, a dozen times and checked it with Mrs. Moss, because the Mosses were very modest people, and I knew that they couldn't endure flattery. Still, I felt that it was impossible to say too much about Oscar Moss's generosity and his support of the arts. After much trouble I did write these three short paragraphs which, as I reread them, I think are a pretty good estimate of the kind of patron that Mr. Moss was.

At the front of the program, we printed these comments:

> Tonight's performance of Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610 is dedicated to the memory of Oscar Moss. It will be apparent that with this glorious music we do not mean to mourn his passing, though that was a grievous loss, so much as to rejoice that Monday Evening Concerts and their predecessor, Evenings on the Roof, were privileged to enjoy his guidance and his generosity during the eight years that he served as president of the Southern California Chamber Music Society. Mr. Moss was the ideal patron of music. While he gave much in terms of energy, time and resources, he asked for

nothing in return but that the concerts maintain the highest possible standards without courting failure by reaching for impossible ones. Not once in all those years did he make any demand affecting the artistic direction of the concerts, leaving this field entirely to the directors. This was not because he was uncertain of himself in matters musical; on the contrary, he was an amateur in the best sense, a man who loved music, whose tastes were both catholic and cultivated, and who maintained an attitude of half-amused detachment amidst tne partisan strife of musical cultists. "Don't overload the concerts with any one kind of thing," was the only admonition he ever gave, and he would smile as he said this lest even this excursion into the realm of artistic policy might appear too aggressive. Because he was by nature a generous man, many organizations came to know the quality and measure of his generosity, but these concerts were his special concern. Truly he was our Oscar Moss, and we remember him with pride and with affection.

The general comment on the conduct of that whole evening was very good. I remember Raymond Kendall wrote very marvelously about this concert and about Oscar Moss. He was then reviewing for the Mirror, which was still in existence.

Well, that was the end of Oscar Moss and his work. Immediately, of course, Mrs. Moss came into the picture. Her main interest is not music--her main interest is art, and she does direct and support the Ferus Gallery here in town. What she does for music is a continuation of what Oscar Moss had been doing, and of course she has become more and more and more interested in music as the concerts have gone on, although her interest in art has not declined

a bit. I would say that Mrs. Moss, being not a businessman, but a housewife, mother and artist herself (she does some painting) is much easier to deal with than Mr. Moss was. She doesn't require monthly financial statements and all that sort of thing, and she is much less demanding generally on the financial side of things.

TUSLER: She leaves that all up to you?

MORTON: Yes. But the Moss family continues now for twenty years to support these concerts.

TUSLER: How had Mr. Moss gotten involved in this in the first place? Had Mr. Yates approached him, or was it his voluntary thought to set the organization up?

MORTON: The exact story I think you should get from Peter Yates. As I remember it, and this evidently took place at a concert of the Evenings on the Roof that I had not attended, at some point Peter made a speech at the end of one of the concerts saying that there was a financial crisis and [asking] those people in the audience who thought they might be helpful to remain for a meeting after the concert. Mr. Moss was one of those men. I think that's the story, but you can verify it with Peter Yates.

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APRIL 28, 1966

TUSLER: After Mr. Moss's death, and Mrs. Moss became the chairman of the Southern California Chamber Music Society, you went on with the 1955-56 season with the understanding that they were still your backers.

MORTON: Right. Mrs. Moss is, has been for all these years, a very good president, and I must say that my own work, in terms of keeping books and so on, has been reduced because she's not a businesswoman, and she didn't require as many financial reports as Mr. Moss did. That doesn't mean that the finances were being any less rigorously [controlled], or that we were any richer than we were before; it just means that some of my own bookwork was cut down since Mrs. Moss has never been as interested in the details as Mr. Moss was. She just leaves it up to me.

Well, the '55-56 season continues to be influenced very much by the availability of Robert Craft and the interest of Mr. Stravinsky and his group of friends, especially Aldous Huxley. After the memorial program with the Monteverdi Vespers, we plunged right into a sort of a Huxley-Craft-Stravinsky season.

On October 17, Mr. Huxley made a personal appearance at our concert in connection with the performance of madrigals by Gesualdo. Huxley's interest in this is recorded rather intimately, but not in great detail, in the next book of Stravinsky-Craft conversations, in which there are several references and one very long excerpt from Robert Craft's diaries accounting for Huxley's interest in the music of Gesualdo and his vast knowledge of Italian history of that time. All the time that we were rehearsing these madrigals, Huxley was in attendance. He was not a musician, of course, but he had a very, very good ear and his knowledge of historical background, particularly of the court of Ferrara where Gesualdo was working, was absolutely fascinating. I remember that after this concert there was a party, and we were standing around in the dining room helping ourselves to choice little sandwiches and Huxley talked continuously in that marvelous voice, full of details of the court at Ferrara and its long history under the Este family.

At this concert, we began with some Mozart and then had an intermission; then we did the madrigals, a group of five of them which Huxley had helped us translate, and then he made a little speech about Gesualdo and the court of Ferrara. Then we sang five more madrigals and

ended with some Renaissance instrumental music. Well, as anyone knows from Huxley's books, he is fascinated by what some of us might regard as the gory details. He had much to say about Gesualdo's murder of his wife, when he discovered her in bed with a lover, and how subsequently he suspected that the son was not his son but the son of the lover, and killed the child by putting it in a swing and swinging it back and forth so rapidly that the child was finally suffocated. It's a beautiful story, and there were many details of Gesualdo's sex life that were fascinating. He related some of these things in this talk, which he subsequently polished up and published in Esquire magazine. Huxley was of course a great attraction at that concert. We had a very very big crowd; there were many people who were horrified by the content of his speech, but this represented one of Huxley's particular little interests. He was trying to make a collection of stories about composers who had killed their wives, another one having been Trombocino, who was a contemporary of Gesualdo, but I think slightly older, who had also been at the court of Ferrara.

This was the beginning of our Gesualdo kick, and some of the madrigals that were performed at this concert were subsequently recorded for a small company called Sunset

Records here in Los Angeles, which was not very well financed and had poor distribution. The record was really a revelation because our previous knowledge of Gesualdo madrigals had been from recordings by an organization in New York, which sang the madrigals as if they had been written by Schubert. Both in terms of intonation and style, they were quite bad. This record turned out to be really quite extraordinary, but was improved upon in several later recordings that Bob Craft made with this group for Columbia Records.

TUSLER: With the same group of singers?

MORTON: The same group of singers, and that was Grace-Lynne Martin, Marilyn Horne, Cora Lauridsen, Richard Robinson, and James Scharbach. Scharbach is now living in Hawaii (he was a piano tuner in addition to being a singer because he had a good sense of pitch), and Robinson of course has been the best tenor around this city for many years. Those records were really first-class, and I think it's the first evidence there is that the century-long criticism of Gesualdo, that his madrigals are absolutely unsingable, is proved not to be true. Some of our fairly recent historians, such as Paul Henry Lang, for instance, has said that these madrigals are not singable. All you have to do is sing them, and sing them with

something like, as far as we can guess, an appropriate style and with attention to rhythmic details, which Craft is very good at and very insistent upon.

TUSLER: They're fiendishly difficult though, aren't they?

MORTON: They are difficult because of the chromaticism. Some of these madrigals were very hard to get because they were published in part-books in the sixteenth century in Genoa. A copy of this book exists in the Library of Congress. We sent to the Library of Congress and asked for photostats of several of them, and many of the madrigals that were subsequently recorded are edited, you might say, either by Craft or by myself. I found out later that I'd made some errors in pitches that I wouldn't have known were errors unless we had gone further into the study of the madrigals. It's a question of chromaticism to a large extent.

The instrumental music we had on that program, Renaissance instrumental music, was also a sort of personal activity of Craft and myself. I mentioned last time, I think, the Symphonia Sacra of Schütz, Fili mi, Absalon, for bass with four trombones and continuo. The four-trombone idea was just too good to give up, so we took a number of [pieces] from the Renaissance period and in some cases where instruments were not specified we simply arranged

them, changed the keys, and set them for four trombones because we had such a marvelous trombone quartet. On this concert, we had the Royal Fanfare of Josquin des Prés, a canzona of Luzzasco Luzzaschi, a canonic song by Isaac, the Music for the Funeral of Queen Mary by Henry Purcell, and a ricercar by Andrea Gabrieli. This four-trombone and Renaissance music kick was to last us for several seasons. We were terribly enthusiastic about it at this time, and it was a nice complement to the amount of contemporary music that we were doing on the programs.

The next program, in the end of October, was interesting for one particular reason. Looking around for fresh chamber music, Ingolf Dahl, following Tovey, was very much interested in the Haydn trios for violin, keyboard and cello, which contain some of Haydn's greatest music but in a form that is no pleasure for musicians to play. That is, these are all really piano sonatas with the accompaniment of violin and cello, and violinists and cellists aren't much interested in playing them. Well, Tovey had taken a couple of trios and had rearranged them so that some of the passagework, some of the interesting melodies and so on, were transferred from the piano into the violin or cello, which made no difference in the notes whatsoever but just simply made the music available for performers

who, if they played, wanted to have something to play. In some cases it might be that if the piano had a scale passage the violin, instead of playing accompanying chords, would be asked to play the same scale passage an octave above the piano, so you had that moving up in octaves; or sometimes you'd simply take things out of the piano part and give them to the string instruments. Tovey's explanation for doing this is perfectly valid, so Ingolf Dahl followed the suggestion and rearranged several trios in this manner. In this particular case we did Peters no. 7, the Trio in E-minor, and it was a marvelous piece of music, some of Haydn's greatest stuff. I think it would be a worthwhile project for someone to go through the whole set and do them all up, because they are such great music it's a shame not to hear them.

TUSLER: Was the one that Ingolf Dahl rearranged ever published?

MORTON: No. Tovey's are published. I wish that Ingolf's had been. We have done I think altogether three or four of these that Ingolf has edited, but to get publication is not an easy thing to do. Ingolf did it with perfect taste and judgment, naturally.

The next program we came back to one of our good projects, that is, some more Webern. In this case, it was

a large group of Webern songs, the ones with piano accompaniment, opus 4, opus 12, opus 23 and opus 25. Marni Nixon sang them and Leonard Stein was at the piano. Just the other day I was looking at some of my programs from the Domaine Musical in Paris--they did the same thing, not in November, 1955 as we did it, but just about three years ago. On this program also we introduced here the Quaderno Musicale of Luigi Dallapiccola, a musical notebook for his daughter Anna Libera, a major work in keyboard style and techniques, the kind of thing that has its root in the Well-Tempered Clavier of Bach, a rather dry piece as it turned out, but quite well done by a young man named Daniel Eller who was at that time affiliated with Pomona College and subsequently left for a better job. I believe he is somewhere in the East now, maybe at Cornell or Yale.

Continuing on our Renaissance-Baroque kick, at the next concert we introduced here the Notre-Dame Mass of Machaut, probably written around 1350 and according to some musicologists, a work composed for the coronation of the French king, but that is not accepted generally. We had many problems in connection with the performance of the mass because it's not clear what instruments are supposed to be used nor what key to set [the music] in. We used on this occasion an edition by a French musicologist,

Jacques Chailley, and he changes the key from the original so as to make it available for men's voices. Machaut had done it with a boys' choir in mind and it would have been in a higher key. We had very many doubts about this, but we didn't make our doubts public. Craft and I had studied this rather thoroughly in order to have some ideas about instrumentation. The instruments only double the choral parts, and one can tell where the instruments are supposed to come in because this is indicated in the manuscript, but you can not tell where they drop out. This is of course not in the age of a cappella music which came much later, and there are reports of fantastic instrumentation.

In connection with this concert, we had a little soirée, at which Dr. Pauline Alderman, who is head of musicology at USC, lectured on all of the available material that there is about Machaut, his friendship with Chaucer, his writing of poetry, and so on. She had a list of instruments that were known to have been used by Machaut at various times, but whether that list of instruments applies to this mass is not certain. In any case, we couldn't have duplicated those instruments nor could we have afforded them all, because it really would have been a very large orchestra. But we did use an unusual combination of English horn and bassoon, bass trumpet and trombone--instruments which went very well with the four voices.

Now I might jump ahead here to March 1965, when we gave our second performance of this mass. This was conducted by Pierre Boulez when he came here for our opening concert at the new museum. He was not really terribly eager to do the piece, but he had done it in Europe in an unpublished edition by Schrade, and there the original key was kept and the instrumentation was still left up to [the performer]. I don't know what instrumentation he used over there, but Boulez was quite content to do it with whatever arrangements we wanted to set up, so we did do it here with a different instrumentation altogether and returned to the original key. I'm not sure that it was any better than our first performance in the wrong key and with different instruments.

As a matter of fact, I don't suppose that one can say that there is any correct way of doing this music at all. There are only various ways that might possibly be authentic; no, none of them could be authentic, but which might be valid on the basis of information that we have nowadays. Even with respect to the Monteverdi Vespers, one can not be quite sure about the instrumentation or even about the order of the pieces, because as Denis Stevens has demonstrated recently, it's not a liturgical work at all, it doesn't follow any rite in the Catholic Church, and

he says that only the psalms, which constitute less than half of the total work, are liturgical music. The antiphons are not. So our two performances of the Monteverdi Vespers are also different one from the other, and if we do it again I'm sure that we would make some more changes in it. And if we ever do the Notre-Dame Mass again I'm sure that it will not be the same way.

TUSLER: Are these things recorded on tape, any of them?

MORTON: No, none of these performances has been recorded. I would hope sometime that we could do a performance of these works that would be recorded, but I don't feel at all confident about how to arrange them, how to set them up in musical terms, what instruments to use and so on. I remember that the first time we did the Vespers we did make use of two recorded versions, one by Schrade and one in an edition by Redlich, and we found both of them faulty in many, many ways. For our first performance at the Ojai Festival, we made in effect our own edition. Of course, as soon as the performance was over, we said, "Oh, of course that must be wrong, we must do so-and-so and so-and-so." One can not come to any definite ideas about how to do it because the moment you hear it in a performance you think of other ways that might possibly be better.

For instance, this is a thing that we have come up

against in many performances of old music--the violins that were used in the early music never played very high, and I think there was only one instance in Bach's orchestral music where the violin plays above C (second ledger line above the staff), except in one cantata where it does go up to E. Now, our violins are vastly different from the violins of that time and certainly very different from the violins at the time of Monteverdi, which probably were viols; their instruments were so constructed that if one got to a high C one was playing a very high note. There's a certain amount of tension there. But a high C on our instruments does not have the proper tension--it can not be a climactic note, so to speak--and we have tried using violas instead of violins so that a high note really sounds high, so there's an effort in bringing it forth. I can't say that this has been very successful either. We did it just a few months ago on a Schütz Symphonia Sacra. We used two violas instead of violins, and the sound was good, but the color, however, was not bright enough.

TUSLER: Of course, it would change that aspect of it.

MORTON: But, of course, we really don't know precisely what the old instrument sounds like, either.

TUSLER: They probably weren't as mellow as a viola is today.

MORTON: I would very much doubt it. But these are the problems in performance of that music. We never make the pretense that we are giving authentic performances, but we do try to make these performances not sound as though the music had been composed just a century ago. We do try to do something that is different. Well, the Machaut mass was a stunning piece for those of us who are interested in the older music and sensitive to the kinds of things that were going on, but I must admit that many people found it dull. And it is dull, if you're going to compare it to, say, the Missa Solemnis of Beethoven; but unfortunately Machaut hadn't heard about Vienna of the nineteenth century, and so he just went along with what he had.

TUSLER: I think it has a strangely modern sound to it. If you didn't know it was written in the thirteenth century, you might wonder if it could be twentieth-century archaic.

MORTON: That's right. There is some dissonance there, too, that is mostly in the cross-relations between the voices. It's a fascinating and marvelous piece, but I can't say that I have been personally very happy about either performance that we have done. After we give it a rest for a few years, we may come back to it and try something else.

TUSLER: Was it done by a chorus or soloists?

MORTON: It's four-part music and we put two voices on a part, which is what we did also in the Boulez performance.

We had some Monteverdi on that program, two arias that were sung by Marilyn Horne. I believe these were arias from his operas, or they might have been independent arias, but they were marvelous and very well suited to Marilyn Horne's voice.

Then we had one of our disasters, which was repeated two seasons ago. This had to do with Schoenberg's male choruses, opus 35, fantastically difficult pieces, in the twelve-tone system of course. We had the same group of singers that had done the Machaut, although the Schoenberg in some places divides into eight parts, making a solo voice on each part. To start with, it had been our intention to do all five pieces in the set, but unfortunately they were so difficult they couldn't be learned, so when it came time to print the program we put down Three Pieces for male chorus from opus 35--and naturally these were the three easiest. Actually, when it came to the performance, we could only do two of them. It's been an ambition for years since then to do the full set. One of the difficulties is that in some of the eight-part music the basses have to go to a low C below the staff, and it's pretty

hard to find singers who can do that; although this is Viennese music, you really need Russian basses for it. I don't know if Schoenberg himself ever had a performance of these pieces.

Well, just a few seasons ago it was time to repeat them. I had got the Gregg Smith Singers to take them on, and we listed again the full work--but came the performance and, no, we could have only three. And of course it was the same three that we had prepared originally. I was rather angry at Gregg Smith because he evidently had known for some time it was going to be impossible to get all of them done and he didn't tell me until just the day that I went to the printer. I think that if I had known in time I would have just cancelled the whole work, because we failed once before in introducing the whole work, and I didn't see any reason why we should repeat that failure. But it was too late to do anything about it then, so we just did the few.

And then to end that program, Marilyn Horne sang Cantata 84 of Bach, which we had fallen in love with from Magda Laszlo's recording with Scherchen. There was an attempt to record that piece shortly afterwards, and actually it was recorded but it was never published. It had to be dropped because something was wrong with Marilyn Horne that

night; she didn't sing well, she sang flat. She was having some troubles around that time with intonation, something in voice production--I don't know what it was--and she just didn't do a good job on it. A very beautiful and wonderful cantata.

The next concert was particularly interesting because Robert Trotter got a little group of people together to do some chansons by Crécquillon. I believe this had been in the material, if it was not the whole material, of a dissertation that Trotter had been doing at the university, and he picked out a group of five chansons that were performed with, again, a very interesting combination of instruments--English horn, viola and trombone. These were Bob Trotter's arrangements. We sang them in French, of course, and some of them had naughty texts. We did give translations of the texts, but they were a little bit bowdlerized. That was a charming group of material and some day we should repeat it.

We had two unhappy repertoire experiments on this program, also. We did Benjamin Britten's Second Canticle for mezzo-soprano, tenor and piano, from the story of Abraham and Isaac, and also a sonata for viola and piano by a South African composer residing in England, Priaulx Rainier. Both of these works turned out to be rather

disappointing, and also a Milhaud piece, Dreams of Jacob, for oboe and string quartet. Actually, the three modern works on that program were disappointing and no repetition of them was contemplated. But then it was material that was interesting and had to be shown at some point or another.

On the following program, we had some more new music, some of which has never earned repetition. Billy Layton, a Texas composer who is now on the faculty at Yale (I don't remember how his music came to our attention), was a young man then and this was an early work of his, just composed in '52, Studies for Violin and Piano, that Eudice Shapiro and Leonard Stein played. They were very avant-garde for the time, but so far as I know, Eudice has never repeated them. Billy Layton has become a more recognized composer since then, and having a position at Yale gives him great prestige. Then we did Elliot Carter's Eight Etudes and a Fantasy for wind quartet, which has become almost a classic of contemporary music. Sonata for Viola Solo by Quincy Porter was again rather mild, uninteresting, and Vincent Persichetti's Concerto for Piano, Four Hands was a bit disappointing. This was an all-American program, because we ended up after intermission with Arthur Berger's Duo for cello and piano, a rather nice piece,

and then a rather fantastic piece, Ballet Music for Kafka's Metamorphosis by Theodore Norman. Theodore Norman, the guitarist, was in his early days a violinist, and he had a string quartet in this city that was playing Schoenberg and a great deal of Adolph Weiss--all twelve-tone music. I'm not sure if he studied with Schoenberg, but at least he was very well acquainted with the twelve-tone business. I used to hear [the quartet] many years ago when they gave some concerts in the Beverly Hills Public Library, under physical conditions that were--I won't say far from ideal--they were far from acceptable. Acoustics were bad, and everything. But he was playing some interesting twelve-tone music that was important to all of us at that time. Well, subsequently, he has more or less given up the violin and gone into guitar; he's a very successful teacher and continues to perform with us from time to time.

TUSLER: He's still in the Los Angeles area?

MORTON: Oh, yes. He had written this music for the Kafka play, a sort of ballet music, and it was scored for ten instruments, including an accordion and a guitar. Now, it was very difficult to find an accordion player who knew how to read music, and we did find one, a young man named Elyakim Shapira, who was at UCLA and who later became one

of Leonard Bernstein's assistants at the New York Philharmonic and has, I believe, a small orchestra of his own somewhere in the East or Southeast. I must say that Monday Evening Concerts made a big error in not recognizing that this young man was exceptionally talented; but he was not aggressive and he didn't put forth his claims or ambitions to us, and so we simply accepted him as a remarkable accordionist who could read music and was able to negotiate this rather difficult piece. It's always been on my conscience that we didn't recognize him.

TUSLER: In what way could you have--was he composing, or did he play another instrument?

MORTON: No, but he must have been interested in conducting at that time, since he subsequently did become a conductor, and I'm sure he played some other instrument beside accordion. It should have been our business, you see, to find out more about him. It was just something that we missed on. We should have discovered his talent and maybe helped him a little bit in getting started on his own career, but he's done very well without us. I was glad to see him last summer; he came to one of Stravinsky's recording sessions.

On the next program, the interesting thing was our introduction of Luigi Nono to this city. The piece that

we did was Canti per Tredici, that is, songs for thirteen instruments, conducted by Robert Craft. I remember that we played this piece twice. It was not very long, maybe twelve or fourteen minutes, extremely difficult, and our first glimpse of this particular composer.

There was a mild scandal about this. We played it just before intermission, and then we came back after intermission and played it again. It was not a perfect performance, but it was a fairly decent one. The review that we got in the newspaper from Albert Goldberg of the Times was very, very bad. He did not like the work at all, and he reported that half the audience didn't come back to hear the second performance. It was on this occasion that I made one of my infrequent speeches at the following concert. I said that Mr. Goldberg had misreported, that it was not true that half the audience had stayed out. The fact was that half the audience had come back. [laughter] So, just an example of slanted language--he could have put it in our terms if he had been a little more sympathetic to new music.

TUSLER: Had Nono never been heard at all here then?

MORTON: I don't think he'd been played in America. This was listed as the first American performance of this piece--it was new at that time. Of course, Nono does not have

a great many pieces of chamber music. He has been interested in opera and large orchestral works. We had his Polish Diary at the Philharmonic under Mehta two seasons ago, and we have done another Nono piece, but none of his other works has been performed here so far as I can remember at the moment, except the one that we did. His major work, Intolleranza, is an opera and has been performed in Boston, but there's been no chance of its getting played out here.

Next concert we introduced a couple of more new composers, Camillo Togni, an Italian, and Giselher Klebe, a German. The Togni work was a group of songs with piano after poems by Trakl, a German poet, and these were fairly difficult pieces, sung by Marni Nixon with Leonard Stein at the piano. Subsequently Togni orchestrated these pieces, and I've noticed in the last four or five years there have been many performances of them in Europe with orchestra. The Klebe piece, a sonata for violin solo, was played by Dorothy Wade, and that was a premiere here. There were two sonatas, opus 8 and opus 20; and they were both advanced, but the earlier piece was a little bit closer to traditional techniques than the later one, and Dorothy chose to play the earlier one. It happens that the second one was played last week by Robert Gross at an ISCM concert at

USC, and I must say that I was disappointed in it. I'd probably be disappointed in opus 8 if I heard it now, too. Klebe had made a rather flashy entrance into the musical life of Germany in the early fifties, and we were interested in him; but he's not as interesting now as he was then because of what's been going on in music in recent years--it's been going so fast. We've done one more Klebe work, I believe, since that time. Then we had some Scarlatti, Hindemith and Mozart on that program.

Now we're back to some more new things in February of '56. Here we have the first performance in America, I believe, of any music by Karlheinz Stockhausen. This was Kontra-Punkte no. 1, that Bob Craft prepared, for ten solo instruments. That was a very tough program to get through because in addition to the easy pieces, Mozart and Brahms, we also had a difficult piece, the Stravinsky Berceuses du Chat with a three-clarinet accompaniment, and the Goethe-Lieder of Dallapiccola, also for three clarinets, so it was natural to put those two pieces on together. Marni Nixon sang both of them. Of course, the Berceuses du Chat are really not for her voice at all (they're much too low), but Marni had the pitches and we felt that since she was going to do the Dallipiccola with the three clarinets she might as well do the Stravinsky, too.

One of our little problems--I think I mentioned it last time, in connection with the difficulties of the Schoenberg Septet that didn't have the clarinets in the right keys--well, the same thing happened here with the Dallapiccola. We got all the clarinet parts airmail from Europe at great expense, only to find that they were all in the wrong key, and again it was one of those last-minute frantic jobs of transposing and copying parts. I remember that I wrote to Dallapiccola at that time and told him that I thought this was a very impractical way of doing things, and I mentioned the troubles we had had with the Schoenberg. Subsequently the parts have been reprinted, I understand, in the proper keys.

Well, with the Stockhausen, it was another sort of scandal--the newspapers were very much against his music, but we all believed that Stockhausen was a composer who was on the way up and, as I'll point out later, we've had rather good relations with him over a long period of time. I'm hoping that we can bring off another piece of his next season if I can find the musicians who are willing to undertake a very, very difficult job.

TUSLER: This was in 1956. Did he have much of a reputation at that time?

MORTON: Well, Boulez, Stockhausen and Nono were regarded as the triumvirate of advanced music, and they were all fairly young people. Boulez is the oldest of the three. Stockhausen is a little bit younger. He was born in '28, Boulez in '25, and Nono in 1926, so they're really three of the same generation.

TUSLER: They had reputations that were much larger in Europe, I suppose, than here.

MORTON: Oh, yes. They were already figures of considerable importance. It seems to me that in 1956 Boulez had already started his Domaine Musical concerts. This is a state project, state money.

Those three were the central figures of the youngest generation--this is a post-Schoenberg, post-Webern generation--and they were already against classical twelve-tone music. Boulez was making some very critical remarks publicly, about both Schoenberg and Stravinsky, particularly Stravinsky. Stockhausen of course was very much against anything except his own period, his own music, together with his friends. And Nono was the most outspoken of all. Even though he's a son-in-law of Schoenberg, nevertheless, he was highly critical of most of that music. Well, I met all of these people a few seasons later when I was in [Europe]. Even by this time they were already changing a

little bit, becoming a little bit more mild in their criticisms as they gained strength of their own.

The next program we had a visit from the University of Redlands Concert Choir, conducted by Irwin Ruff. We were trying, as we've always tried, to keep some sort of contact with the neighboring educational institutions. They had a pretty good choir, and they came in to sing a Mozart cantata, not a very important one but one of his Masonic pieces, "Thou, Soul of the Whole World," I guess you'd translate it; Aaron Copland's "In the Beginning;" and Cantata no. 12 of Bach. We had on this program also Stravinsky's own arrangement for two pianos of his Septet; we had already played the Septet in its original version, and though normally we don't play arrangements we do in cases where the arrangements have been made and published by the composer himself. It was played by Pearl Kaufman and Dale Rubart, and they also did the Scherzo à la Russe in the composer's arrangement.

The final program of that season, March 19, was a good old solid classical program: the Brandenburg Concerto no. 3, four songs of Schubert sung by Marilyn Horne with Gwendolyn Koldofsky as pianist, and the big B-flat Serenade, K. 361, of Mozart.

The Serenade of course had been played--this was a

period in which the Serenade was having a run. This same group of players, the Los Angeles Woodwinds, which had been organized by Don Christlieb, played K. 361 at our concert, played it for a special Sunday afternoon patron's group at the Ojai Festival, and subsequently at the Ojai Festival itself under the direction of Steinberg. This is one of Mozart's superb masterpieces, and the only difficulty in performing it is that it runs for more than forty-five minutes, and there are hardly any wind players whose lips will last that long. Obviously, the music must have been intended for a performance at a large banquet, so there would have been plenty of rest between the movements. It's almost time now, I think, to bring this piece to performance again; it's now ten years since it was done at our concerts. It was played at the County Museum concerts and a few other places, so we have to give pieces like that a rest.

TUSLER: Where were the concerts for this season held?

MORTON: They were in West Hollywood Park. This was our third season, I think, in the park.

TUSLER: Were you there right up until the time when you came to the County Museum?

MORTON: No. A few seasons after this--it must have been in the summer of '59--the West Hollywood Park underwent

some remodeling physically. The auditorium, which was really not a very good auditorium--it was long and narrow, with a flat floor and collapsible seats--was being developed by the county more as a recreational center. They remodeled the auditorium so that it could be used for basketball and as a gymnasium. The stage was left; it's still being used occasionally for concerts, I understand. They added a swimming pool, and the whole atmosphere of the place just became sort of nonmusical. Even though it would have been nice to look out the big side windows at a swimming pool, you couldn't be sure that there wouldn't be something going on on a Monday night; they couldn't give us any guarantee of that.

That's when we moved over to the other park, Plummer Park. That was of course well designed for music because Supervisor John Anson Ford, who represented this district at that time, was very much interested in the Meremblum orchestra, the young training orchestra, and that auditorium was designed more or less with Peter Meremblum's orchestra in mind. So we were more or less forced to go into Plummer Park because of what had been happening at West Hollywood.

At the end of this 1956 season, I immediately plunged into preparations for the 1956-57 season, because I was

going to be away for that whole summer and I had to get everything in shape before I left. That summer I went to Europe with the Stravinskys. It was my first trip to Europe, and it was marvelous to go with them because, being who they are, they had access to all kinds of activities that I never would have been able to take part in by myself. We took the boat from New York; the boat stopped at Lisbon and went through [the strait of] Gibraltar, and finally--our distination was Greece--we got to Naples.

The long afternoon that we had in Naples, almost a whole day, was devoted to what we could find out about Gesualdo because this was the season when we'd done so much [of his music]. The Stravinskys had friends there who met us at the boat in a car; we immediately drove halfway across the peninsula to Gesualdo, stopping for lunch on the way. We got to the castle, beautifully situated, walked up to the door, and the first thing we saw was that someone had been hanging laundry out across the front of the inside court. [laughter] We looked at the inscription above the facade, and it mentioned the family Gesualdo. They had got their patent of nobility I think sometime during the Crusades, and this was the family home. The first thing [we saw] when we walked in through a little vestibule was the Gesualdo coat of arms on the ceiling. I

remember the light was fairly good there, and I lay down on my back and took a picture of that coat of arms; I had color film, and it didn't come out too badly. The idea was that Craft would use it in connection with a publication of his records at some point or other. Then we went into the chapel to see the only extant picture, I think, of Gesualdo, where he is posing with his uncle, Carlo Borromeo.

TAPE NUMBER: V, SIDES ONE and TWO*

MAY 5 and MAY 26, 1966

TUSLER: Last week you'd just gotten to Europe with the Stravinskys, and you began to describe your visit to Gesualdo's palace.

MORTON: As I said, our boat had stopped in Naples and Stravinsky had arranged for some friends, including the painter, Eugene Berman, to meet us there and to take us over to Gesualdo. We got off the boat and we stopped for espresso, drove through Naples a little bit, and then headed east across the peninsula toward Avellino, which is the largest principal city close to Gesualdo. The ride was very beautiful.

When we got into Gesualdo we drove directly to the palazzo which had been Gesualdo's home. I mentioned last time that as we entered the courtyard there was a sort of little alcove with the Gesualdo coat of arms on the ceiling, and I took a picture of that lying on my back; and then we went into the courtyard where we saw the laundry hanging out. There were people living there who were not at all aware of the place or who Gesualdo was, although

*Sides one and two of Tape V have been blended because of considerable repetition in the first half of side two.

the name of the Gesualdo family appeared over the facade of the building, accounting for the establishment of that noble family at the time of one of the Crusades. Part of the building was closed up, and the family living there now was using only part of the building.

We did go inside. What we saw of the decorations indicated that redecorating had taken place sometime during the Baroque period, and there was very little except the architecture to remind you that this had been a very early Renaissance building. The chambers that we saw were surprisingly small, but there was a rather grandiose entry where you could see where Gesualdo had probably hung his swords along the wall at certain places.

We went down then to the monastery which Gesualdo had built as a sort of penance for his crimes. We went into the chapel [where there is], I believe, the only extant portrait of Gesualdo--I mentioned this last time. It's a scene where his uncle, Cardinal Borromeo, is appealing for him before the Virgin Mary, and down in the lower left-hand corner is a portrait of Gesualdo. Though the light in the place is very bad, there have been many photographs of this painting. It's not very good, but it's the only one that we have.

TUSLER: Who painted it?

MORTON: I don't think the artist is known. That painting has been reproduced in a few books and also on one of the recording jackets.

Well, we met there Fra Cipriano, one of the monks, and he was working on a book on Gesualdo. Strangely enough for us, the book had only to do with Gesualdo as a patron of the church and not as a composer at all. As a matter of fact, Fra Cipriano was hardly interested in the music. However, he did take us--that is, Stravinsky, Craft and Eugene Berman and myself--up to his study, and he served us some very terrible sweet wine. We talked with him, and he did show us some materials. One little scrap of music there indicated that Gesualdo might possibly have been writing some homophonic music; it was a melodic line with some accompaniment figures. Almost everything else that we know of Gesualdo is polyphonic music, in the style of the sacred works or the madrigals. It was Craft's intention to follow through on this and I don't know if he ever did or not. Of course, the women, Mrs. Stravinsky and the other ladies in the group, were not allowed to go up into the monk's chambers, but they wandered around in the chapel and outdoors. We must have stayed there about an hour, and this was all very interesting and very stimulating to us.

The reason I go into this in some detail is just to establish a kind of chronology: that is, Craft's interest in doing Gesualdo for our concerts; our performance of some of the madrigals; bringing Aldous Huxley into this general situation where he did talk to our audiences about Gesualdo; continued performance of the madrigals and the recording of several volumes of performances, records issued by Columbia; and then Stravinsky's completion of some unfinished works--not works left unfinished by Gesualdo, but some motets in which one voice was missing. You see, in those times the music was not printed in score but only in the parts, and something [might be] called a motet in six voices, but only five parts are found, so the sixth one had to be added. There were three such madrigals that Stravinsky completed and we performed. And then finally, Stravinsky's--it was 1960, I believe--composition of the Monumentum [pro Gesualdo], which was an orchestral version of three madrigals. That was for the four-hundredth birthday of Gesualdo in 1960. My point here is that from this little beginning of performing madrigals at the Monday Evening Concerts came this great interest on the part of Stravinsky, culminating in the Monumentum. There is one more chapter to add to it, namely, that a few seasons later Balanchine made a ballet to this work.

TUSLER: To the Monumentum?

MORTON: Yes; so that's a rather lengthy sequence of events.

TUSLER: Were these works then subsequently published, the motets you spoke of?

MORTON: Yes, they're all published. The first performance of the Monumentum was at the Venice Festival in the fall of 1960. I was present at that performance in the Ducal Palace in Venice, up on the top floor in a gorgeous room; one spent as much time in looking at the ceiling and walls as in listening to the music. It was not a terribly good concert, the Italian orchestra not being one of the very great ones. It was a Stravinsky program, Stravinsky and Berg--Stravinsky conducted Orpheus and the Monumentum, and Bob Craft conducted the Berg Der Wein, which Magda Laszlo sang.

TUSLER: Does it sound like Gesualdo or Stravinsky?

MORTON: Well, the personality of the music is largely Stravinsky because we hear instrumental combinations that of course would not have been possible at that time; and the additional voices, the things that Stravinsky did, are strictly his own. He was not trying to do anything in the style of Gesualdo; he was long past his neoclassical period, and he was interested in these things as structures.

They sound as different from Gesualdo as, for instance, his instrumentation of the Vom Himmel hoch Variations sound different [from Bach], because he added voices, put the variations in different keys; it's the instrumental color that takes you far, far away from the original quality. The moment you take vocal music and put it into instruments it has a very different sound.

So that was the glorious ending, for me, of the 1956 season. I left the Stravinskys in Venice and came back directly to Los Angeles for the next season of concerts. The Stravinskys stayed in Europe and in November, when they were in Berlin, Stravinsky had his first stroke and was sick for some time. They brought him to Munich. I missed all that unhappy experience, of course, because I had come back.

Meanwhile, I had set up the 1956-57 season of concerts before I had left. I'd say about seventy-five percent of our subscriptions were in before I left in June. The first program was one I turned over to André Previn, to do the Romeo and Juliet music of Boris Blacher. All that could have been, you see, prepared before I came back.

TUSLER: Of course, while you were there you traveled most of the time, didn't you, with the Stravinskys?

MORTON: Yes. I was with them practically all of the time.

We went first to Greece, and then we went to Istanbul; then we came back to Athens and took the boat up to Venice. I left them for some of the time. I had a chance to go to Vienna for a week with some other friends whom I bumped into in Venice, and then when I came back I found that Mr. Stravinsky did not feel very much like traveling, so some of the plans that we had for going down to Florence and other places didn't come through. I decided that I would leave them because I wanted to see more of Italy--not that I had exhausted Venice, by any means; but I felt as long as I was there I wanted to see more than just one neighborhood. I flew down to Rome and then took a bus going in very easy stages from Rome back to Venice. I visited perhaps a dozen places, Bologna, Florence, Orvieto, Ferrara (which was the place where Gesualdo had settled down after his second marriage), Ravenna, all the way up to Milano, and then back to Venice in time for the festival concerts. That was the occasion when the Canticum Sacrum had its first performance in San Marco, which was a great event.

TUSLER: Is it an antiphonal work?

MORTON: No. You may remember that in the publicity about that piece, Stravinsky is supposed to have gone around visiting various churches in Venice in order to study their

acoustics and find out what could be done. I suppose subconsciously this might have had some influence on him, but actually in Canticum Sacrum I don't see anything that responds directly to the architecture of any Italian cathedral. He didn't make use of antiphonal effects. Actually, it would be hard to do it, because every time I've been in San Marco there's been some reconstruction going on; even on the night of this performance there was scaffolding up in the front of the church on the right-hand side, and the balconies were not safe for putting a group of musicians and choristers up there. The balconies were closed except for occasional visitors and small groups. They had simply built a stage up across the apse, and the concert was given there. I have no way of knowing, but I don't think that story is worth anything except publicity. It was hard to set up an audience in the basilica because the floor is like waves on the ocean, it's so curved. Nevertheless, there was a very distinguished audience there that night, but not a very attentive one, I thought.

Well, as I said, I had prepared most of the season before I had left, and André Previn had prepared this performance of Blacher's Romeo and Juliet, which is a scenic oratorio after Shakespeare for tenor, soprano, small chorus and chamber orchestra. Blacher had been visiting out here

the previous year, and I had been introduced to him by Franz Waxman. He was eager to have something performed at our concerts; he was a composer who had not previously been heard here and he was a man of some distinction in Germany. Of course, the practical factor was that it was easy to set this up way in advance and then turn the responsibility over to André Previn so that I had the least possible work to do in preparation. Actually, the work is not a great one by any means. I found myself really disappointed in it as a piece of music but, nevertheless, Blacher was a composer who deserved to be heard here, partly because of the distinguished position that he holds in German music as head of the Hochschule in Berlin.

TUSLER: How did you happen to do that piece? Did someone bring it to your attention?

MORTON: He did it himself. He wanted very much to be represented on our programs because, again, it was the same old thing of our having a very good reputation elsewhere--many of the composers whom I've met in Europe were eager to have performances with us, and I felt that Blacher was a composer that deserved to be represented on our programs. We have lots of second-rank music--you can't live on double fugues alone, as the saying goes--and this was a piece that represented a certain cross section of European

music, so it was worth doing.

On the next concert, we introduced here a then-new work by Samuel Barber, Summer Music for wind quintet; it was also a fairly disappointing work, but again one that deserved to be presented. And we had our first opportunity to do a piece by Janáček, a composer who has a rather good reputation but whose music has never pleased me very much. This was a sextet [for winds], one of his last works, called Youth. We've subsequently done other Janáček works. I daresay that his reputation must derive particularly from his operas, which we don't know in this country at all. I believe one has been done at USC a few years ago. Although he lived until 1928, he is really a composer of the last century; I think that's perhaps why he seems to be a decadent late romanticist, although the Czechs, of course, regard him very highly--he's one of their great figures.

For the second time we imported an artist, on the concert of November 3. We brought in [Rey de] la Torre, a classical guitarist. Our policy had been not to import artists unless they were composer-performers, or unless they performed on some instrument for which we had no performers right here. Previously, Peter Yates had brought Suzanne Bloch for two concerts because she played the lute

and some of the old instruments, and she gave fairly interesting programs. On these grounds, we brought Mr. [Rey de] la Torre here, and we were able to afford him because I also got him a second performance at the Ojai Festivals, of which I was director--it's the old business of getting the on-tour rate. He gave a very interesting program of music by Luis Milán, sixteenth century; Gaspar Sanz, seventeenth century; Robert de Visée, Frenchman, late seventeenth-early eighteenth century; and then Fernando Sor and a few contemporary pieces by [Joaquín] Nin-Culmell (then at San Francisco), Rodrigo, Falla, and Julián Orbón, a contemporary Cuban composer. That was quite a successful concert; he is a very good player. The Guitar Society of Los Angeles was very interested and brought lots of customers in.

TUSLER: Did bringing in an artist like this make any difference in the box office?

MORTON: It's not always so. I have tried in vain to accumulate figures over the years, to find out what brings the audience in--I think I mentioned this before--and I've not come to any conclusion whatsoever. Sometimes I think it's the date that make a big difference. I think almost without exception our first concert in January brings a big crowd, and I think that's because people are now tired

of the holidays and they're ready for something. Also, our first one, two, or three concerts have big crowds. What happens thereafter I've never been able to figure out.

On the next concert we brought in a group that I had high hopes for as a permanently organized group, but which actually didn't last more than a few seasons. It was called the American Chamber Players, with Ingolf Dahl at the piano, Dorothy Wade, violin, Milton Thomas, viola, and William Van den Burg, cello. They had played at Ojai, had played a very distinguished repertoire and gave marvelous performances, but for various reasons they didn't last for more than a few seasons. Various situations arose with their commercial work--all of them were in commercial work, with the exception of Ingolf Dahl, who is of course at USC--and it was really a first-class group. At this particular concert they played a Haydn trio, one of the pieces I spoke of before that Ingolf Dahl had reconstructed; they played the Aaron Copland Piano Quartet, and the Brahms C Minor. This was a very, very elegant concert, elegant in repertoire and in performance. It's a pity that that group couldn't have kept going, but that's the history of organized groups in this community.

TUSLER: Why do you think that is? Do we prefer to bring

in things from the outside as being more exciting?

MORTON: I don't know that I can give any single reason, and I wouldn't know in this instance which was the reason that actually caused them to break up. Some of these things are personal relationships, and sometimes it's just the pressure of economic life. It's hard for them to get together for a rehearsal--Dorothy Wade and Milton Thomas and Bill Van den Burg might have agreed upon a rehearsal time and then something comes along, a recording date or a moving picture, and no one can afford to pass up those engagements because that is how they make their living. I would say it was that, and whatever personal relationships were involved, and some disagreements, I suppose, about how one does this or the other thing, which is perfectly normal in every group; and I suppose the pressure of the commercial thing makes it quite impossible to get along with these personal and musical disagreements.

TUSLER: This isn't anything necessarily peculiar to Los Angeles.

MORTON: No. As a matter of fact, I know of groups that have started up in various communities that face somewhat the same situation. Unless a group becomes internationally famous and has regular tours like the Juilliard Quartet and the Budapest Quartet, there is not a chance. But our

people couldn't afford to take time out to go on tour, even if they could get the dates. They did some playing of course in neighboring communities, but this is not sufficient, it's not financially rewarding enough to keep going on with the hard work of learning new repertoire and getting really polished performances.

The next concert [December 3] had some rather distinguished music. Wolfgang Fraenkl, who'd been a student of Schoenberg in Europe and was writing classical twelve-tone music, had a rather large piano solo, Variations and Fantasies on a Schoenberg Theme, that Leonard Stein played. Then we introduced a young English composer--I think he was originally Australian and had been in Los Angeles at some time--Marc Wilkinson. He's one of the avant-garde people in England right now and has a few pieces, especially one on a text from Waiting for Godot, entitled Voices. That has had a number of performances and is rather interesting.

Then we had [Pierre] Boulez's Sonatina for Flute and Piano, that Leonard Stein played with Arthur Hoberman. Boulez had been represented on our programs once before; this was during the Evenings on the Roof years, when a work of his was played called Polyphony for, I think, eighteen instruments. It's a work which Boulez has now withdrawn

from his catalog, but he told me that he has some intention some day of revising it and bringing it back to life. But on this occasion we had the Sonatina for Flute, and it's a work that is fairly important in Boulez's output. This was really, I suppose, the beginning of the long-time association with Boulez which is, I think, the closest relationship that he has in the United States. We'll come to it later. He has conducted for us several times, even before he had conducted anywhere else in the country. I might as well jump the gun and say that at this point I've just been re-engaged for the Ojai Festival next year, and I've engaged Boulez as conductor. So our relationship with him is of eleven or twelve years now. We've become rather good friends and correspond fairly regularly, although he's a slow letterwriter--it takes a long time to get an answer from him.

Then we had Lukas Foss conducting his Concerto for Oboe and Chamber Orchestra. It is an early piece of Foss's in a rather neoclassical style, but it was charming and it was played by Bert Gassman who is a superb oboist. Lukas was always very proud of the fact that in the reviews of this concert his piece came off with more favorable comment than Boulez's did. I remember he kept bringing that up in conversation, which I think was not a very good

idea, because I think there's no question right now that Boulez is one of the major figures in international music; of course, Lukas Foss is going right up there toward the top, but neither as a conductor nor as a composer is he on quite the level that Boulez has reached. We ended that program with a favorite of mine, the Brahms F-minor Piano Quintet in its other version for two pianos, played by Daniel and Marilyn Eller, the young couple I mentioned last time who were then at Pomona.

TUSLER: Is that the first time Lukas Foss's name has shown up on the programs? Was he new out here then?

MORTON: It seems to me that this must have been his first year, 1956. I remember that when it had been announced that Lukas was going to come to UCLA (he was in Rome at the time), I wrote to him immediately and told him we were delighted that he was going to be in the community and we hoped that he would participate in the concerts. I had been after him, first of all, as a pianist--I wanted to have him play the Hammerklavier of Beethoven--I was after him for years on that, and I had the support of his wife, Cornelia; but Lukas never played it for us because he said he never had enough time to practice.

However, we did have it played once on a program in which he was participating, and he did not enjoy the

performance at all. It was by Lillian Steuber. She played it very, very well, of course, but her interpretation of it didn't match Lukas's. He was backstage and said, "Oh, how terrible--she shouldn't do it this way," and so on and so on. We went to have coffee afterwards and he complained that he would [have done] it so and so. Finally his wife spoke up and said, "Well, Lukas, you have no right to talk about it. You had your chance for five years to play the Hammerklavier the way you'd like it, and you never would take it on."

TUSLER: You knew him before he came out here to Los Angeles?

MORTON: No, I didn't know him; I just wrote to him. I knew his name and I knew his earlier pieces, but I hadn't met him until he came out here. We had many dealings on musical things after he came.

TUSLER: Obviously this is one of your jobs as executive director, to know who's coming to the area and get them involved in the programs.

MORTON: I try very hard to do that. Sometimes it's not easy. With Lukas, of course, his first commitments were to UCLA; during the first years that he was here he had conducting jobs at the university and his own works were being produced in the opera department and the orchestra department. However, much of his chamber music did come

to performance at our concerts rather than at UCLA, because UCLA, as we've said before, does not concentrate so much on performance as on theoretical things. We did his Time Cycle in the chamber version; we did the first draft of Echoi, and other chamber pieces of his.

TUSLER: I noticed in going through the minutes of the Southern California Chamber Music Society that he was on your board for some years.

MORTON: Yes. We invited him to be on the board, but he was not a good board member because he's not interested in the practical details of putting on the concerts. He was interested only in the music. He was a good name for us to have on the board, but he missed most of the meetings. He was a busy man, and of course he was composing and that was his main job; but as a board member he didn't contribute very much.

Well, we come to other concerts now with Bach; Prokofiev; an early piece of Ellis Kohs, the Sonata for Clarinet and Piano. One piece that came up that was very interesting was Heinrich Biber, a serenade for a few instruments--string quartet, cembalo, and voice. This was conducted by Milton Thomas. It was a piece in six movements. There's now very much of Biber that's available in practical performing editions; we knew of him of course through

Alice Ehlers and her performances with Adolph Koldofsky of the scordatura sonatas. I've since looked at a few other pieces of Biber and some of them are not practical for us because they require too many instruments, but he is a composer of very great interest and I hope that we will be able to get more of him.

In January we had a very big event with Heinz Blankenburg, who has since gone on to a very good career in Germany at the Hamburg Opera. He sang the whole of the Dichterliebe, with Gwendolyn Koldofsky at the piano. This was really a superb performance. It's not often that we can get complete cycles of that sort, and as you know we don't like to present little groups of songs--we want to do a whole big work--and it was very important for us to get this. He was a very promising young artist at this time, with a very, very beautiful voice and a very sincere and somewhat romantic attitude toward music. He was ideal in the Dichterliebe. He had coached it with Gwendolyn Williams Koldofsky at USC. This was really a memorable performance, one of the best things we've had at our concerts. I must say he had a sensational success as a young, handsome, romantic-looking fellow who sang these very romantic poems. I personally didn't know him very well; Leonard Stein knew him better, and I had made the arrangements for

the whole thing really through Mrs. Koldofsky.

On the same program, we had Aaron Copland's Piano Variations played by John Crown, and John, together with Gabor Rejto, played a Beethoven sonata and a sonata for violincello alone by Ernst Kanitz. Then we had [William O.] Smith's String Quartet. Bill Smith at that time was at USC, either on the faculty or still working for his degree; since that time he's gone to Europe and has become quite distinguished as a jazz player and also as a composer of avant-garde music, some of it using jazz techniques. The most recent piece of his that we have had was the piece for clarinet with tape which John Neufeld did for us, as he did it at Ojai and at subsequent performances, maybe half a dozen of them around town.

Then we came to another piece in February, a favorite. Couperin had done three settings of the Tenebrae, one for tenor solo, which we had done a few years previously in connection with a Webern program; and on this occasion we did the Third Lesson, which is for soprano solo, women's voices, string quartet and, of course, continuo. Bob Craft conducted it. Sometime I'd like to do all three of those Tenebrae of Couperin, but this is rather lugubrious music and one has to have a very patient audience to listen to all three of them. But these are very important pieces.

The first one that we did, the one for tenor solo, we knew first of all from a recording by Hugo Cuénod. This piece had some influence on Stravinsky in his composing of the Cantata. It was Cuénod who came out to sing [the Cantata] when it was first performed by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra at UCLA. The vocal style impressed Stravinsky very much, and of course the special quality of voice that Cuénod has. We did it ourselves with Dick Robinson, who at that time had a more beautiful voice, I would say, than Cuénod had, although Cuénod is an absolute master of style. We all learned a great deal from Cuénod's performance.

We ended that program with one of our favorite cantatas that I think we've had three times altogether, no. 152, Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn, which I used to call "Down the Glory Trail." [laughter] There we had the services of Grace-Lynne Martin, soprano, and that wonderful bass, Robert Oliver, who has since moved to New York. There was a magnificent voice. He had a low C which we made use of in Monteverdi's Ballo delle Ingrate when he sang the part of Pluto. This Bach cantata is one of the smaller ones, it needs only a few instruments, but its melodic quality is quite extraordinary--the last movement has a nonrepetitive melody that goes on and on and on; it's a piece that I've

been particularly fond of, and Craft has been very fond of it, too.

TUSLER: What happened to Grace-Lynne Martin? I haven't heard her name around town recently.

MORTON: She's still in town; she lives in South Pasadena, I believe. She continued to sing with us for some years after this; but recently, the last time I asked her to sing with us, she declined on the grounds that she was interested in opera, and she has been doing things with some of the local opera companies. Personally I don't think that she has the kind of voice for opera at all, although the first time I ever heard her she sang the Queen of the Night, at City College. She doesn't have that high a voice any more, but she's a beautiful singer and she was the soprano in our Gesualdo group and in the recordings.

One of the reasons that Grace-Lynne didn't enjoy singing at Monday Evening Concerts was the attitude of the critics. She consistently got bad reviews where she was dismissed as a very intellectual soprano, and she didn't want to subject herself to that kind of criticism. One time she sang she got a bad review, although she had sung magnificently--she's not a bel canto singer, she's another kind of soprano altogether--and then she refused

to come on and sing another Bach cantata for us. (I'm jumping ahead a few seasons here.) I had to use all my powers of persuasion to get her to come back and sing again. After that, she said no.

In February we did a special concert in cooperation with the Friends of Music, at the University of Southern California. Nell Tangeman, mezzo-soprano, was in town, and we'd been put in touch with her by Peter Yates who was eager to get another performance for her while she was on the coast. She sang a rather interesting program of Scarlatti, Purcell, Debussy, Milhaud, Strauss, Theodore Chanler, Ned Rorem and then she sang Jocasta's aria from Oedipus Rex. She had been in the New York production of The Rake's Progress of Stravinsky; she had done the part of Mother Goose. This was a rather nice concert; however, a solo recital of this sort was not much in our style. This concert was given in Hancock Auditorium at USC.

In February we had a very important performance of Schoenberg's Serenade opus 24--this must have been the second or third performance; the problem there was always to find the bass-baritone for the vocal movement. At that time we had Sam Van Dusen, who with his wife has since gone to Europe where both have had pretty good careers in opera houses. Another case of where Los Angeles just simply

cannot hang on to its singers--we lose them all. On this program we also had the Kreisleriana of Schumann played by Xenia Chassman and ended the program with Ballo delle Ingrate of Monteverdi, which I just mentioned. It is a most marvelous piece, beautifully sung by Bob Oliver as Pluto; his performance of this was really very exciting. The voice is a real bass and it has gravel in it; it's not at all a voice for sentimental music, but for a very virile, muscular sort of music, and he sang this really magnificently. The Ungrateful Soul was sung by Catherine Gayer, another one of our very good Los Angeles artists who didn't stay here very long but went off to Europe; she's been having a wonderful career over there singing coloratura roles, singing a great deal of contemporary music. She got much of her musical training here, although not in a formal sense, from her association with Leonard Stein, and at other times she sang very difficult works for us. We'll come to her again. But I mention her because of the usual Los Angeles tragedy--we can't hang on to our singers because there are no careers for them here. Her voice was something like Marni Nixon's--very high, and with absolute pitch.

This was one of the big events for us, although I must say that outside of Bob Oliver and Catherine Gayer,

the vocal parts were not done with great distinction. We had young artists who [have since] disappeared, I guess. I won't even mention their names. They were adequate but not more than that. A small chorus of women's voices, the Ungrateful Souls, was prepared by Gregg Smith. That is a work that I look forward to doing again, possibly next season when we celebrate the four-hundredth anniversary of Monteverdi, provided I can find the basso for the part of Pluto.

TUSLER: It requires such a low voice?

MORTON: Yes, it requires a low C, although I know in the recording the low C is not given; as I remember, they take the upper C, but it's a low part as one would expect for Pluto.

We did a concert in March in collaboration with the American Scandinavian Foundation. We worked this program out with the help of Mary Tinglof, who was head of the foundation here before her political activities, and in connection with the main office of the American Scandinavian Foundation in New York, which supplied us with a great deal of music. It was a rather elaborate program, mc ɜ costly than we could afford to produce by ourselves, but the foundation contributed some money to it. I'm sorry to say that the Scandinavian population of this town,

whatever its size, did not turn out in very great force and we had a rather scant audience, although I must say that Mrs. Tinglof was delighted with the whole thing because she still has strong ties with her Scandinavian ancestry.

We were able to present a number of works by very significant composers. We had a horn sonata by Niels Viggo Bentzon, a Danish composer; we had the complete songs, which consist of only seven, by Fartein Valen, a Norwegian composer. He was, I think, the first of the Scandinavians who went to study with Schoenberg and he wrote in a twelve-tone style. His seven songs were included under opus 6, opus 39 and opus 31, the last of which, the opus 39, were composed as late as 1941. Some of these songs were photographed manuscript copies that we got through the American Scandinavian Foundation in New York.

And I come back to the same old story with Page Swift, a soprano, who shortly thereafter left for Europe and got an engagement at an opera house in Switzerland. I engaged her shortly after this for an Ojai Festival. She had a very sweet lyrical voice and she was a very pretty girl. She was back in town for a visit I think two seasons ago and I saw her, but she was not staying here--no career possible.

The big work on the program was a Chamber Concerto for piano, winds and percussion by Karl-Birger Blomdahl, a Swedish composer. I suppose he would be reckoned as the most significant of the contemporary Swedes. This work was brought to our attention by Ingolf Dahl, who knows Blomdahl personally and who knows most of his music. Pearl Kaufman played the piano part and gave a rather brilliant performance. There were four percussion players in this piece, plus the wind orchestra of three flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons and contrabassoon. That made a very good sound.

TUSLER: You must have done some digging to find the other music on the program.

MORTON: No, it wasn't too hard; actually the Bentzon Horn Sonata had already been played out at USC at a student concert, and I presume it must have been Ingolf Dahl who brought the music out there. I don't remember how we came on to the Valen, but we probably had some advice from the American Scandinavian Foundation in New York.

After the intermission we had some vocal pieces by Ingvar Lidholm, a Swedish composer born in 1921. These were entitled Laudi. They were in Latin and they were rather modern pieces. Lidholm is an important man in

Swedish musical life, and I think he holds or did hold a position of some importance with the Swedish radio; but of course most of the composers work through the Swedish radio. These were sung by the Gregg Smith Singers. I suppose I should mention that we'd already been using the Gregg Smith chorus for a couple of seasons. At that time it was far from being the group that it is now. It was at that time a semi-amateur group; now, of course, it has become fairly professional and Gregg Smith is off to Ithaca, New York, where he is doing choral work at Cornell. He still comes back to Los Angeles and keeps in touch with his group of singers here so that, just as this past spring, he did a tour, did some recording with Stravinsky, and did a program of Ives for us. I'm glad to say that we were encouraging Gregg in these years when he was still struggling and still learning his trade, and I would say that we helped him a great deal, as he helped us.

TUSLER: I notice that Roger Wagner's group hasn't shown up on your programs for quite a while. Was that for financial reasons more than anything else?

MORTON: Mostly for financial reasons, because by this time and for years his group had been thoroughly professional; every singer had to receive union scale, and this

was just way beyond us. He had appeared, you see, in the earlier years of Monday Evening Concerts, when Roger was still on the road up, and his choir also was only partly professional.

We ended the program with Grieg, an unfinished string quartet. We felt that we couldn't do a Scandinavian program without Grieg, although he's hardly a composer who ranks with the general run of composers whom we present. But it seemed a reasonable thing to do on this occasion, and we played an unfinished string quartet of which only two movements had been written and published posthumously. There was a young group of players in the string quartet, all of whom have left the city and gone on to far better jobs. Max Hobart, the violinist, was at USC at the time and he went off to join one of the Eastern orchestras; Eugene Wilson, the cellist, is now on the music faculty at the University of Vancouver, and a very, very good player; and [William Magers], the violist, left to go into military service and when he finished his service he stayed somewhere in the East.

The next concert [March 11] was something that turned out to be a little bit different than we had planned. This was a concert that was to present Stockhausen and Boulez. We opened the program with the Lamentations of

Tallis for small vocal group that Bob Craft was conducting. We did it with solo voices, partly for financial reasons, but also [because of] the character of the music. Absolutely great, wonderful pieces. Since a performing edition was not available, we photographed the score from the complete works at UCLA, and everybody had to sing from little photographed copies. I spent I-don't-know-how-many hours pasting these photographed sheets together--some of the hack work that I find myself involved in.

Then we were to have the first American performance of the Pierre Boulez Marteau sans maître, and the Stockhausen electronic tape piece Gesang der Jünglinge. It just happened at this time that Boulez was in the United States; he had been in San Francisco and he came down here partly to see Stravinsky. During the course of the rehearsals, Craft asked Boulez if he wouldn't like to conduct the piece himself. We had already done a great deal of preparation, and Boulez did want to do it, of course. So quite without schedule--and, I must say, without fee--we had Boulez making his first conducting appearance in the United States. (We had him for his second concert appearance in the United States, too, and when he came to us for the third time, just a year ago, he had then conducted elsewhere--the Cleveland Orchestra, the

Pittsburgh Orchestra, and in Toronto.) This was our first meeting with Boulez, although of course Craft and Stravinsky had met him in Europe and had spent a great deal of time with him.

We did the Marteau. Catherine Gayer sang it; she is not the right voice for it--it should be an alto, and Catherine's a soprano with a very wide range--but she could manage the notes and that was most important. I remember that Boulez and Catherine rehearsed at my house morning after morning. I just locked myself in my bedroom and did some work while they rehearsed.

I remember that after the performance I couldn't judge the quality of it because I didn't know the score that well--it's an extremely difficult score--and when they came off stage I said to Boulez, "Well, how was it?" And he said, "Pas mal." ("Not bad.") Which is pretty high praise from him.

We had a good group of players there. Besides Catherine Gayer for the vocal part, we had Arthur Gleghorn on alto flute; Milton Thomas, viola; Theodore Norman, guitar; William Kraft, vibraphone; Dorothy Remsen--she's a harpist, but on this occasion she played xylophone, or xylorimba, as it's called in the score; Lester Remsen played percussion, and he's a trumpet player. But this

is still in the early days of our dealings with avant-garde music, and it was not easy to find performers for it. The reason we asked the Remsens to play instruments that were not their official instruments was that they were willing and ready and eager to do the necessary work, although I don't think that Dorothy Remsen wants to play any more percussion instruments, nor does Lester, either. Their son Eric has become a percussion player, and we've used him many times. These were good musicians, first-class musicians, and so we did come off with a performance that was "pas mal."

TUSLER: Did it require an enormous lot more rehearsal than for pieces less avant-garde than that?

MORTON: Oh, yes. This program was planned, as you can see, so that nobody appeared in more than one piece: the Tallis was one group of performers, the Boulez was another group of performers, and the Stockhausen was an electronic piece. This was the American premiere of Le Marteau sans maître. The piece already had a reputation for difficulty. When it was first scheduled for a German performance, after something like fifty-seven rehearsals, the performance was cancelled because it wasn't adequately prepared. Well, we didn't have anything like that number of rehearsals, but both Craft and Boulez worked with the performers

individually on their own parts, in addition to the ensemble rehearsals. It was a difficult, a very difficult piece.

As to be expected, we got very bad reviews from the press, and Milton Thomas wrote a letter to the Times to protest the review and to say that, regardless of what the critic thought, the artists found it a very rewarding job and that they were delighted to have made the acquaintance of Boulez; they had learned a great deal about new music from him, and it had been an experience of very great importance to them. That letter, plus other letters written in to the Times, led to a group of Sunday columns entitled "The Battle of Boulez." There were letters both pro and con. We did get an amount of publicity out of this, but there was genuine dissension, let's say, over this kind of music in the community.

The Stockhausen didn't come in for quite so much comment because it was an electronic piece, and no one expected it to sound anything like "normal" music, so to speak. That piece, Gesang der Jünglinge, I think still remains the classical work of electronic music. Most of the sounds that we have subsequently heard were already there on that tape. It was an imaginative and germinal work in the field of electronic music. It probably dates

from the early 1950s, so with the exception of some studies that he had done, I think maybe it is his first electronic work.

TUSLER: Of course, a work like that is not performed at the concert, is it?

MORTON: No, it's a piece composed on tape.

TUSLER: So the audience listens to the tape--I mean, there's no instrument that's added to it.

MORTON: No, no. Stockhausen used actual recordings of boys' voices which he manipulated electronically, and combined it with electronic sounds. All you can do is watch the loudspeakers on stage. That's all there is to do. That's one of the shortcomings of electronic music, that there's nothing for you to attach your eyes to; but of course the men who are working in that field have ideas that this kind of music should not be played in an ordinary concert hall. It should be played under other conditions, and Stockhausen had other ideas about theaters in the round, suspended in space, and other ideas of continuous music for people who would come in or go out as they pleased, much in the style of a movie theater. But this was a constructed piece that had a beginning, a middle, and an end; and it had to be listened to in that manner since there was a text, the text of the three young

men in the Book of Daniel. It is a constructed piece so it must be listened to as a concert piece.

The Boulez is perhaps more controversial because we had "normal" instruments and performers there, but the music was "far out." But that piece is so difficult that Boulez told me (the last time he was here) that for him, there has only been one perfect performance, and that is the one recorded in Rome close to two years ago. The record is not yet available in this country, and the copy that he sent me was warped in transit, so I have not heard that performance.

TUSLER: Would that piece of Boulez sound as avant-garde today as it did in 1957, do you think?

MORTON: I don't think so, no. It would not please what you would call a normal audience, but if we were to perform it again at our concerts I think that it would be regarded maybe as a masterpiece. There are people who say that this is the piece for our generation, as Sacre du printemps was for the previous generation. I don't know if this is so or not. It's a little bit early to make definite judgments on these pieces, and I would say there are other pieces, subsequent pieces of Boulez, that I think are better pieces. This is still a very important work and one that Boulez himself takes great pride in.

TUSLER: I wonder if it would stir up as much controversy in the press today as it did back in those years.

MORTON: No, I think it wouldn't. The concert that Boulez did for us just a year ago contained only two of his own pieces, but they were not particularly controversial. The Structures for two pianos, which Karl and Margaret Kohn played, was what I would call a rather sensational success. The new piece that he composed for us for that occasion, Éclats, was a much shorter work than Marteau sans maître. The circumstances of the concert last year were such that it would not be regarded as controversial but rather as a celebration, since it was the first concert in the new museum.

For the end of this season we had planned to do Stravinsky's Canticum Sacrum, although I wasn't quite sure how it was to be financed because it required a very large orchestra. Nevertheless, we had planned it. In the meantime, Stravinsky had been invited to give a concert for the Los Angeles Music Festival under the direction of Franz Waxman. We had a promise, so to speak, for Canticum Sacrum, but Stravinsky wanted it for that particular concert. So as it turned out, we made a deal with the Los Angeles Music Festival, that we would give up the American premiere of Canticum Sacrum to their concert, but that our

subscribers would get that concert as part of their subscription. I must in honesty say that it was their concert since they footed all the bills; we simply brought part of our audience in on the subscription tickets, and paid into the festival a minimum amount for those tickets. It was held at Royce Hall, and the program is listed as a "Gala Concert in association with Monday Evening Concerts for the seventy-fifth birthday of Stravinsky."

That was quite a marvelous program: we had the Greeting Prelude that Stravinsky had done for Monteaux's eightieth birthday; the Symphonies for Wind Instruments in the 1947 version; the American premiere of Canticum Sacrum; and the world premiere of Agon. On this program, Aldous Huxley made a short speech celebrating the occasion. Then the program ended with the Vom Himmel hoch Variations, which had already been premiered at the Ojai Festival, and the Symphony of Psalms. Bob Craft conducted all the new music--that is, the Prelude, the Symphonies for Wind Instruments, the Canticum Sacrum and Agon, and Stravinsky conducted the Bach and the Symphony of Psalms. This was a magnificent concert, and out of it came a recording of Agon and I believe also a recording of the Bach Vom Himmel hoch.

TUSLER: Agon is a ballet?

MORTON: Yes. The ballet had been commissioned by Lincoln Kirstein for the New York Ballet Company, Balanchine's, and it was by special permission that they allowed this concert performance of it before the ballet had been performed in New York. Balanchine was here at that time and he was present at the recording of Agon, I remember very well. He's such a wonderful musician. He listened to the score (he reads scores very fluently), and he was listening always in terms of what he would do with the ballet. Of course, Agon turned out to be one of his most striking and beautiful ballets. I didn't see it until 1959 when I was in New York, but it is really one of the great moments in ballet theater, so far as I am concerned, and it has turned out to be one of the most successful, particularly the wonderful adagio dance, the pas de deux. Agon is still in the repertoire, and I believe that they performed it in Russia when the company went over there, and that kind of ballet of course was quite a shock to the Russians.

Well, that's the way we ended that season, in a rather glorious concert that we sort of squeezed ourselves into simply because we had had the promise of having the Canticum Sacrum, so we could only offer that as part of the repertoire, and our audience.

TUSLER: That was the same work that you'd heard the premiere of in Venice the year before.

MORTON: Yes. I might say something about that premiere in Venice. The setting of course was magnificent. When we'd been there for rehearsals, one of the things I noticed was the preparations, which included the lowering of the great chandelier, filling the individual little cups with oil (or whatever it was that they burn), setting up the chairs and the stage, all that preparatory business.

There was a very distinguished company there. Nadia Boulanger had come from Paris, and she sat during the rehearsals with a score and made the most illuminating comments. Stravinsky relied to a great extent on her judgment as to which part should be emphasized, which inner voice should come out, and so on, although I think that she must have been somewhat disturbed by Stravinsky's venture into the world of twelve-tone music. This is not strictly a twelve-tone piece--one would describe it as serial music, but it is not consistently so. Certain things made a great effect, such as the big tenor solo, "Surge aquilo." Marilyn Horne was in that performance, and in the church no one could have looked more beautiful than she did with a white Spanish shawl to keep her head

covered. Magda Laszlo was the soprano and she sang gloriously.

This was the occasion, by the way, when Stravinsky had to call on the patriarch of the Venetian church, who subsequently became Pope John, and he tells the story of that visit in the books of conversations. Unfortunately, his visit took place while I was not with them in Venice that summer--I'd left and gone down to Rome--but I heard all the details from the Stravinskys when I came back to Venice. The patriarch made his appearance just before that performance. He came in and greeted the audience, but I think he listened to the performance in the back part of the cathedral; he didn't sit with the audience. I remember that Mme. Respighi, the widow of the composer, was in the audience. Mrs. Stravinsky was sitting with Eugene Berman; Nabokov was there; both of Stravinsky's sons--Souleima andhis wife, from the University of Illinois where he's been stationed for some years; and his son Theodore from Geneva.

A few days after the performance some photographs were circulating, and in one photograph taken from the front of the cathedral I found myself at the edge of the picture. That's one of the pictures that I treasure. Mrs. Stravinsky is also visible. The wife of the president

of Italy is sitting in the front row, and it was she whom the patriarch came in to greet especially. There were diplomats and government people sitting in the front, and it was a very auspicious occasion.

But the work was not well received. The reviews were generally not good, and I would say that it was not a very distinguished performance. They couldn't use the organ of the cathedral; they used an electronic organ which, of course, made the wrong sounds completely. The chorus was from La Fenice and did not know what to do with this kind of music stylistically. They wanted to sing everything in Italian bel canto, which was the wrong style for this austere music. Stravinsky himself conducted. This was the summer before he took sick, and he was still doing full-time conducting chores. Bob Craft helped, of course, at the rehearsals. The publicity in Venice at this time was simply extraordinary. There was a great deal of talk about the amount of money that the city of Venice had paid to Stravinsky for this commission; I don't know what the actual amount was, but I did hear talk about twenty-five thousand dollars. That doesn't seem to me to be an awful lot for a man like Stravinsky.

TUSLER: Translated into Italian terms it must have seemed more.

MORTON: Yes. But this just opened up that same old canard about Stravinsky and money, which has been going on for years and years and years; I don't know why he shouldn't have the right to get as rich as people in business. But he did present a very fine work.

Well, those are the highlights of that 1956-57 season, and I'll go on now into the '57-58 season. We began that season with some music by Buxtehude, a set of three cantatas for solo voices and fiddles and continuo. They were sung by Grace-Lynne Martin, soprano, and Margery MacKay, mezzo-soprano, one of the cantatas being for two sopranos with the instruments, and the others being solo cantatas. This was the first sizeable chunk of Buxtehude that we had done. There are some more Buxtehude pieces on my list, things that I do want to do--he's a neglected composer--but the opportunity has just not yet come up; that's on the books for the future. Owen Brady, who is now the director of music at Beverly Hills All-Saints Church, was in charge of these performances. He conducted and prepared all of the material.

October 28 we continued, as we had for many years, in trying to present something of Ernst Krenek every season, since he is one of our most distinguished resident composers. (We can't call him resident any more because

he's just recently moved to Palm Springs.) His activities nowadays are keeping him in Europe about half the year, and outside of performances at our concerts he is not much played in the community. The Philharmonic did present a cello concerto of his many years ago, but he appears hardly at all in the local repertoire, although some of his pieces are played from time to time on the university campuses where there are younger people interested in newer things. On this occasion, we presented his Capriccio for Cello and Chamber Orchestra which was then about a year and a half old. Krenek conducted, and Eugene Wilson, whom I mentioned before in connection with a quartet, was the soloist. This was a rather big production for us, since it required sixteen players in the chamber orchestra.

TUSLER: Is Krenek a good conductor?

MORTON: Confidentially, no, he's not a very able conductor. He has conducted at our concerts many times, but he doesn't consider himself a conductor and he doesn't conduct anything except his own music. One of the things that has always surprised me is that he doesn't require the absolute finesse of performance that other conductors do. He's happy to hear his music and happy to perform it, but I daresay that the best performances of his music will

always be the ones that some professional conductor is conducting. He did a piece with us this past season, a very interesting work, and the musicians had to pay very, very close attention because he is erratic as a conductor.

Then we ended that program with something that I regard as a kind of coup, namely, four sets of vocal quartets by Brahms. It's a very neglected repertoire, the kind of music that is not fashionable any more; I suppose that this kind of music was really written for domestic consumption in the nineteenth century. The quartets are very beautiful, and they are mature works bearing the opus numbers of 31, 64, 92, and 112. These are all of the vocal quartets that Brahms composed, with the exception of a set of gypsy songs, which we did some time later. Anita Priest was the pianist and the leader of the group, and the singers were Marie Gibson, Kay Fessenden, Alex Martin and Harry Reed. It was a very good quartet--not a great vocal quartet, but that's a very hard combination of voices to put together. I think a mixed quartet is one of the most unmusical of all groups, and they always sound better when the music is contrapuntal, so that one can listen to the individual lines, than when it is harmonically constructed.

TUSLER: Then you have to get a blend that isn't always there.

MORTON: Yes. A blend, I think, is something that is just not at all possible as we know, say, from the Beethoven Ninth Symphony--the solo quartet parts are always hideous sounding, I think.

These were settings of very good poems by people like Goethe, Schiller, Daumer, Hebel, Kugler, and so on. That was one of the most enjoyable things that we presented that year.

The November 11 program had a number of interesting pieces on it. We did another Buxtehude cantata, sung by Barbara Hardy, who has also gone to Europe, by the way, and is having a good career. She was back in this city last season, too late for me to try to schedule her. She and her husband have been in Europe maybe nine years by now. We had a flute and piano sonata by a young Italian, Camillo Togni, whom I had met in Venice. We have done one other work of his--a set of songs which has become rather frequently performed over there, both in its piano version and in its orchestral version. This sonata was a fairly good piece, composed in 1953. We also had the two-piano version of Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony No. 2, played by Leonard Stein and Natalie Limonick.

After intermission we did, I believe for the first time, some music by Milton Babbitt, who is the leader of the mathematical computer academic circle in this country. In 1957 (the time I'm talking about), he was not quite as important a person as he has become, but this was the first time we had had a work of his. We ended that program with the Concerto for Piano and Winds by Wallingford Riegger.

This was the seventy-fifth year of Stravinsky, as I've already mentioned, and out at USC, Ingolf Dahl, who was then conductor of the orchestra, was contemplating a big Stravinsky program with Persephone, which had never been performed on the West Coast. We also wanted to keep on celebrating Stravinsky's birthday, so we shared this program with them. We prepared with our people the Dumbarton Oaks Concerto in E-flat, and of course Ingolf conducted it since he belonged to us, I might say, almost as much as he belonged to USC. This was our contribution to the program, and the USC orchestra contributed Persephone. This was really quite a wonderful concert, and all of us were very excited to hear Perséphone since we'd known it only from phonograph records. Richard Robinson sang the part of Emolpus, and subsequently he did a recording; he sang it in Carnegie Hall with Stravinsky and

made the recording with Stravinsky. Here we had Charlotte Hyde (in spite of her name she is a French woman--I think Hyde must be her married name), who spoke the part very beautifully in impeccable French; I believe the New York performance had Vera Zorina.

I'll move on now to a program on December 9, when we did for the first time some Gesualdo sacred music. We'd been doing madrigals, but Bob Craft's investigations of Gesualdo brought him to some of his sacred music and we did three of his Responsoria for Holy Saturday. The transcriptions were made by Ruth Adams. She'd been a student at UCLA and was doing her thesis for her master's on Gesualdo. Since we'd been performing the madrigals she sought out Robert Craft, of course, and he encouraged her to go to Italy, and she did go, on a Fulbright. Well, she was stimulated largely by Robert Craft, and she did do a great deal of work on Gesualdo there. The three pieces that we did were in her transcriptions. I remember talking with her when she came back, and one of her stories was that she was always cold in Rome; at one point her husband came over to visit her and the big event for them was to spend a weekend in the Hotel Hassler, which is a very expensive hotel but one of the few places where they could get warm. The rest of the time working in those

unheated libraries, she had a pretty rough time. [laughter] Together with the Gesualdo--these are magnificent pieces--we did some choral music by Orlando di Lasso and Josquin des Prés.

The second part of the program was one of Bach's great masterpieces, the Trauerode, which we could afford to do simply because its instrumental requirements are very slight. Bob Craft had conducted this piece already at the Ojai Festival, and in both cases we used the original text in memory of the countess for [whose funeral] it had been written. Subsequently Bach had made a sacred piece out of this, using the same music with a different text.

January 13 was a big event for us because we had the Los Angeles premiere of the new Piano Fantasy by Aaron Copland. There was at one point a possibility of our having the world premiere of it, but I believe the work had been commissioned by the Dumbarton Oaks Foundation, and William Masselos did the world premiere there. But we did get the second performance, a Los Angeles premiere, played by Leo Smit. That's a colossal piece. It runs around thirty or thirty-five minutes, piano solo.

I'd had a taste of it during the preceding summer. Aaron Copland had been out here and he brought the music with him, and we had a get-together [with Ingolf Dahl] one night at about eleven o'clock at my house. Aaron sat down

at the piano and played it--not only played but sang the parts that he couldn't play. We were making a fearful racket, and I think that's the only time that I have received telephone calls from neighbors saying that it was too much. Well, we closed all the windows and closed the piano, but kept on going. This is quite an extraordinary piece. It's almost due for a revival, too.

Ingolf Dahl, like myself, but even more so than myself, was always looking through the nineteenth-century repertoire to see if there weren't some things we could dig up to revive. This time he dug up a quintet for piano and winds by Heinrich von Herzogenberg. We know his name mostly because he and his wife were very close friends of Brahms. Years ago when I was still an active musician, I played some piano pieces of his that I was rather attached to; they were very much in the Brahms style. Well, we revived the quintet and I'm glad we did, but we will not do it again. It's definitely a second-class piece, but it was interesting to have it.

I might mention now that just fairly recently Ingolf Dahl had been reading in the German, which is the only language in which they exist, the letters of von Bülow, and he found out that von Bülow was very fond of a piano quintet by [Joseph] Joachim Raff, who was one of the important conductors and not such an important composer

of the time. It was hard to find, but Ingolf worked out an interlibrary loan with the Library of Congress. He came over here one evening, and we went through the Raff--von Bülow's enthusiasm for it was much misplaced. It was a piece that we could not perform. But we are still looking through the nineteenth century to see if we've missed anything.

On January 27, the big event was the Sonata for flute, oboe, cello and harpsichord by Elliott Carter. We had played other pieces of Carter's, of course, in past seasons, but this was a new and a rather difficult piece. Leonard Stein played the harpsichord; the flutist was Arthur Hoberman; the oboist was Donald Muggeridge, who is now at the Philharmonic; and Marie Manahan was the cellist. We also had the Gregg Smith Singers on this program, and they did three choruses by Schoenberg, opus 50a, opus 27 nos. 1 and 2. Gregg Smith, as you see, was plunging into the new repertoire for which he has become rather well known, but they also sang the Motet no. 6 of Bach, Lobet den Herrn.

On February 10, an interesting item was Grieg. We did his song cycle Haugtusse, opus 67. We did that because an addition to the musical community here was Eva Gustavson, who is now on the vocal faculty at USC. We thought it would be nice to have her do a major piece and these songs are, I think, first class, very much in

the German romantic tradition. She sang them in the original Norwegian and they have a very different quality that way. She gave a very, very good performance of it. So that's twice in two seasons that we had Grieg. I think the only other Grieg we've had--and I think it's something I've mentioned before--was a group of piano dances that Ingolf Dahl had played, and they were really quite forward-looking, almost in the style of Bartók.

On February 24, a magnificent program of classical music, old music--Purcell, Tallis, Vivaldi and Bach. I want to emphasize that, because so many people think of us only in terms of modern music. We repeated the Lamentations of Tallis that I mentioned from the year before, such beautiful music that we felt, "Let's do it again." Then we did a harpsichord suite by Purcell. The Vivaldi was an extraordinary piece--a delightful piece, I should say--for two mandolins, string quartet and continuo, one of his I-don't-know-how-many concerti. We did have two mandolin players available, one of them being Max Gralnick, who has consistently done our mandolin playing in recent years, and the other a man that Mr. Gralnick had known, Jack Rose. He has since passed away. If we ever had another opportunity of repeating that piece, I don't know where we'd find another mandolin.

We concluded that program with the Bach Cantata no. 60, O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort. This was our second

performance of that cantata, and one reason that we wanted to repeat it was that the first performance in the Evenings on the Roof days had been something of a disaster in which I personally was involved. This is sort of a dramatic dialog between Hope and Destiny, and at one point a baritone voice, ["A Voice from Heaven"], is supposed to come from backstage with continuo accompaniment. Well, we used a little harmonium from backstage, and I was playing it. The baritone made a mistake in counting the rests, and I remember my scrambling around for a few seconds in order to find the place. Under these conditions, a few seconds seems like an eternity. We wanted to remedy that error, so we gave another performance. This time we had a real bass, Bob Oliver again, who didn't make any mistakes, so we redeemed ourselves with Bach on Cantata no. 60.

Notable repertoire on March 10 was Schütz. For maybe the third or fourth time we did the Fili mi, Absalon, a marvelous piece for bass and four trombones, and we added this time--again because we had Bob Oliver available--the Attendite Populum Meus, which uses the trombones also. Both of those pieces were about this time recorded by Bob Craft in a Schütz album that never did very well. One of the horrors of that program was that I was playing continuo harpsichord and I left out a note. So in that recording there's one empty spot where I should have

played but missed. It was exposed, and so people who know the [score] conclude that the microphone didn't pick it up, but actually I missed it and we didn't have enough time to do another take.

On this program we had the Los Angeles Percussion Ensemble, which was a group of percussion players got together by Bill Kraft. We had used them previously, but here they had a real chance to show off with a Theme and Variations for Percussion Quartet composed by Kraft. Then we had Doppelspiel by Bo Nilsson, one of the younger group of Scandinavian composers. He came from somewhere way up in Lapland and is supposed to have learned about music from radio. He became for a while a very important and very advanced young composer. I haven't heard much about him in recent years, the last three or four years. This piece was called Doppelspiel, which is not a baseball term meaning double play. It required nine percussion players and it made quite a good racket. Then we ended that program with what I still regard as the classical masterpiece of percussion music--the Ionization of Varèse. Bob Craft conducted that and subsequently he did make a recording of it, plus a lot of other Varèse music, a whole volume of Varèse. Our performance of Ionization was marvelous. I remember it in comparison with a subsequent performance that I heard in Paris where they didn't have the right siren. This is a fairly

important instrument in Varèse's orchestra for this piece, and in Paris, I don't know what they had, but they didn't have the hand siren that you can turn by yourself and consequently change the pitch of the instrument, make it wail more. In Paris, they don't know about American sirens.

March 24, again a kind of program that I particularly like--the first half, Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Stockhausen, Dallapiccola; and the second half, Bach. The Stravinsky was the Concertino for Twelve Instruments, which was originally a string quartet piece; in 1952 he had made an instrumental version of it. The first performance of that had been done by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra Society at UCLA, and I believe the occasion was the first performance of his Cantata on Old English poems. We'd wanted to do it, but we let some years pass and now the time was ripe. So we performed that, and it's a very, very beautiful piece.

The Schoenberg was the opus 11 Piano Pieces which Leonard Stein played. I remember that performance very clearly because I don't think that at any time before or after have I heard Leonard play as well as he did opus 11; whatever it was--a pill or the state of his digestion or whatnot--he really gave an incandescent performance of opus 11, and I think it's the best performance I ever heard. He also played some of the piano pieces of Stockhausen; that's a set, I believe, altogether of eleven,

but they were not composed in order and all of them were not even available at this time. Leonard played here nos. 2, 5, 3 and 1, in that order. The composer specifies that they can be played in any combination and in any order that the performer chooses. At another time, Leonard played the no. 11, which is the huge one, the one that is printed on a sheet of paper about the size of a pillowslip, and it came carefully rolled up in a carton with a wooden frame to hold it.

TUSLER: What is the purpose of that?

MORTON: Well, it's a chance piece and there are various little sections printed in various positions on the page, and you go from one to another as you choose. So you have to see the whole thing at one time. However, that technique was not used in any of these pieces, nos. 2, 5, 3 and 1. Then we did the five songs of Dallapiccola which were brand-new--they'd been composed just the year before. We have done an amount of Dallapiccola in our time.

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JUNE 2, 1966

TUSLER: I believe our starting point today is the 1958-1959 series.

MORTON: That's right. We begin in October as usual, with a very good program. We presented complete the Musical Offering of Bach, with Milton Thomas as the director and viola player, and he had a number of very good people playing with him. Haakon Berg, who had been one of our best flutists over a period of many years, has since passed away, and I think this is the last season that he played with us. He was also a composer and an arranger, and all-around a very good musician. Bert Gassman of the Philharmonic was the oboe and English horn, and the violinists were Dorothy Wade (who had been doing a lot of work with us for a long time) and Ralph Schaeffer. The violas were Milton Thomas and Joseph Reilich; Eugene Wilson, whom I mentioned last time, was the cellist, and Peter Mercurio the bass.

This was really a very interesting performance. Milton Thomas is a great Bach fan, and although he and I don't agree at all on the manner of playing Bach, the style in which Bach should be played, he does it expertly in his particular way, with great polish, great intensity, and great expressiveness. He has, as you probably

know, been working in the annual Casals Festivals for many years, and that is the spirit in which he likes Bach. To me, it's rather romantic and too expressive, but he does it expertly.

On that same program, William Kraft from the Philharmonic conducted his own piece, a Nonet for Brass and Percussion. If I'm not mistaken, this is the piece that he dedicated to Monday Evening Concerts. We have done premieres of maybe half a dozen of his pieces through the years.

The second concert was most important for us because of the uncovering of some vocal quartets of Schumann. I think I mentioned last time the Brahms vocal quartets that we had done, and this time we had the Schumann quartets called the Spanisches Liederspiel, opus 74. Natalie Limonick was in charge of this performance and she had as singers: Nancy Foster, soprano; Patty Winston, as alto; Alfred Jensen, tenor; and Allen Gildersleeve, baritone. I haven't heard anything of any of those singers in the past couple of years. There are ten songs in that set, and they're in Schumann's very best style. It was a stunning performance and really a first-class piece of repertoire for us to uncover. Natalie coached them and got the whole thing ready.

Just the day after that concert, which would have

been October 28, we succeeded in placing one of our concerts elsewhere, a thing that we had been trying to do, and continue to try to do, to get second performances of some of the repertoire that we have done. On October 28, we gave a concert at the Pasadena Art Museum sponsored jointly by Monday Evening Concerts, the Pasadena Music Teachers' Association, and the Pasadena Art Museum, with some financial help from the music performance fund of the union and the recording industry. Of course, with that help, it had to be a free concert. We did some of the material that we had previously performed, together with some pieces that were still to be performed. Grace-Lynne Martin was the soprano and she did some solo madrigals by Caccini and Luzzaschi, sixteenth-century music, and very well suited to her style of singing. Then we had the Sonata a Cuatro of Gian-Francesco Malipiero, which we had had just a few weeks previously on the program, which Haakon Berg had played; that's a sonata for four wind instruments. Then we had Mr. Tedesco with us to play the accompaniment for some songs, eight of his Shakespeare settings, with Grace-Lynne Martin. It's always interesting to have the composer at the piano, and I think that maybe some of these Shakespeare songs are Tedesco's most attractive pieces. Then we had a Sonata for Flute and Piano by Togni. I think this sonata,

opus 35, is not quite as strong a piece as the songs that we had done previously, but it was still a fairly important piece. We ended the program with some brass music which had been appearing on our programs over a period of several years, old Italian music for brass instruments, and the composers were people like the two Gabrielis and Banchieri, six of those pieces altogether. We had done them not only at Monday Evening Concerts but also I had programmed some of them at the Ojai Festivals. So this was repertoire all of which had been prepared for previous concerts or for some other purpose, and we were able to get a paid performance for our players.

TUSLER: Was it successful, in that area?

MORTON: Yes, it had a good crowd. There was no music on the program that was terribly difficult or abstruse; it was a rather easygoing program by our standards. But in the circumstances, however, it was an appropriate program.

TUSLER: What really is the purpose of the organization in taking its programs to another area like that?

MORTON: Well, there are two main ideas. One is that we do have fresh music, and we'd like to propagandize for it a little bit. But the overriding purpose, so far as we are concerned, is that when our musicians put in a great deal of time, countless hours in preparing a piece,

it's really too bad to let it go with one performance. When you think that the great virtuoso artists around the world--Rubinstein, Heifetz, and so on--will go through a whole season and maybe play two hundred, two hundred and fifty concerts, and have only four programs, they're getting a good run on every piece of music that they take the time to learn. Their return on their investment is very high in terms of study and practicing. With our people, the returns are very low because they work for many, many hours and then in ten or twenty minutes the piece is gone and that's the end of it. When a great deal of work has gone into difficult music we want very much to get second performances. The musicians feel that, too; and they feel there's a little bit of financial recompense there because they don't have to prepare then for the second performance, you see, [except for] a run-through and brush-up.

TUSLER: What are the ethics of having a piece performed a second time at the same performance, if it's repeated right then and there?

MORTON: It's not a question of ethics at all, so far as I'm concerned; it's just a question of time. If you have a very long piece, say, a twenty-minute piece, you may not be justified in playing it a second time because you're depriving the audience of a chance to hear something

else. But if it's a fairly short piece, it can be played twice and we've done this many times. I brought up the story previously about Nono and the review in the Times, which said that half the audience didn't come back, and I pointed out that half the audience did come back--it's just a question of how you slant the remark. But I think there are a great many pieces that should be heard twice, and it may be true that we haven't done enough of that in the past few seasons. Part of the reason is that I'm so pressed to get all the pieces into the season's repertoire that I have either promised [to have played] or feel that we really ought to make a place for, that it's hard to save enough time to do a second performance.

TUSLER: When I used the word "ethics," I meant financially, as far as the union was concerned, if it were required then that they receive double compensation.

MORTON: Oh, no. It's part of the same program. No, it's not an economic problem at all.

The first of December was a program that caused us much grief. Karlheinz Stockhausen was here, and we had planned on three of his pieces: the Klavierstück XI, that Leonard Stein was playing; the Zeitmasse, a piece for five winds (here there was a second performance of Klavierstück XI because it could be played in a different order--the fragments could be rearranged another way);

and finally the Kontra-Punkte, which we had previously done at the concerts under Bob Craft's direction and which we were repeating here. The second half of the program was given over to the Stravinsky Cantata.

This program had been arranged as a joint project of the UCLA Music Department, under Lukas Foss's general directorship, and Monday Evening Concerts. We were preparing the Stockhausen part; UCLA was presenting Stockhausen in a couple of lectures, one public one and one for the composition students and so on, and then the UCLA people were to produce the Stravinsky. Well, as I may have indicated before, Lukas Foss is not the easiest man in the world to deal with because he's very volatile, and when you think something is all set he'll get another idea and want to change everything, and while this is a mark of his enthusiasm, it's also a comment on the difficulties of working with him. We had a few days of rather rough going there, the outcome of which was that he decided he wouldn't conduct the Stravinsky but would turn it over to one of his students. That performance of the Stravinsky was not well prepared; the tenor was not nearly good enough, although the soprano, Catherine Gayer again, was very, very good. But the general performance was not good at all. I had heard a rehearsal of it and I was very unhappy about it--I thought that

it was a bad way to treat Stravinsky.

TUSLER: Was Stravinsky in the audience that night?

MORTON: No, he didn't come; I suppose he might have been out of town. I remember--though this is in the field of gossip--that Mrs. Schoenberg was there, and although the Stravinsky-Schoenberg relations have never been cordial through the years, even she made the remark that this was no way to treat Stravinsky.

Well, now I come back to the Stockhausen part. Leonard Stein did the two versions of the Klavierstück very well--he had had some coaching from Stockhausen, naturally, so it came off as a very good performance. The Kontra-Punkte, which we had done previously, was quite well played.

But when it came to the Zeitmasse we had a disaster. This had never been performed before, and it's a very, very difficult piece. Stockhausen was going to conduct it; he's extremely demanding, as he should be, and he thought of performances that he had had in Europe where they would rehearse every day for a month, which was quite impossible here. Just on the day before the concert he refused to go on with it. We had to substitute a tape piece of his, and so far as the audience was concerned, since they didn't know Zeitmasse, they didn't know what they were missing. The tape piece was new and he made some comments about it, so it turned out satisfactorily.

I remember when I had to go out on stage and make the announcement--since the program was already printed--that the Zeitmasse wouldn't be played, I made a very clever remark which the audience didn't pick up, and I remember how disappointed I was. I said that we had had trouble in getting the quintet together for adequate rehearsal, that it seemed during the days just preceding we had never been able to get more than three quarters of them at one time. There wasn't a bit of laughter, no one seemed to catch on; maybe my mathematics were too advanced for them. That was one of my great disappointments as a public speaker. [laughter]

TUSLER: So Stockhausen ended up not conducting anything on that program?

MORTON: He conducted the Kontra-Punkte; that was for ten players.

TUSLER: Do you think he was quite justified in canceling the other piece? Or could it have really gone on?

MORTON: Well, from his point of view he was justified; the players were disappointed, of course, that they didn't get a chance to play it because they'd put some work on it. No, you cannot criticize a composer if he cancels a performance for lack of rehearsal.

TUSLER: He wasn't just being temperamental.

MORTON: Oh, no. It's not a question of temperament; it's just a question of his feeling that the piece could not be adequately represented.

TUSLER: Is it terribly difficult?

MORTON: Yes, it is; it's a frightfully difficult piece and we have never succeeded in getting a performance of it, although I have hopes of programing it for this coming season if I can find the performers to put the time on it.

Now I'll skip to January 19, which was a very good program in which the Gregg Smith Singers played an important part. We began this program with the three solo madrigals that Grace-Lynne had sung at Pasadena (this had been a preparation in advance). Then Carol Rosenstiel played a group of pieces by Frescobaldi for harpsichord. These two program items were the prelude to the major work of the evening, which was Luigi Nono's Cori di Didone, Choruses of Dido, an American premiere that Leonard Stein conducted using the Gregg Smith Singers and the Los Angeles Percussion Ensemble. The percussion group in that piece consisted solely of cymbals, and there were so many of them that we had to have six cymbal players. The mixed chorus, as you can see, got no

help from the instruments in respect to pitches. I must say that Gregg Smith had done a really remarkable job of preparing the singers, and they did a fairly accurate job. At that time the shortcoming of Gregg Smith's chorus was simply a matter of choral quality, tone quality--it wasn't nearly what it subsequently became. There was no [other] choral conductor around town who would or could undertake to prepare a work of this difficulty because Gregg Smith has a remarkable ability to get his people to sing correct pitches. Now, I don't know if this was a flawless performance, since I didn't know the score; but that was quite a remarkable piece.

After the intermission, as a sort of recompense to the Gregg Smith Singers and also to the audience, they sang a group of classical pieces, a piece by Orlando Lassus, a piece by Johannes Brahms, a motet, opus 74, no. 2, and Charles Ives's Psalm 67. I don't remember now if this was the first time that Gregg had done any of the Ives psalms for us, but including this performance and subsequent ones, we've had a number of them, including just a few months ago the four psalms that were being performed for the first time, which Gregg Smith has edited from the Ives manuscripts.

We ended that program with the Schoenberg Ode to Napoleon, which Leonard Stein led from the piano, and William Schallert was the reciter. He's the son of the Schallert who writes for the Los Angeles Times as a movie critic or drama critic. Bill Schallert had some musical ability so that he was able to do this rather difficult half-spoken, half-sprechtstimme part. He did a very impressive job. It's unfortunate that the Byron poem that Schoenberg used is quite a miserable poem; one applauds its sentiments in a way--a plea for democracy and liberty and freedom, all that sort of thing--but the poetry is really not very good. The music is very interesting and we had a good performance. That was a first-class program. It was nice to have Schoenberg on a program together with his son-in-law, Nono.

On February 2, we had a program in collaboration with the Fromm Music Foundation of Chicago. I think this is the first of the concerts that Fromm sponsored.

TUSLER: What is the foundation?

MORTON: The Fromm Music Foundation is located in Chicago under the presidency of Paul Fromm, a businessman. He has a certain amount of money that he takes from his business or from his own private purse and has set up a foundation for the encouragement of contemporary music.

He has spent this money: first of all, in commissioning compositions; secondly, in financing performances of them; thirdly, in getting them recorded; and fourthly, in publishing. His activities in the early years were not as well organized as they have become now, and in those years he was not necessarily engaged in patronizing concerts to present music commissioned by the foundation. He's almost limited to that now, but at this particular time he was willing to have us do other kinds of music together with it.

He had commissioned, some time earlier, [a work from] Gunther Schuller--again, we're speaking of 1959--Gunther was an up-and-coming, very promising composer-conductor, and of course by now he's become one of the most important figures in American music. The piece he had commissioned from Schuller was much too big a piece for us to handle, so we did another piece of Schuller's called Five Pieces for Five Horns. The whole program was conducted by Robert Craft. Then we did Ingolf Dahl's Quartet for Violin, Viola, Cello and Piano, which had been commissioned by the foundation two years earlier and had been premiered, I believe, at the University of Illinois. Those two Fromm works we surrounded with Stravinsky and Varèse. Varèse had never been commissioned by

the foundation, but Varèse was a great figure in American music and Fromm was quite content to have such masters as Stravinsky and Varèse on the program. We began the program with the Stravinsky Octet for wind instruments, a piece which all our players knew very well so that rehearsal problems there were very small. Then we had the Schuller and the Dahl, and after intermission we had a huge ensemble play three works of Varèse. It began with the Hyperprism for nine winds and sixteen percussion instruments, but that doesn't mean sixteen players; I think we probably had six or seven players. Then we played the early piece, the Octandre, which is for seven winds and double bass; and then the major work, the Intégrales, for eleven winds and seven percussion players. The Intégrales and Hyperprism I can't say were first Los Angeles performances because I don't know, but at least they've been very rarely performed, and this was a big chunk of Varèse to present at any one concert.

The Fromm Foundation has continued to sponsor one program a year; it skipped one year, but from 1959 up until now, the foundation has given us a rather handsome check which enables us to put on music of a size that we could not ordinarily afford. As I said before,

now we are presenting almost entirely on those programs music commissioned by the foundation, although we had an exception this past season I'll mention later. It's been a very, very important connection for us not only because of the money, which is important to us, but also because our dealings with Mr. Fromm have been exceedingly friendly and cordial. He has never been out here to hear one of the concerts sponsored by his foundation, but in making the arrangements with him and in reporting to him afterwards, his attitude has always been most helpful and generous. His foundation is not one of the great ones like Ford or Rockefeller, so we're not talking about that kind of money. In recent years, his main effort has been going to Tanglewood, where he not only commissions a number of pieces but also has been sponsoring a sort of festival of American music--always chamber music, I think no orchestral works at all.

TUSLER: Is that his particular taste?

MORTON: Well, I don't know if he actually prefers it, but it certainly fits in with the amount of money that he has to spend. Rehearsal costs for the preparation of an orchestral piece are very very great. If his foundation is not wealthy enough to do that, they are very well occupied in taking care of chamber music ensembles.

But Tanglewood continues to be the principal activity of the foundation. That means that they are sponsoring not only the composition but also the performance, and in a few cases some works have been recorded; an Elliott Carter piece has been recorded, for instance. Monday Evening Concerts might be called a [foundation grantee] of the third order, the first order being Tanglewood and the second being some Eastern universities in which the Tanglewood people are concerned, where either in New York or in their home universities they present some of the Tanglewood performances for a second time. But we are, I would say, in the third order.

TUSLER: Odd that he's not doing something there in Chicago, since he lives there.

MORTON: Well, Chicago has not been a very lively musical town except for the symphony orchestra, which is one of the very good ones. They've had trouble with opera there for many, many years, but I never think of Chicago as being one of the great music centers, either for contemporary music or for chamber music. I think it was last year or the year before that the University of Chicago got on the bandwagon, so to speak, through a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, and Ralph Shapey has been directing a group there. I don't know but what

Fromm might have had some activities in Chicago, but they've not been very widely reported in any case if there have been any.

TUSLER: How did the relationship with Fromm come about? Did he approach you, knowing of these concerts?

MORTON: No. This was again through Stravinsky, as many of our good connections have been. I don't know where they met or how they became friendly, but this was our introduction to Fromm; and after Mr. and Mrs. Stravinsky spoke to me about it, I pursued it by letter. I did meet Fromm once in Chicago; I think this was probably on my return from Europe. Otherwise, everything has been done by correspondence.

Now I'll go over to February 16: there we had a new work by Ernst Krenek, actually two works. This time we coupled with him one of his favorite Renaissance composers, Johannes Ockeghem, and we had three little pieces for soprano and two instruments, the instruments not specified. We used viola and bassoon. I made these arrangements myself. I don't remember where I found the music, maybe in the Harvard Anthology or somewhere in the library. These were very charming pieces that Marni Nixon sang. Ockeghem is a composer that has appealed very much to Krenek, and Krenek has written a

small book about him. Krenek, I think, feels a very close kinship there. Ockeghem's music was sometimes regarded as being rather harsh and crabbed, and many people think this is also true of Krenek--maybe he thinks so himself; in any case, he does feel this kinship with Ockeghem, so it was a good idea to put them together.

The two Krenek pieces that we had on the program were the Sestina, which was for soprano and nine instruments, with Krenek himself conducting, and a Suite for Guitar Solo, a world premiere that was played by Theodore Norman. The Sestina was an interesting piece, as most of Krenek's recent pieces have been on the grounds of their peculiar structure. The sestina is a poetic form that was developed, I think, in the time of the troubadours. It has a rhyme scheme and stanza scheme with certain locations of words and even sentences; one has to compose the lines of the poetry in such a way that they can be repeated and the rhyme schemes maintained. It's a very complex, highly organized kind of thing and, of course, it fits in very well with Krenek's notions about twelve-tone music, so there is a double system there, both literary and musical. Of course, the poem was written by Krenek himself; he wrote it in German and he also wrote it in English, so one can be sure

that all of the rhymes and the repetition of lines and so on are quite accurate. Of course, hardly any of this appears in performance. One may be aware of rhymes as he hears words being repeated, but the overall mathematical form is hardly to be perceived, either in the music or in the poem.

During one of the rehearsals I commented to Krenek that there was one very, very beautiful effect where the soprano arrived at a high G, and just as she let it go the vibraphone somehow or other arrived at that same G; it sounds almost as though the vibraphone were continuing out of the voice. It was quite a beautiful effect and I mentioned it to Krenek, and he said, oh, yes, that he liked it, too, but it was a sheer accident. It came about as the result of the manipulation of the tones of the row, but he could not take credit for it as an inspired idea. It was simply the outcome of the workings of the mathematics of the composition.

TUSLER: If you get something beautiful, it's just luck--if you get something ugly, it's just chance, too!

MORTON: Yes. But of course there is nothing ugly to a composer in the twelve-tone style. As long as it doesn't turn out to be a C-major chord it's okay.

We'll go on to March 2 for a very interesting program

where we had the first American performance of the Debussy Chansons de Bilitis. I'm not speaking of the songs, but of the incidental music to the recitation. This was a work that Debussy had started and had never completed. The manuscript had belonged to a French critic, whose name I can't think of at the moment, but somehow or other Pierre Boulez got hold of it and he completed the composition. Now, I've never been able to find out exactly how much Boulez actually had to do. Subsequently, you know, Debussy used this material in the four-hand piano piece, Six Épigraphes antiques, so we can judge from that how much of the actual composition had been completed by Debussy, although the formal structure of the piano pieces is quite different from that of the recitation. This had the interesting combination of two flutes, two harps and a celesta, and the recitation goes on quite steadily; the music either introduces or connects poems or, at the end, may be a sort of epilogue which actually repeats some of the material of the introduction. The recitation we presented in French, of course, recited by Charlotte Hyde, the lady whom I mentioned last time in connection with a performance of Persephone at USC. This was the first

time it had been done in this country. We performed it a second time a few seasons ago with Vera Zorina doing the recitation, and that performance was recorded a couple of days later. This is not a great piece by any means, but it's an extremely interesting one; and in view of subsequent events in the field of _sprecht-stimme_, the combination of a spoken voice with this very delicate music was very, very interesting.

For the second half of that program we presented an oddity, which was part of the music of Mozart's opera _The Abduction from the Seraglio_ in an arrangement without voices for wind octet. It is not absolutely certain that Mozart himself made this arrangement, but there are eight pieces in the set and they're certainly worth doing. It's easy to imagine that Mozart might have done this because as we know, in those years, without protection of copyright, any music that came along could be stolen and arranged by anyone and someone else could make money on it. So it's very possible that Mozart did this himself; the woodwind writing is quite expert and since all the notes existed already in the operatic score, it's simply a question of arranging them for the usual woodwind combination of pairs of oboes, clarinets, bassoons and horns. This was a very

interesting project. The music had not been published so far as I know, but it was owned by a German company from whom we rented manuscript parts--I mean, modern manuscript--and I don't know if the piece has subsequently come out as a published work or not. But it was an interesting thing to have that music in this particular shape, even if it wasn't done by Mozart but by one of his contemporaries.

TUSLER: How did you know about it?

MORTON: This was something I'd read in a catalog, it seems to me, of Bärenreiter, or I might have read something about a performance somewhere in Germany. I spend a great deal of time looking at lists of new music and reading about performances wherever I can, and I'm continually trying to get on more and more mailing lists from the European concert agencies. I have, for instance, a complete file of programs of the Domaine Musical from its first years.

On March 9, we had a special program that was made possible through the courtesy of the Coleman concerts in Pasadena and one of our friends who made a special contribution of money. The Parennin String Quartet of Paris had come to town to play at the Coleman concerts, and of course there they were playing a fairly normal

classical repertoire, although in Europe they're very well known for their performance of avant-garde music. As long as they were in town, we were able to get them, with the approval of the Coleman people, at a very much reduced fee on the grounds that nothing they played at our concerts would be of any interest to the people who normally go to the more conservative concert series, such as the Music Guild here or Coleman in Pasadena. They played for us the work that we had asked for particularly, Elliott Carter's String Quartet of 1951--I think it must have been the First Quartet. The Parennins had it in their repertoire because they'd been playing it abroad, so it was no great job for them to get it in shape for us, and they may actually have been playing it on this tour at other places.

We also had a quartet by Bruno Maderna, a man who is dividing his life, I would say, between three-quarters conducting and one-quarter composing. He has conducted at the Domaine Musical, and I believe his principal job was at the Milan Radio. He's been a specialist in conducting the very advanced pieces by people like Berio and Nono, and he's done a great deal of Boulez, having conducted at the Boulez concerts in Paris. Just two years ago he was in this country to conduct

Nono's opera Intolleranza at Boston University. He's a very, very busy man in Europe, conducting all over. His compositions are very expert. I haven't come across a piece of his yet that I actually think is first-class contemporary music, but he's a very solid and good composer. This was the first time that anything of his had appeared on our programs. Well, we were glad to have that.

Then I asked the Parennin people, since they were a French quartet, to play one French composition, leaving it up to them to choose whatever piece they wanted, taking into account the general nature of the program. They came up with a quartet by Jean Martinon who is now, as you know, the conductor of the Chicago Symphony. This was his Quartet, opus 43, and compared to the Elliott Carter and the Bruno Maderna pieces, quite conservative, but again, expertly written and of course played superbly.

Their visit was rather enjoyable. Those of us who had a little bit of French could talk with them, and they were a very lively group, especially the cellist whose name is Pierre Panessou. The question of food was very much on our minds at that time; I knew that they had been invited to several places in Pasadena where

they didn't get anything to drink, and I know how the French are devoted to their wines. After our concert they came back to my house, and I had made a huge pot of soup that had meat in it and lots of good vegetables and seasonings, and some French bread with garlic, and I had a couple of bottles of very good French Bordeaux. I had a small apartment and I think there were something like eight or ten people there, and it was very crowded; but I remember they all enjoyed it and they all came back for seconds on the soup and I even ran out of bread. Of course, after a concert they were very hungry, and the wine was something that they really enjoyed. I think they'd undoubtedly been offered Scotch or whiskey at other places, but wine was what they wanted. So that evening was a lot of fun.

TUSLER: Did the Coleman group partially support this concert?

MORTON: No, they didn't support it, but you see when they pay a very large fee for bringing a quartet here, it wouldn't be fair for someone else to get them at a much reduced price. But the Coleman people were extremely generous in this respect, and they were quite willing that we should take them and pay them what we could, as long as we weren't competing in terms of repertoire. It worked out very nicely. We've always had

very friendly relations with the Coleman people.

TUSLER: Was this all arranged a long time in advance?

MORTON: Oh, yes. This was probably sometime in the summer preceding the concerts. I don't know why I shouldn't mention the friend who helped us out financially on this--it was Paco A. Lagerstrom, who is a member of our board and who is on the faculty of Caltech. He knew the Parennins from Europe, since he travels a great deal in Europe for scientific meetings, and he's very much interested in music and plays a little bit of piano himself. He met the Parennins and liked them, and it was through him that they were engaged for the Coleman concerts because he was on the music committee for the Coleman concerts, and since he's always been friendly to our concerts he thought it would be nice. We didn't have quite enough money to meet the fee that they had to have, so he contributed the difference to us.

I tried a couple of times to get the Parennins back. They were out of the battle for a while because one of their members was in an automobile accident and was rather seriously injured and, I think, couldn't play for something better than a year; they had a substitute for a while, but it wasn't the same old quartet. Now they're

all back together again, and I noticed that just a few months ago they played at the Domaine Musical, playing Boulez's quartet.

Before the end of this season, 1958-59, I began to organize the next season, which I was going to spend in Europe. I had a Guggenheim grant beginning in September of that year, and I intended to spend the whole year in Europe, possibly more. The organization of the concerts before I went took quite a bit of work. We engaged a young man named Henry Holt who was to act as a sort of executive secretary, but we divided the twelve concerts for the coming season amongst the people who had been working most faithfully with us and made each one of them responsible for one or two programs, depending on how many he would take. For instance, Ingolf Dahl took the responsibility for two programs (he chose the repertoire and got the players together); Leonard Stein took two; Leo Smit took one or two--well, as I go through these programs I'll find the names of the others. I think I asked Lukas Foss, but he was unable to do it for some reason or other, though I think Lukas appeared on the series somewhere.

Most of all, I spent the summer in getting our memberships in, and I would say that by the time I left,

seventy-five percent of the season's money had come in to the society as contributions or ticket purchases, so that the bulk of the practical work had been accomplished before I left. I had discussed repertoire with all of our program directors, as we called them, so that I could leave with a perfectly good conscience and was sure that everything was going to work out all right. Well, it did work out all right in practically all the musical problems; with some of the practical problems, the handling of money and so on, there were some complications, some of which we never did get quite straightened out. I suppose I must say there aren't very many people who are as fussy about details as I have been. I've always been very fussy about financial details because I feel that since we're always short of money I want to be sure that it's being spent not only in the most economical way but in the way that's going to show itself most in the conduct of the concerts.

Ingolf Dahl took over the first program and it was a typical Ingolf program: Bach, Toch, Haydn and Hindemith. I remember when the program was sent to me in Paris I was a little bit horrified at the size of the ensembles--there were so many people engaged in the performance of this program. The Bach was a Concerto for

Harpsichord and Strings. Alice Ehlers was supposed to have played it, and I don't remember why she didn't (maybe she was ill), and Ingolf had to play the harpsichord part himself, conducting from the harpsichord. The Toch was a premiere, Music for Winds and Percussion; it was five winds and I think three percussion players. The piece that Ingolf and I had discussed many times and hadn't found a place for was a solo cantata for soprano by Haydn called Ariadna on Naxos, and Ella Lee sang it. She's another one of the very good singers whom the city has lost, but I think she had been working at USC at that time and Ingolf knew her quite well, and she was delighted to sing an important work of this sort, which consisted of two recitatives and two arias, Italian text. The program ended with the Concert Music for piano, brass and two harps by Hindemith. That was another favorite work of Ingolf's, and one that I hadn't been able to program because I thought it was a fairly expensive piece to put on; but as I say, some of the financial matters were sort of brushed over this season and no one was being quite as economical about these things as I was [used to] being.

For the second program, another person who'd taken over programs, David Raksin, [was in charge]. Most people

know of him as a film composer and as the composer of "Laura," but he's always been very deeply interested in serious music and he directed this program and actually conducted, I think, two of the pieces on it. This program I had planned in advance with David. We had already received information from the American Association for the United Nations that some special events were to take place in connection with the fourteenth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, and literature had gone out asking various groups to participate in a national celebration. So we had a kind of international program, with the French composer Louis Saguer, the Swedish composer Bengt Hambraeus, the American composer George Tremblay, the Italian composer Luigi Dallapiccola, and the Russian composer Prokofiev. Dave arranged for Frank Baxter from USC to make a brief intermission talk about the significance of the United Nations. I'm sorry I missed that, but it was evidently a very successful program and the variety of music was very great. We had done a number of Dallapiccola pieces, but this time Dave had the Four Machado Songs, which Marni Nixon sang with Natalie Limonick. The Prokofiev was a rather old work but one that David Raksin was particularly fond of, the Quintet for Oboe, Clarinet, Violin

and String Bass. We had had that work many years ago in the Evening on the Roof days, but Dave had a special affinity for it, and that was the work that he conducted.

Then a short time later, and this was something I was very sorry to have missed, a delegation of Russian composers came to Southern California for a visit--Shostakovich, Kabalevsky, Dankevich, Khrennikov, Amirov and the musicologist Yarustovsky. A special program was arranged jointly by Monday Evening Concerts, the University of Southern California School of Music, and the Young Musicians Foundation; and the idea here was to present some of our American composers and one classical work that would show the Russians that we did have some classical background. The pieces played were Lennie Bernstein's Sonata for Clarinet and Piano, Halsey Stevens's Sonata for Cello Solo, a repetition of the Haydn cantata that Ella Lee had just sung, and Ingolf Dahl's Concerto a Tre for clarinet, violin and cello. It was performed at USC at Hancock Auditorium.

The Russians weren't passing out any real compliments to anybody, as you probably know, and I remember reading even in Paris that Shostakovich had some rather harsh things to say about American music and about American culture generally. Of course, people like Khrennikov

would have been much more outspoken, although Shostakovich was the one everyone was interested in. I remember he made some very adverse comments in San Francisco about Stravinsky. Of course, all that is water under the bridge now; since Stravinsky visited Russia they've become, at least for the world, very good friends.

TUSLER: Was this under the cultural exchange program?

MORTON: Yes. It says on the program, "A special program in honor of the visiting musicians from the Soviet Union participating in the foreign leaders program of the International Educational Exchange service of the United States Department of State." I didn't know anything about this when I left. It was arranged after I'd gone to Europe, and I think that the occasion must have been more or less set up by Raymond Kendall of USC, who has always been very close to State Department activities.

Well, as for the rest of this season, there's nothing I can take any personal credit for in the way of programing, except for a few things I'll mention as I go through. The Pierre Boulez Structures for Two Pianos that Karl and Margaret Kohn played had been talked about for several seasons, and Karl and his wife decided this would be a good occasion to perform it because Karl was

the director of this particular program. They also played the Bartók Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion. Then another program came along with Leonard Stein, the first of the two programs he prepared, and he had [Goffredo] Petrassi, [Hans Erich] Apostel, some Schoenberg piano pieces, and the Bach Cantata no. 202, a wedding cantata, that Grace-Lynne Martin sang. Then Leo Smit's program--one could almost guess that he would be sure to have Stravinsky: he did the Divertimento for Violin and Piano, with Eudice Shapiro; his dear friend Harold Shapero was represented on the program, with Leo playing his Variations; some Beethoven folk songs, and the Hindemith Octet for Winds and Strings.

I think that I'm going to skip comment for most of this season to remark that one of the other things that I had to achieve before I left for Europe was to find us a new home. At the end of the '58-59 season, West Hollywood Park was being redesigned so that they could use the floor for indoor athletic events. It had never been a completely satisfactory hall, and now with the prospect of its being changed and, I daresay, expecting the smell of basketball to be there, we made arrangements to move to Plummer Park, which was very well suited for music because it had been designed for Peter Meremblum's

Youth Orchestra activities. That was one of the great deeds of John Anson Ford as a county supervisor. So this season now, the '59-60, was taking place at Plummer Park, and we remained there until the fall of 1965.

We had a West Coast premiere of the Stravinsky Epitaph for Prince Max of Fürstenberg in February of that year, a notable but very small piece. Henry Holt himself took over a program and presented Michael Sahl, who was one of the young composers at USC and a very promising young man who's done well in the East.

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TUSLER: Last time you were just finishing the 1959-60 season.

MORTON: There were just the last few programs in that season that I hadn't talked about. One of them was on March 21, under the direction of Leo Smit. He conducted a rather large work of his for vocal quartet and twelve wind and brass instruments called Cantata for a Roman Lady, and it was a first performance. I don't know this piece and I have not seen the score. As one would expect with Leo, he also had on this program a piece by Irving Fine, who was one of his very close friends, a Fantasy for String Trio, played by Eudice Shapiro and Victor Gottlieb and Sanford Schonbach, a West Coast premiere. Then, of course, there was Bach, to whom Leo is devoted; he played four preludes and fugues. (Just last season he did the whole series at UCLA.) After intermission he played [the piano part in] the Schumann E-flat Quartet, with the same string players. His own piece was the notable new work on that program.

What had originally been scheduled as the final program of the year was the program sponsored by the

Fromm Foundation, and the composers represented there were Arthur Berger, Ernst Krenek, Kazuo Fukushima, Milton Babbitt and Alban Berg. Actually, I believe that none of these pieces had been commissioned by the Fromm Foundation, but they were all composers in whom the foundation was interested. Arthur Berger has been closely affiliated with the Fromm Foundation since around '57-58 when the foundation took a different turn in its sponsorship of music. This piece of Arthur's was Chamber Music for Thirteen Players and was a first Los Angeles performance. Then Ernst Krenek, who is a close personal friend of Paul Fromm, played a piano suite, the Sechs Vermessene. The Fukushima piece, played by Leonard Stein and Arthur Hoberman, was called Ekagra (La Concentration), for alto flute and piano, also a Los Angeles premiere. Since then we've had Fukushima on another program; he's one of the younger Japanese composers, quite avant-garde. Milton Babbitt's piece was the Woodwind Quartet.

Bob Craft was supposed to conduct the Alban Berg Three Pieces from the Lyric Suite in the larger arrangement for a string orchestra. Something happened to that performance and it wasn't played, and I don't know what was substituted for it--I've tried to get a correction on this for my own files. I believe they ran into some

difficulty with the union. If I'd been around, I would have warned them against this. It required multiple strings, and that did bring us into the orchestral category instead of chamber music. I never would have permitted the programing of it because it was against the union rules; but I suppose because Craft was eager for the piece and Henry Holt, who was in charge of the concerts, was--let's say--slightly impulsive, he probably said, "Well, let's go ahead and do it anyway." This is what I imagine happened, and at the last minute it was canceled. We've since had the Lyric Suite played in its original version for string quartet, but the version for string orchestra is simply not feasible for our concerts.

TUSLER: Why did the union make this distinction between the chamber group and the full orchestra?

MORTON: The union made this distinction really at our request, because as long as we stay in the chamber music category one does not pay for rehearsals. If you go into the orchestra category you pay for rehearsals, and of course the reasons for this are obvious--a chamber group is going to work by itself, it's going to rehearse many, many hours. Generally an orchestra work requires a different kind of discipline; you have to

make every minute count, whereas in a chamber group the musicians are rehearsing on their own.

At the end of the season, there was an extra concert arranged by Leonard Stein to take advantage of the presence of Luciano Berio, the composer, with his wife, Cathy Berberian, the mezzo-soprano, and Severino Gazzelloni, who is, I suppose, the most famous flutist in the world today. He's a flutist for whom every European composer has composed a special work. He's a Roman, and he looks that, too. I met Gazzelloni in Europe just a few months after he had played this concert. Berio I had already met, and I also saw him and his wife Cathy in Milano. The program that they put on here had music by Varèse, Debussy and Berio (these were all flute pieces): the Varèse Density 21.5 for flute solo, the Debussy Syrinx for flute solo, and the Berio piece Sequenza, that was I believe the first of the Sequenzas which have now come up to number five. Then they played some electronic music by Bruno Maderna, who had been closely affiliated with Berio in the electronic studio in Milan, first a piece called Continuo, which was just for electronic tape, and second a piece called Music in Two Dimensions, for flute and tape, which Gazzelloni played. Then in the second half of the program Cathy Berberian

did a number of pieces: John Cage's Aria for Mezzo-Soprano and Fontana Mix, which she subsequently did at the Ojai Festival; a tape piece of Berio's called Omaggio a Joyce; Sylvano Bussotti's piece for voice and piano that was done by Cathy and Leonard Stein; then flute pieces again, the Messiaen Le Merle noir and the Boulez Sonatina. This must have been quite an extraordinary program; Gazzelloni and Cathy Berberian are among the really great performers of our time. I'm not saying that she's a great singer--she's not. She is a very special kind of singer; she's a theatrical singer, and by that I don't mean opera. Her voice is called a mezzo-soprano, but it's an unclassifiable voice, and she is one of the most stunning performers I've ever seen on stage. Gazzelloni is a performer with more stage awareness than I've ever seen in anyone except great artists like Rubinstein or Horowitz. Gazzelloni has a style, a way of playing which belongs entirely to the mind of music that he's playing (he plays only new music). I've never heard of his playing a piece in the classical repertoire; I'm sure he must have studied them, but now he has made a perfectly fabulous career as a performer of avant-garde music.

TUSLER: Is he connected somewhere specifically?

MORTON: No. He's a solo artist. I suppose there must be twenty-five or fifty pieces composed for him in the last eight or ten years. Every composer wants to get Gazzelloni to play a piece for him.

TUSLER: What were they doing here in Los Angeles? They were here on some other mission, I take it.

MORTON: Luciano was giving some lectures at various colleges. I don't know the whole situation there, but they must have had a lot of other concerts.

TUSLER: How did the Monday Evening Concerts manage to get them? Did they do this just out of their interest in the group?

MORTON: I presume that they got our usual fee; I don't know if they got anything more for travel expenses or not. The details of that I don't know. Leonard Stein had met Berio and they had become rather friendly, and they're still very close friends. I had met Berio previously but only briefly, and subsequently later in that year I visited them in Milano. This is just part of the Monday Evening Concerts style; somehow or other, one of us seems to get acquainted with the avant-garde people--Stockhausen, Berio, Boulez. I would say that Berio now is a special friend of Leonard's, whereas Boulez is a special friend of mine, and Stockhausen is

also a friend of Leonard's. Stockhausen and I had a run-in, and for some time we were not on good terms at all. This had to do with some criticisms that Stockhausen had made of Los Angeles generally; he said some unkind things about our musicians and I remonstrated in a letter, and he chose to suppress the letter. Well, this was all going on at the end of my European visit, but one doesn't carry chips, and the last time he was out here we were friendly again and had a rather nice time. We have cultivated composers of that type as part of our regular business.

In 1960-61, contrary to my expectations, I stayed in Europe longer than I had anticipated. I got a second Guggenheim, so for the 1960-61 season I was also not here. By this time, Henry Holt had gone on to do other things--I might say, to do his mischief elsewhere. He was not a very good manager of the concerts. His place was taken by Douglas Talney, who was then a graduate student at USC and had been recommended to the organization by Ingolf and other USC people. His wife we had known as a violinist; she had played on our concerts. Talney was first rate as a manager and director of the concerts. He has subsequently moved up to Vancouver where he has a position at the university. [He was a]

very pleasant and a very dependable, reliable man, and did everything just the way it was supposed to have been done.

He continued, however, the policy that we had set up of having a program director for every concert, and during the 1960-61 season, Ingolf Dahl took charge of the first concert. It was a typical Ingolf program with Bach and Schubert and two Los Angeles composers, one of them Joseph Achron, who had already passed away in 1943 but who was a very, very wonderful man; he had a Sextet for wind instruments including trumpet that had always been a favorite of Ingolf's. It's a very bright and lively piece. There was the Bach Triple Concerto in which Alice Ehlers played the harpsichord, Roger Stevens, flute, and Harris Goldman, violin. It was a sort of, let's say, USC group. Ingolf conducted the accompanying quartet. The new piece was by a young man who had graduated from USC, Ramiro Cortes, Chamber Concerto no. 1 for cello and twelve wind instruments. Cortes was, I think, one of the most brilliant young people turned out at USC; he was capable both as a composer and as a conductor. He moved away shortly thereafter and has now come back to Los Angeles.

The Schubert on the program was the Grand Duo for piano four hands, played by Muriel Kerr and Lillian Steuber. I think this is the only time, if I remember correctly, that Muriel Kerr played on our concerts. She was on the faculty at USC, had appeared with the Philharmonic and was a concert artist of some standing. I think she was reluctant to play on our concerts; but Lillian Steuber of course had played before and has played since. They're both USC people, so on the whole this program had the configuration of a USC concert.

The second concert was under the direction of Peter Yates, and of course anyone who knows Peter would guess who the composers were: Ruggles, John Antes, Ives, Lou Harrison, and Gerald Strang. The two great old men of American music, Ives and Ruggles. The Ruggles was the four chants for piano called Evocations, played by Peter Hewitt, and the Ives was the First Piano Sonata, also played by Peter Hewitt. He has become now one of our solid, very good players. The Strang and Harrison pieces were for percussion ensemble.

The middle piece was one of the trios by John Antes. Antes was of the early American Moravian culture that was prevalent at the end of the 1700s and early 1800s.

Some of this music by Antes had only recently been uncovered. A great deal of it is now available and being issued by a number of publishers; one of the specialists in this is Irving Lowens, who at that time was at the Library of Congress. Naturally, Peter Yates was up on all that sort of thing because of his interest in American music.

The third program was under the direction of David Raksin. David is a film composer and, although he doesn't like to be so identified, he is the composer of "Laura," which is one of the great pop songs of all time. David has indicated a much more substantial interest in serious music than most of his colleagues. His only rival in that respect would be Hugo Friedhofer, who does not perform in any way at all, but Hugo is one of the good musical scholars in the classical field and has a great interest in the great contemporaries, such as Stravinsky and Schoenberg. His interests include the avant-garde.

Well, David had cooked up a program involving the then recently formed Amati String Quartet, and he also is interested in recorder music, so he had a very interesting program with an Arriaga quartet, some older pieces for flute and recorder, and a piece for string

quartet with guitar by a Brazilian composer named [Radamés] Gnattali, who had not previously appeared on our concerts. Then he had André Previn play the Sonata no. 3 of Paul Hindemith. This had in a way been set up by myself because I had run into André Previn in Venice where he told me that he was about to record the three Hindemith piano sonatas. I had said, "That's a marvelous project--why don't you play the whole group of them at Monday Evening Concerts when you get back?" I had written back to Doug Talney, and I was rather disappointed to see that instead of the three piano sonatas, which would have been a substantial chunk of music, they ended up with only one on this program.

The last piece was by Leonard Rosenman, who had been living here, and working in films; he was an accomplished twelve-tone composer and had composed a serial film score called The Savage Eye, which was an avant-garde, almost scandalous film about Los Angeles and the underground activities of the way-out beatniks. He made a concert suite out of this called Music for Fifteen Instruments. It made a very stunning piece. Subsequently it was played by Henri Temianka on his series called Let's Talk Music, and I heard it then. It is, really, a striking piece, although I think it's better with the

film; I think the film is not an awfully good film but the music sounds better with than without it. Leonard Rosenman is an outstanding young composer and if he could only find a way of giving more of his time to serious music, which doesn't earn him any money, I think we'd have a really very, very good composer there.

Doug Talney himself was the director of the next program and he programed a large group of madrigals and old music from the Renaissance and early Baroque, had Ellen Mack play the Schoenberg Five Piano Pieces, opus 23, and also scheduled a work by Donal Michalsky. Michalsky is also a USC graduate, a rather talented composer, a pupil of Ingolf Dahl. I think this is the first time he had been on our program. The piece was Fantasia, a setting of four poems by Lorca for mixed voices and bass clarinet. The program ended with some cantatas of Scarlatti and Telemann, the arrangements of the Scarlatti by a former flutist in Los Angeles named van Leeuwen. I knew that setting, and this is one of the pieces that would have never passed muster if I'd been around. It was a romantic setting of Scarlatti and the kind of thing I personally don't approve of and which it's not our policy to include.

The January 16 concert was a production of Handel's

Acis and Galatea, which Henry Lewis had prepared and had already given several performances of around town. It was a striking production with Marilyn Horne, of course, singing the role of Galatea, and Marni Nixon singing Damon. John Guarnieri was the Acis, tenor, and Roderick Ristow the Polyphemus, bass. It was a concert performance. This was really not an opera--it was a pastorale, and may have been intended for outdoor performance; at least the settings are all outdoors. It's a beautiful piece. Here again, because I wasn't here, I don't know how this was worked out from the standpoint of union regulations, because this was a large string orchestra. I remember that I had written some advice to Doug Talney: that this was not to be considered a Monday Evening production but a Monday Evening presentation, and that he should be careful not to pay the players but to arrange [payment to] Henry Lewis in a lump sum, so the responsibility there was Henry Lewis's. This was a standing organization called the String Society of Los Angeles, so it was not our responsibility; it was just a case where we purchased a concert. Unfortunately I didn't hear it, but everyone told me that it was an outstanding evening, that the singing was beautiful and that the whole performance

was absolutely top-notch.

Aurelio de la Vega took charge of the next program--I don't know if I've mentioned him in connection with the concerts or not--he is a Cuban and has been stationed at California State College at San Fernando. Of course, he knows the South American musical scene very well; and he had a very interesting program, with music by [Silvestre] Revueltas from Mexico; Juan Carlos Paz from Argentina (he was one of the first South American twelve-tone composers); Aurelio's own Wind Quintet, which was a world premiere; a piece called The Fragrant Dawn by Juan Orrego Salas, from Chile (we have subsequently had another piece of his); and a piano sonata by [Alberto] Ginastera. I had good reports on this concert, particularly about the Ginastera sonata, which was a real virtuoso piece and played in very grand style by a young man, Adrian Ruiz, who is on the faculty now at Valley State.

The seventh program was under the direction of Leonard Stein. One of its two main items was Ernst Krenek's Santa Fe Time Table, a work that had had considerable fame because it was simply a setting of the [names of the] station stops on the Santa Fe line. Of course, no one but Gregg Smith's chorus would undertake a work like

that. It was an indication of Gregg's growing interest in contemporary music; he was making a real place for himself with modern choral works. The other piece was the Zyklus for percussion solo by Karlheinz Stockhausen. Those two things are of course Leonard's main interest, but the rest of the program had to balance it, and Gregg Smith's group also sang three motets for unaccompanied chorus, and there were the Mahler Songs of a Wayfarer, sung by James Tippey with Natalie Limonick playing the piano. To open the program there was a Zelenka sonata for oboes, bassoon and continuo. The Zelenka sonata I want to talk about a little bit later apropos of a performance of another work of his.

Karl Kohn took over the next program. As you see, all these people who are program directors are bringing in as performers and repertoire the things that they are closest to. Karl Kohn, of course, brought in the Pomona College Glee Club, which had been singing for us for many seasons, and which I have used in Ojai. They sang a mass by Jean Mouton, a Renaissance composer, and Karl prepared some instrumental pieces from the Glogauer Liederbuch, which I believe had come out in a new edition, or as a new publication just around that time; and Karl had been fascinated by the materials there.

Incidentally, I found that Charles Wuorinen, who appeared with us last year, was also fascinated by the Glogauer Liederbuch, so I thought I must bring Karl Kohn and Charles Wuorinen together, and I did without any very striking results at all. Marilyn Horne sang some early songs of Schoenberg on this program, the Eight Songs, opus 6, and then Karl and his wife Margaret did some two-piano pieces, En Blanc et Noir of Debussy, and the Stravinsky Concerto for Two Pianos. That's a standard repertoire with us; the Stravinsky had been played several times, one notable performance having been given in the Evenings on the Roof days by Ingolf Dahl and Stravinsky's son Souleima. That certainly is, I think, without any question, the masterpiece of Stravinsky's neoclassical period.

The ninth program was under the direction of Robert Craft, but really the only music on it that he was concerned with was the Varèse Deserts, which was still a very new piece and had not been performed out here. It had a large group of instruments--there must have been fifteen or eighteen people there, including five percussion players--and it also requires tape for the middle portion. The other part of the program doesn't represent any of the Bob Craft's particular interests, and

I think that Doug Talney himself must have been responsible for setting up the first part of the program, which had some songs by Alessandro Scarlatti in the John Edmunds realizations, some songs by Edmunds himself, and some songs by Charles Ives. All of the singing was done by Margery MacKay, mezzo-soprano, with her husband Harper playing the piano. In between, there was a performance of Sam Barber's Excursions, opus 20, for piano solo, played by John Steele Ritter. I don't know who he is--I've not heard of him before nor have I heard of him since--but he must have been, I presume, someone connected with USC whom Doug Talney had met.

The next program was under the direction of Lukas Foss. The program material I have here indicates that, as usual, Lukas's arrangements were rather scatterbrained and constantly changing, and of course the printed program was not the program that was actually played in terms of personnel or in terms of repertoire. This is just Lukas's unbridled enthusiasm in getting ideas at the last moment and finding that things won't work--a sort of impractical attitude toward the business of concert making. The big pieces on the program included, first of all, the Improvisation no. 1 of Boulez. It was interesting that Lukas wanted to play Boulez, because just

a few years previously he had [taken part in a] catastrophic symposium, with Boulez and Bob Craft representing the avant-garde and Lukas Foss and Paul Des Marais representing the older tradition. This was quite a symposium.

TUSLER: Where was this?

MORTON: This was at UCLA, and the occasion was I think rather devastating for Lukas in that he found that he had not kept up with what had been going on in European musical centers. Boulez, I think, shocked him a good deal. Well, of course, since that time Lukas has gotten on the bandwagon and he is an advanced composer; and he did get his improvisation group together. The improvisation group played on this particular program. This was the original group with Richard Dufallo, clarinet; Charles DeLancey, percussion; and Howard Colf, cello.

TUSLER: Was that a good group, or were you familiar with it?

MORTON: Oh, yes, I knew that group; I knew all those people very well. They are three people of extraordinarily different temperament, and I don't think anyone but Lukas could have brought them together and got each one of them to contribute his own kind of music making, because those three people were as varied in

musical experience and taste as any three people could be.

TUSLER: I know that individually they're outstanding performers, but how did you feel about the improvisation group as a group?

MORTON: Well, if we go into the field of criticism here, I can only speak personally now; I can't represent the opinions of Monday Evening Concerts, because actually Monday Evening Concerts doesn't have opinions--we take on anything that is new and interesting. My personal opinion of the improvisation group is that, one, it's not really improvisation. In my own experience, I did a good deal of improvising; of course, when a soloist improvises you don't need to do the kind of things that one needs to do with group improvisation. But I think the premise on which Lukas began this was all wrong. I remember that I had long discussions with him and he showed me some papers and some articles he had written about it, and I didn't agree with his ideas at all. It required too much planning to be called improvisation. Lukas himself was much too dominant a personality for the others. He was the moving spirit and the best musician and the only one of them who was a composer, and so the improvisation group was not improvisation by four people who got together; it was improvisation according

to rules and regulations set down by Lukas. So I think that the esthetic basis of the thing was wrong.

The other criticism that I have to make about it is that it is very well for people to improvise; the next question is: is their improvising actually music? This I'm not at all sure of. Lukas's subsequent work with his group--for instance, his composition Time Cycle--indicates that good music can be made by this group, but it's not improvised. There are little improvisational things in it, but the written-out portion of Time Cycle I think is quite a good piece, and it represents Lukas applying some contemporary techniques to a basic concept of music which I think for Lukas is middle-European romantic. I think that's what Lukas's basic musical personality is, and he added to it all these other things. Some very good pieces have come out of this, both Time Cycle and Echoi--which we just heard up in Ojai, quite a striking piece--and there are improvisational elements in all of them. But Lukas himself I think is a nineteenth-century romantic, and the other people are performers who have had varying degrees of experience and bring to it what they have.

On this program there's a piece by Morton Feldman, but with a different personnel than had been announced

(there are personnel changes in all of the pieces). The Gunther Schuller piece that was supposed to have been played, Music for Violin, Piano and Percussion, which we have subsequently performed, could not be played that night, and I don't know why. Instead, we had Five Pieces for Five Horns, written in 1952, a piece that had been previously played. I would like to know what Lukas did with Boulez's Improvisation because we know what Craft does with them and we know what Boulez himself does with them.

The next program had some classical music, but its principal item was a repeat of a piece we had done several years before, the Canti di Prigionia (The Prisoners Songs), by Dallapiccola. Again, it was the Charles Hirt USC chorus that sang it. This is really a stunning and extraordinary piece. The instrumentation for it is a large percussion section--there are eight players, plus three pianos and harp. These are settings of poems by Mary Stuart, Boethius and Savonarola, all prisoners songs. It's really a stunning piece and I think in Dallapiccola's best style. I can remember corresponding with Doug Talney about this, and I told him to beware of costs because this music is for rent, and it's terribly expensive just to rent the music and

choral parts, which of course always get torn and tattered. Watch your budget, I remember warning him. It's a very big production and music charges are very high.

The next program was under the direction of Leo Smit, and it was centered around a performance of Aaron Copland's Nonet for Solo Strings. I'd been in touch with Aaron for some time before this; the piece was a commission for the Dumbarton Oaks Library, and I had asked Aaron if we could have the first West Coast performance. I had hoped it would have been done the season previously (of course, I wasn't here then, either), but Aaron didn't get it composed in time; so its performance in the East was delayed, and we could not have it here until after the premiere. It was the first of May before we could get it. Leo Smit conducted, and he had a very good string group. It's almost time for a repeat of that piece and I'm rather hoping we can get it on for next season.

Also on the program there was listed a piece by Leonard Rosenman, a concert piece for clarinet and piano. We ran into problems there, and it was not played. I did schedule it, however, the following season and that's quite an important and stunning piece. In place of it on this program, Leo Smit played some of the pieces

by Stravinsky, Milhaud and Hindemith that he had recently recorded for an album called the Masters of Jazz. Then there was some Purcell and Schubert and Mussorgsky.

Well, that was the end of that season. I had already indicated that I would return to the direction of the concerts the next season, and I came back to Los Angeles in August to prepare the season [1961-62] beginning that fall. Meanwhile I had returned to the country and spent the summer months in Ojai, where I was continuing with some writing and also beginning to plan the '61-62 season. I think that some of the programs were a little bit more consistently put together. I do feel that I know something now about putting programs together that my colleagues don't, in terms of contrast and certainly in terms of economics. When I came back and looked at the financial situation of the previous seasons, I was a little bit appalled.

TUSLER: They'd gone overboard?

MORTON: Well, it wasn't that they'd gone overboard, but a lot of money had been spent unwisely, and concerts had not taken advantage entirely of the people who had been on the programs. There were certain extravagances and certain things that would just happen because Doug Talney didn't know the business as well as I did, that

was all. So I had some fence mending to do in the field of economics. Mrs. Moss's own contribution to the concerts was rather large in those two years simply because economy had not been practiced as I had practiced it.

Well, the first concert was a sort of a joke, I might say, on Lukas Foss. I think I have mentioned that when I first heard that Lukas was coming here I wrote him in Rome and asked him to be sure to consider himself one of the participants in Monday Evening Concerts, and I asked him if he would play opus 106 of Beethoven, the Hammerklavier. It takes a pianist of extraordinary abilities. I'd been trying for years and years to get Lukas to play this, and he always declined. So I finally put it on the program, with Lillian Steuber playing, on a program on which Lukas was also going to appear in his Time Cycle, chamber music version. All during the performance while Lillian Steuber was playing, Lukas was backstage storming for all he was worth, "No, the phrase should go this way--oh, there should be a ritard there," and so on (the usual kinds of things that no two pianists ever agree on, especially with a work of this sort).

Lillian gave a very stunning performance. There were things that I didn't agree with either, but I would

say that I only agree with maybe ten percent of performances that go on, anyway. Lillian gave a very, very good performance. She had performed a whole Beethoven cycle just a couple of years before this. Of course, Lukas would do it in a much flashier way; he is more of a virtuoso player, an outgoing player, than Lillian is.

Well, after this concert I remember we went out to get coffee and Lukas was complaining. Finally his wife said, "Now, Lukas, that's enough. You've had your chance to play 106 and you didn't take it, so you just have to put up with somebody else's performance."

TUSLER: Did that jolt him into doing it then?

MORTON: No. I can understand why he didn't want to play it; it would take many, many months of hard practice, and he's a composer and was busy and just didn't want to put the time in on it. I think it's a pity, though, that we didn't get him to play it because I think Lukas would do a magnificent job.

TUSLER: He's every bit as good a performer as he is a composer, isn't he?

MORTON: Oh, yes. I think he's a better performer.

Time Cycle was the other half of that program, in the chamber music version, with Grace-Lynne Martin and,

of course, the improvisation ensemble. This was a very good performance--I would say one of the best concerts we ever put on. Howard Colf, the cellist of the improvisation group, played the Hindemith solo sonata as a sort of introduction (it's a short work), to Lukas's piece.

Well, this was a really stunning program, and the performances were first class. I immediately pointed out to everybody that here was a program that was done with six players, a very elegant program, and I brought it in well within the budget. That's one of Lukas's very good pieces, I think; he has a wonderful instinct for poetry, and the poems he used for Time Cycle are very good. He told me that he was hoping to expand that piece with more poems having to do with time in the sense that he was expounding it in this work. I remember I suggested to him a Baudelaire poem that would fit in very well, but he's been too busy with other things. I don't suppose he'll ever add to that composition now.

The second program was also well within the budget. Howard Colf played cello in it; Pearl Kaufman, piano; Myra Kestenbaum, viola; John Neufeld, clarinet; and Diana Steiner, violin. I think this was the first time

that a work of Dorrance Stalvey had been played in town. This was a string trio that he had worked very hard on, and it was an extremely difficult work. There were real problems in getting that performance together. There were notation problems; I remember that I subsequently talked with Dorrance about it. As a matter of fact, just a few weeks ago we talked about notation problems and we brought this matter up. It was originally written without bar lines because there was no going tempo in the normal sense. It is in a sort of Renaissance style in the way the voices move. It was played just a few months ago at Fullerton and for this occasion Dorrance did put in bar lines, but it was still difficult to perform, and he conducted it.

TUSLER: Why did he object to bar lines? Did he actually feel this would interfere with the fluid motion?

MORTON: Yes. Composers nowadays are very particular, or they're very interested, let's say, in the relationship between the visual aspect of the music on the paper and the sound, and the moment you have bar lines the players regard them as bar lines, and they play the bar lines.

TUSLER: There's a subtle difference, somehow?

MORTON: That's what the composers say; I can't hear it myself. When I watched Stalvey conducting this piece a

few months ago out at Fullerton, I was very much disturbed in seeing the beats of the conductor not coinciding with the musical events. I think any string trio that's going to play it should simply take enough time, maybe months and months, in order to be able to play it without the bar lines and without a conductor.

There's something wrong, I do think, with a great deal of contemporary music where performances are so difficult to achieve, maybe something wrong in the notation. Of course, composers have always faced this problem, as we know with Stravinsky's remark that he had composed the "Danse Sacrale" of Sacre du printemps in his head--he knew exactly what was going on--and it stayed in his head for months because he didn't know how to write it down. His revision indicates that after he set it down he had second thoughts, and many conductors change the "Danse Sacrale" to suit their own conducting styles. It is a hard work to do, although now, I shouldn't say so any more, because Sacre du printemps is fifty years old, and everybody knows how to do it now. But notation is a problem and I don't think Stalvey had licked it here and I don't think he has yet.

Also on this program we had the Rosenman Duo for

Clarinet and Piano that had been postponed from the year before, and it was played by John Neufeld and Pearl Kaufman. I think this is one of the most important clarinet pieces written in our time. It's a brilliant, brilliant piece, extremely difficult, and it was beautifully prepared.

The next program centered around the Los Angeles Percussion Ensemble headed by Bill Kraft, and we had pieces by Michael Colgrass, a piece by Bill himself, Elliott Carter, and double music which was jointly composed by John Cage and Lou Harrison. At the beginning of the program we had the Frauenliebe und leben by Schumann, which I had promised to Margery MacKay a long time before and had not found an occasion for programing, and Natalie Limonick played the piano. For her second appearance on the program, she sang an early song of Aaron Copland's, "As It Fell Upon a Day," with clarinet accompaniment, and two Shakespeare songs by Halsey Stevens.

The next program was dedicated to St. Cecilia--I think November 22 is her day, and this concert was November 20. We had a lot of Purcell music put on by a USC group of singers and players under the direction of Frank Zimmerman, who is a Purcell specialist, and he

put the whole program together. The music was first class, beautiful music, but the performing group was not quite up to our standards. It was really a student group, and Frank Zimmerman, a first-class scholar, is not really a performer. That program was rather disappointing, although the quality of the music was obvious.

The next program was our introduction and I think the first American performance of any piece by Alexander Goehr, an Englishman (often confused with his father, Walter, one of the important English conductors, who died four or five years ago). Sandy Goehr has been fighting his father's name for a long, long time. But Goehr is a very important composer, and the piece that we did of his was called The Deluge, Cantata after Leonardo da Vinci. It is a semi-dramatic work. I think that that piece ought to be able to be staged or produced with film; it has a dramatic quality. This was conducted by Larry Foster. It was the first time that Larry Foster had been on our programs. He had been conductor of the Young Musicians Foundation Debut Orchestra, and he had been highly recommended by people like Leonard Rosenman and Leonard Stein and Ingolf Dahl, who all thought very highly of him. Well, since that time, of course, Larry's

come a long way, conducting many more things for us, and now he's assistant conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. That's an extraordinary talent, and he did this piece very beautifully. Subsequently, he made a visit to Europe, went to London, and met Goehr, who has some connection with the BBC. They've become rather good friends, and Larry has conducted some other pieces of Goehr and has had a number of BBC concerts, so this was a beginning of a connection that's been very valuable for both of them.

This program was a joint program with the ISCM local chapter. We had music by Oliver Messiaen, a piano piece, Canteyodjaya, that Leonard Stein played, and a piece by Roman Haubenstock-Ramati, an Austrian, played by David Shostac, a young flutist who played with us a couple of years and then went off to Juilliard and is now first flutist in the New Orleans Symphony--another good young man whom we've lost. Leonard also had got the music for a piece by George Rochberg played by Bob Gross and Jacqueline Simon, and then the Robert Erickson (a San Francisco composer) Duo for violin and piano. Those are all small pieces at the beginning of the program requiring one or two players, because the Goehr piece was a rather large ensemble. I think that was the last program we have done

jointly with the ISCM. The ISCM concerts are now being jointly sponsored by various university campuses, so they have four or five concerts a year--one at USC last year, one at UCLA, one at Fullerton, one at San Fernando.

The next program we had Leo Smit, and we had a lot of Stravinsky that I was very glad to program. We had the Shakespeare songs which had been dedicated to us and hadn't been sung for some time, with Grace-Lynne Martin singing; we had the Septet, with a group got together by Eudice Shapiro; we had the Four Russian Songs in the original setting, Grace-Lynne again; the two little piano pieces, which had not ever been performed here and which I had made available (I had copies through my own research on Stravinsky): the little waltz for the readers of Figaro, the Paris newspaper, a [very simple little] piece that had appeared in 1922 on the front page of Figaro, and the Souvenir d'un marche boche (1915) that Stravinsky had written during the war. I'd found a copy of that and had copied it out and given it to Leo; so those made two interesting pieces. Then we had the little duet pieces, the Three Easy Pieces and the Five Easy Pieces, that Leo Smit played with one of his young students.

Now, we are here in January 1962, which is the eightieth birthday year of Stravinsky. So for the whole of this

season we had Stravinsky on every program, and this was the first program of our Stravinsky celebration which we continued through the rest of the season.

TUSLER: Was he in attendance at a lot of those?

MORTON: Well, he came to some of them, I can't remember which ones now, but he was very happy about this arrangement. And we did cover a lot of ground; we couldn't get all the pieces in, of course, that we wanted to have, but we did get some of the less well-known ones, such as the ones that were played on this January concert. The Russian Songs had not been heard nor had these little piano pieces, and we had never played the easy duets because they are just too simple for us to program, but in the context of this celebration it was possible.

I was a little bit disappointed in this program for one reason: When I programed the pieces, I said, "Leo, I'm going to play them with you." You see, in one set of pieces, the left-hand part is very easy, for amateurs, and in the other set, the right-hand part. I said, "That's my style of piano playing and I want to play them." But Leo did not go for that. He wanted to bring in this young girl student who had a very short skirt and looked very childish.

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TUSLER: Last time you were just beginning to speak about the Stravinsky eightieth birthday celebration that began in January 1962.

MORTON: That's right. His birthday, of course, was being observed widely all over the world. I had thought at one time of giving an all-Stravinsky program, but somehow or other, we've become less and less attached to one-composer programs, and we had been playing Stravinsky so constantly that it was rather difficult to think of doing a whole program, unless we had been able to branch out to some of the large orchestra works, which of course wasn't possible. So we included on every program from January on one work at least and in some cases two works of Stravinsky, and in that way we were able to cover quite a bit of ground.

I mentioned last time the rather big selection of Stravinsky pieces that we did at the January 15 concert: the Shakespeare songs, the Septet, the Four Russian Songs, the two early piano pieces that were unpublished, and the Three and the Five Easy Pieces for Piano Duet. That was a rather good beginning, all of that music being in the

lighter vein. Actually, as it turned out, we did a great many of the lighter pieces, because we had an excuse for programing them, and they are sometimes rather difficult to put into a program.

TUSLER: What did he write them for--teaching purposes?

MORTON: No. He tells a very interesting story about that. He went to Rome to meet Diaghilev and he showed the first set of pieces to Diaghilev. Diaghilev was enough of a pianist so that he could play on one set the left-hand part (the right-hand part was very difficult). When I say the left-hand part was easy, I mean it's just an oom-pah-pah sort of thing that almost anyone can play. On the other set of pieces, the right-hand part was very easy. Well, there was one called a Polka that Stravinsky said he wrote with Diaghilev in mind (it was dedicated to Diaghilev), and the image he had there was of a circus master with a whip in his hand, who would of course have been Diaghilev, and Diaghilev didn't know if he should be flattered or not by the image. Those pieces were subsequently orchestrated, and they are either played, the two suites together, in which case they are programed as Eight Short Pieces for Orchestra, or separately as Suite no. 1 and no. 2. (Actually, no. 2 is the first suite and

no. 1 is the second because that was the order in which he composed them.) But he himself always played the eight of them together, and when we played them at our dedication concert at the museum just a year ago March, we played all eight of them. That is the best way of doing them, and they are charming and lovely little pieces.

On the January 29 program, we had the Four Russian Songs; we also did two local composers, John Biggs and Gregg Smith, Gregg Smith's chorus participating in the program; Gregg led his own piece and also the Ives Psalm 24 and some Bach.

On the third of the Stravinsky celebration concerts, which came on February 5, we had music for string quartet by the Valley State College String Quartet, which at that time was headed by Andor Toth, who has left the college, has gone to Colorado, and is now part of an ensemble with Gabor Rejto and Adolph Baller, the Alma Trio. He's a very good violinist, but unfortunately the quartet was organized only for that one season--the same problem we've come up against many times before. They played the Three Pieces for String Quartet, which are very early Stravinsky, and also the Double Canon written in memory of Raoul Dufy. That was the Stravinsky part of the program, but the

rest of the program was music that Stravinsky was very happy to be associated with: a big harpsichord suite by Couperin, [and his] first Tenebrae service (I mentioned once before that I'm still hoping to do all three of them) with Richard Robinson singing.

Then we had a perfectly wonderful piece by Marin Marais, called "Tableau de l'opération de la taille," which is "operation on a gall bladder." This was a descriptive piece in which the solo instrument--originally a gamba; we did it with cello--does all kinds of strange things, and there are words to be spoken along with it which describe the various stages of the operation.

I remember a very amusing thing that happened. In the program notes I listed this as an operation on the gall bladder, and I had a letter from Dr. Edward Shapiro, who I think has subscribed to these concerts since the time they began. He wrote the most amusing letter with all kinds of scientific data showing that at this period operations for the gall bladder were unknown, that he must have been talking about the urinary bladder. The letter was so amusing that I thought I would go in front of the audience and read it, which I did without mentioning Dr. Shapiro's name--that would have been "unethical advertising," I decided. I offered to let anyone who wanted

to know about it come and look at the letter and see who wrote it. Well, this just about broke the audience up. It was one of the most amusing incidents that we have had.

Then we had the Boulez Third Sonata, three movements of it, that Leonard Stein played. All of those were composers that Stravinsky would be very happy to be associated with.

Our February 19 concert was our annual Fromm concert, and there wasn't much that we could do about Stravinsky there. We had a chorus on hand and quite a good number of instruments, but the only piece that we could think of doing [for unaccompanied chorus] happened to be a world premiere, and so it turned out to be quite an event--that was the anthem that Stravinsky wrote to a text of T. S. Eliot, "The dove descending breaks the air." It was a very short piece; it doesn't take more than a couple of minutes to perform. But it's twelve-tone and very, very difficult, and we were delighted to be able to add that to our repertoire of Stravinsky premieres.

TUSLER: Did he write it for the Monday Evening Concerts?

MORTON: No, actually he didn't write it for any particular reason, although originally the project had been set under way for a revision of the hymnbook of the Church of

England, in which T. S. Eliot was of course concerned. This poem is a selection from Part IV of the Four Quartets, called "Little Gidding." It's quite a remarkable poem [and, like] all of T. S. Eliot, full of the most marvelous imagery: here the images of the Holy Ghost and the flaming robe of Hercules. All these things are tied in. It makes quite a wonderful image, and I suppose one could say that this is a religious poem and suitable for the church. I don't know if the piece was ever included in the revised hymnbook or not.

This was not actually the Fromm program of the year, come to think of it, but we had a special grant from Fromm in order to perform the Elliott Carter Double Concerto for Harpsichord and Piano with Two Chamber Orchestras, a piece that we had wanted to do and Fromm was interested in having, but it was much too expensive for us to put on. Bob Craft conducted the program, and we also had the Bach Cantata no. 210, the Wedding Cantata, O holder Tag, that Grace-Lynne Martin sang. She sang it very beautifully, but she had a very bad press, and this is one of the reasons Grace-Lynne hasn't sung with us very much recently. She will not subject herself to that kind of criticism.

We closed the program with the Schoenberg Chamber

Symphony, opus 9, and I must say we had a much better performance of it than was given at the Philharmonic by Mr. Mehta, a better performance in the sense that we gave it its proper [setting in] a chamber music hall.

TUSLER: They beefed it up for orchestra, didn't they?

MORTON: Yes, and I don't think that was a bad idea. Craft tells me (although he doesn't give me any references) that Schoenberg himself had done this before he made the big orchestra version of it. I thought that considering the circumstances under which Mehta was doing it, he was justified in augmenting the parts the way he did.

TUSLER: You mean for the size of the hall?

MORTON: Yes. In our hall, it sounded the way it should sound. Of course, the balance between the strings and the winds was bad. It just will never [be right].

The next concert on March 5 was a special event in which we presented John Cage and David Tudor. It was very amusing, the negotiations for this concert. I wrote to Cage and told him that we were putting Stravinsky on every program this year and would he like to participate in the performance of some Stravinsky work? He wrote back that he would have nothing to do with any observations of Stravinsky's birthday and that we should go ahead and plan whatever we wanted to do independently

of his appearance.

So we began the concert with some songs sung by Marni Nixon. We had the Pastorale, a wordless song, the Two Poems of K. Balmont, "Blue Forget-me-nots" and "The Dove" (these, of course, were subsequently orchestrated and we had already given the premiere of that version, but here we did them in the original setting for piano), and then the Three Stories (Les Trois Histoires) for Children. Those songs date from 1915-17, and two of them, "Tilimbom" and "Drakes, Swans, Geese" were also subsequently orchestrated. The third one, called "The Bear," is really a spoken piece with piano accompaniment, a sort of melodrama. I've never heard of anyone performing that piece, at least in recent years. "Tilimbom," which is a very famous song, and has been sung many times, was subsequently lengthened by adding another verse, but here we did it the way it appeared in print when it was first published.

The Cage part of the program included one large work of Cage which can be of variable length. It was called Atlas Eclipticalis with Winter Music. Now, it happens that Atlas Eclipticalis and Winter Music are two separate compositions, but they can be played together. For this program we set up altogether fourteen instruments. Each

one had a contact microphone attached to it and the amplifier into which these microphones were fed was operated on stage, with a score in front of him, by Gerald Strang. There were three loudspeakers in the hall, one in the back and two on the sides of the stage. The volume could be adjusted according to the score that Gerald Strang was reading and according to certain signs that were given to him by Cage, who was conducting. I must say that this was quite a racket because all the music coming through the loudspeakers became terribly loud at points. The piano was fed largely through the speaker at the back of the theater, and many people had to move because it was so loud they couldn't stand it. This was a major production, and I must say that the pages of the score were, from the standpoint of calligraphy, absolutely beautiful. Any number of those pages you'd be happy to mount on your wall; they were really very handsome and John does very painstaking work.

He has also been interested in the young composer Christian Wolff, who was one of his followers. Wolff teaches at Harvard University and regards music as his secondary career (his first career is teaching, something to do with the classics or classic languages). We gave three pieces of his at the beginning of the Cage portion

of the program, a piece called "for 6 or 7 players," another called "Duet II for Horn and Piano" and the third piece called "for pianist." David Tudor was the pianist in all these works and the horn player was David Duke, a young man. This was the first time he had played at our concerts; he was still a student at UCLA, but between 1962 and the present (1966), he has become one of the outstanding horn players in Los Angeles and is a very busy man, sometimes so busy that he has been unable to play for us.

TUSLER: Is he with the Philharmonic now?

MORTON: No, he is free-lancing, playing a lot of studios and making a lot of money, in short.

TUSLER: You spoke before about Cage's unwillingness to have anything to do with the Stravinsky aspect of the concert. Is there some special animosity there?

MORTON: Oh, no, not animosity at all. It is just that Cage's world is so far separated from Stravinsky's that he probably feels about Stravinsky the way Stravinsky would feel about, say, Wagner. It wasn't meant as a personal insult; all that Cage meant was that this was not part of his musical world. I was a little bit unhappy about that because I thought that the eightieth birthday of a distinguished man would be something that Cage would

like to participate in.

The Stravinsky celebration on the March 19 program was rather modest, and I can say I wasn't terribly happy about it. The shape of the program was such that we did two transcriptions for violin and piano from his works--"Chanson Russe" from Mavra and the "Ballade" from Baiser de la fée, which Stravinsky had transcribed from these larger scores. This was really a rather stingy portion of the celebration, but it was all that I was able to work out at that time. It turned out that way partly because we had Robert Gross playing a Chaconne for unaccompanied violin by Roberto Gerhard, and he wanted something else to play on the program and this seemed to me to be a reasonable thing, to give him these two little violin pieces of Stravinsky. Then we introduced--I believe it was an American premiere--a young Italian composer, Niccoló Castiglioni, with a piece of his called Tropi. This was conducted by Lawrence Foster and there were eight instruments in it. It is a very striking piece, one of the best of the Italian composers that we have had. We also had Subotnick's First Serenade on that program. For the second half of the program, we had something that I had been wanting for a long, long time, Leo Smit playing a major Beethoven work, the

Diabelli Variations. That was a first-class performance.

The next program was a special event, which we miscalculated. We had hoped to raise some money, mainly. Vera Zorina had a project with Bob Craft to record two works--one of them the Debussy Chansons de Bilitis, which we had done a few seasons before, and the other one the Hindemith Hérodiade with a chamber orchestra. Since the works were going to be recorded they were eager to have a performance beforehand, and Zorina is a very big name, so I thought we would run a benefit concert and charge extra to try to earn some money for the Monday Evening Concerts. Well, it just backfired terribly. We set the price at $3.50 and this was outside the regular series; so even our customers had to pay. You know, they will go downtown and pay--as last year they paid--$7.50 or $6.50 to hear Zorina, but they wouldn't come to us for $3.50. So we had a marvelous program, a perfectly beautiful program, and practically no audience.

We began with the Mozart piece, Adagio and Rondo for flute, oboe, viola, cello, and celeste, which part was originally for glass harmonica. Then we had a Stravinsky premiere. He had taken the four pieces from his suite called The Five Fingers and arranged them for small instrumental ensemble. It turned out to be just

about the ensemble that we had for the Hérodiade and the Debussy. Subsequently, he went ahead and orchestrated the whole set of eight pieces, but we had four of them at this performance, the Andantino, the Vivace, the Lento, and the Allegretto. The pieces when completed have been called the Eight Instrumental Miniatures. Stravinsky dedicated this little suite to me, and I was, of course, very delighted. He gave me the first page of his manuscript, which is one of the things that I treasure very much. Well, that was our Stravinsky celebration for that concert.

The Debussy was the setting for speaker, two flutes, two harps and celeste that Boulez had completed, and I must say that Vera Zorina did a beautiful job on it, although there are many people who say that her French is tainted by a little bit of a German accent. I am not aware of that, however. And the Hindemith was done. Two days after the concert, they were recorded and that record is out (unfortunately with no credit to Monday Evening Concerts, a thing that angers me very much, but Columbia Records just put it down as the Columbia Orchestra, or something of that sort).

Then on the same program we did the first Los Angeles performance of three very small orchestra pieces that

Schoenberg had composed around 1910 and never finished. Again, the instrumentation suited what we had and so we played them. That made a very distinguished program.

TUSLER: What a pity it turned out that way, with no audience.

MORTON: And there were people who said to me afterwards, "Well, of course we wouldn't come--the price was exorbitant." I thought that was a rather strange adjective to use, considering what they pay for concerts elsewhere, but Monday Evening Concerts is stuck with its policy of inexpensive concerts.

The final concert of the season on April 16 was the regular Fromm-sponsored concert. Here we did [some pieces], none of which had been commissioned by the Fromm Foundation. No, I take that back--one piece was commissioned by the foundation, but it was not completed at this time because Lukas Foss never gets anything ready on time. I'll come to that in a minute.

We began this concert with the Stravinsky Octet, which Lukas wanted to conduct. Of course, that is one of the most delightful of all of Stravinsky's pieces--a sizable piece, too. Lukas did it and it had a remarkable clip in the last movement, maybe a little bit too fast. I can remember when I first heard this piece at Monday

Evening Concerts, it still baffled people a little bit, but nowadays if you play the Octet everybody knows exactly where to giggle, because it is full of wit and I think everybody gets the point now. For this program we had Luciano Berio here, with his wife Cathy Berberian, and we did that marvelous, marvelous piece of Berio's, Circles. He brought the production down from San Francisco--it is an extremely difficult thing to produce, and they had done it up there at Mills where Luciano was stationed for that year. He came down with a harpist and two percussion players, although we provided the instruments down here. Cathy Berberian, Mrs. Berio's performance of Circles is one of the great theatrical productions of all time. This was really a smash, not only because the music itself is extremely interesting, but because of Cathy's performance, including her gown. She knows how to dress for every piece she does, and she has to use some finger cymbals and a few other small percussion things, and she does everything with such style. I don't think that piece can ever be performed by anyone with anything near her style. Then she sang the Stravinsky Berceuses du chat, which are ideally suited to her. Those are the pieces with three clarinets, the cat songs; she sings them in Russian, and this was a perfectly

delightful performance.

Then Lukas was supposed to perform for us his work Echoi, which had been commissioned by the foundation. But, of course, it wasn't finished, and so it was programed as Two Excerpts from Echoi. What we had at that performance I believe does not exist in the present work Echoi. I believe he kept part of the first movement that he played for us and then added something to it, not only in length but also in texture. At one point the joke was going around that, in order to make one movement, he had taken the first and second movements and played them simultaneously to make the present first movement. But I don't think this is true, and I have no way of checking it. Certainly what we had that night was far from the present work, and I must say that most of us felt, from what we heard, that it wasn't terribly exciting. But I think Lukas was going through a stage where he had compositional problems; he finally worked it out, because Echoi as it now stands is a very striking piece.

To end the program, Leon Kirchner was here and he conducted his Concerto for Violin, Cello, Ten Winds and Percussion, with Eudice Shapiro and her husband Victor Gottlieb as soloists. Fromm had not commissioned this piece, but he had commissioned something else from Kirchner,

and he was very interested in having Kirchner. I have to take back something I said at the beginning: Circles, I see here, was commissioned by the Fromm Music Foundation--I had forgotten that completely; so we did have two Fromm commissions on the program, the Berio and the Foss, and another work by Kirchner in which Fromm was interested; and then we had the Stravinsky as part of our season-long Stravinsky celebration.

I think that whole series, season 1961-1962, was a very, very good series. We had, of course, a large number of large works, most of them concentrated in the second half of the season. But that was a season that I was very proud of, and even though we had had the disaster of the Zorina program, that was terribly important for her and for Craft and part of our subsidization of Columbia Records. That is a subject on which I feel rather bitter.

TUSLER: Before you go on to the next season, how involved was Stravinsky himself with all of this? Did he come to most of the concerts or participate?

MORTON: He didn't participate in any way, no, but he did come to many of them and always sat in the front row. You see, one of the difficulties with Mr. Stravinsky's coming to our concerts is that people besiege him

during the intermission time and ask for autographs and it is not a pleasure for him to be present. At some of these concerts I remember that he came backstage and sat there and went out the back door, so that nobody would see him. But, of course, the word got around from some of the musicians and he couldn't escape scot-free. It has happened even during the past season in the museum. He came to two concerts, and that is a rather long walk for him considering his present physical difficulties-- I usually try to meet him and help him down the slope (you know that we have a sloping floor here); he has great difficulty in going down stairs or down a ramp. Going up is quite easy for him, but somehow or other he loses control of his legs when he is walking down. In any case, when he gets to the front row at our present home, he is just besieged all the time by people. I've even tried bringing him in in the dark, you know, before the music starts, but the word goes out, "There's Stravinsky, there's Stravinsky." It's not only the strangers who come up but the people who know him and have every right to speak to him, but it becomes a nuisance to him, and Mrs. Stravinsky is always very distressed. A good part of the time he stays backstage.

TUSLER: He must have been very pleased that the concerts

commemorated the occasion.

MORTON: Oh, yes, I think he was pleased, and I think that is why he gave us the premiere of those four movements.

TUSLER: Did it do anything in particular for your attendance, having a special festival going like this?

MORTON: I can't say that it did, but then I've never understood, after all my years in producing concerts, what makes an audience come and what makes an audience stay away. I just don't think there is any answer to that at all. If I knew what made them come I would certainly repeat that; but no two concerts are ever alike, and so you never learn anything at one concert that is of any use to you for the future.

We opened the '62-63 season with an amount of percussion music under the direction of William Kraft, a piece by Arthur Cohn called Quotations for Percussion, Alan Hovhaness's October Mountain, Hodograph I by Earle Brown, and then the Concerto [in Slendro] for violin with percussion instruments and piano by Lou Harrison, with Eudice Shapiro as soloist. The first half of the program was played by Milton Thomas, who played Bach and some anonymous medieval dances. Then we introduced--this was the first time this composer appeared on our program--

Henri Lazarof, and Milton played the Inventions for Viola and Piano with Georgia Akst at the piano. I believe this was certainly the first important professional performance that Lazarof has had in town. We played another major work of his this past season, and he is now getting recognition elsewhere, too. Of the percussion music I think the Earle Brown piece, Hodograph, for flute, celeste and quite a large percussion section, was the most successful of the pieces. The Hovhaness was disappointing, but perhaps I made an error in putting Hovhaness on in the first place. He's a composer who's been very successful in the last several years because Stokowski has played him a lot, but he's really not the kind of composer that belongs on our program. We've had him once, and I think we should have had him once, but not twice.

October 15 was a real classical program that I think must have amused a lot of people to see among the Monday Evening Concerts, listing Beethoven, Schubert, Bach, and Haydn. Ingolf Dahl and Eudice Shapiro were concerned in this, [with pianist] Pearl Kaufman, and Dom[inick] Fera on clarinet.

The Beethoven piece was the Grosse Fuge for piano duet, opus 134. Now, this was a real discovery. Ingolf had been over here one night and I had been saying, "I'd

give anything if we could find a Beethoven piece that hasn't been played." Ingolf said, "You know, I've always been curious about Beethoven's arrangement of the Grosse Fuge for four-hand piano." I didn't know that it existed, and I looked it up in a catalog and, sure enough, there it was, but it was impossible to get the music. I finally did track it down at the Library of Congress, and we got a photostat edition. It is a fascinating piece because it isn't just a transcription of the Grosse Fuge, for there are some things that are different--I don't mean in terms of notes but in terms of placement. He really wrote this for piano duet and didn't just give the two violin parts to the upper part of the piano and the viola and cello to the bottom. It was really a version for four-hand piano, and it was perfectly stunning. I remember I made a bet with my brother that I knew what the review would be, and I was exactly right. The review had little more to say than, "Of course, it doesn't sound like a string quartet"--as though everybody didn't know that beforehand! [laughter] It seems to me that that was a pretty weak kind of criticism to make. Of course! it doesn't sound like a string quartet, it sounds like four hands at the piano, and it was really quite a glorious sound.

Then [there were two] Schubert songs, both of them with instrumental obbligato, "Der Hirt auf dem Felsen" for soprano with [piano and] clarinet and "Auf dem Strom" for soprano with [piano and] horn. Those were both very beautiful pieces. We tried out a young soprano there named Norma Lynn. She has a very beautiful voice but she is really not a Lieder singer; she belongs in opera, and since then she has done an amount of singing with some of the local opera companies and is very charming, quite pretty and does very well. She has not sung with us again, although I've talked with her on the phone and she has recommended other singers to us and we are friendly. She knows herself that that isn't quite her field.

To close the program we had Haydn, one of the trios that Ingolf had edited. I think I've mentioned this before, where he turned some of the piano parts over to the other instruments so that their parts were more interesting. This was a beautiful program and, as I say, many people thought, "What's happening to Monday Evening Concerts? They've put on the nineteenth century." But that was all right.

On November 5, the idea was to present Karl Kohn as composer, and we had two works of his, both first performances. One was Serenade for wind quintet and piano,

written in 1961, and the second one the Capriccios for harp, cello, flute, clarinet, and piano, composed in 1962. The difference between these two pieces is really quite astounding. The Capriccios is quite a modern piece. There are even--I won't say improvisatory passages at the end of it--but passages that are indeterminate and, of course, with Karl playing the piano himself, our performances came off very, very well.

Other pieces on the program were some little fugues for harpsichord by Frescobaldi, and there I slipped because as Ellis Kohs pointed out to me the next day, they are published as Frescobaldi, but everybody knows now that they are not authentic. They are not by Frescobaldi at all, and I don't know who did compose them; but they are not Frescobaldi. As soon as he mentioned this to me, of course I remembered. They are good pieces in any case; it is just that we had the wrong composer's name on them and that was a real musicological slip on my part. Then we had a beautiful piece, Bach's Trio Sonata for two flutes and continuo, which is also known as a cello sonata. Another piece that I had found in a music store was a charming little piece for two flutes without accompaniment, although it is early eighteenth-century music, by Joseph Bodin de Boismortier, who wrote

quite a bit of flute music. I came across this little piece for two flutes and I thought it would be an ideal piece when we just happened to have those instruments handy for the Bach--it was a good program idea.

It was not the first time we have played Karl Kohn, but I think he made a particular impression as a composer at this concert with two major works. They are around ten to fifteen minutes long, each of them, and they are serious works. I think they really established Karl as a composer here.

On November 19, a great event was, on the first half of the program, Peter Hewitt playing Charles Ives's Concord Sonata, which we haven't had for several years, although in the old Evenings on the Roof days Frances Mullen must have played it four or five times. We hadn't had it for a long, long time. Hewitt had been doing quite a bit of work on it and he gave a very good performance.

The second half of the program went Polish. This was because some of the new Polish music was beginning to come in, and the particular piece that we wanted to present was by [Krzysztof] Penderecki, called Strophes for soprano and ten instruments. It required a singing voice and a speaking voice. This was the American premiere and Leonard Stein conducted it. Quite a striking

piece, and Penderecki since that time has become quite well known all over the world, including the European musical centers. He is one of the leaders of the younger generation. Preceding this we did five songs by another young Pole named [Kazimierz] Serocki. Maurice Allard sang the songs with Leonard at the piano. And since the program still needed a little bit of time, we found some Chopin songs that nobody knew very much about, opus 74--it's quite a large set of songs but we took five out of it, which is against our principles really, except the whole volume of songs does not make a unified work as it is not a cycle. They were sung by Marie Gibson. I thought that they were quite nice but not great Chopin.

For December 3, we had the collaboration of the Screen Composers' Association to do a concert in honor of Ernst Toch's seventy-fifth birthday. It was really very funny that this information was kept from Toch until about two or three days before the concert. I don't know how he happened not to notice it, but I wrote him a note and reminded him that this concert was coming off, and we hoped that he would be present. He wrote back saying that he was delighted and surprised and of course he would be there. We sent Mrs. Toch a corsage to wear

that evening, and it was a very nice affair. Of course, Toch had done a good deal of work in the films so that the Screen Composers felt that they should join with us on this program. Actually, what this meant was that they contributed an amount of money to the cost of the concert in return for which we gave them tickets. They distributed the tickets themselves so that we were practically guaranteed a full house.

We surrounded the three Toch pieces with Mozart, of course. The Toch pieces were the Sonatinetta, opus 84, for flute, clarinet and bassoon--that's a late piece. Then we did the Tanz-Suite, opus 30, which was a middle-period piece, and the Quintet for piano, two violins, viola and cello, which had been presented many years before at our concerts. It was a piece that he wrote since he came to Los Angeles. So we had early, late, and middle Toch with Mozart in between, the Mozart being the C-major Trio for piano, violin, and cello. The original piano pieces that we had scheduled--namely, the Menuetto and Gigue, little pieces that are so beautiful--I have noted on the program that we omitted. Something else was played in their place, and I didn't make a notation here of what it was. The association of Toch and Mozart was very pleasing to him, and I remember that

after the concert he wrote a charming delightful note. He was a delightful and charming man, although I must say that his music--let's say that we had outgrown it largely. He represented a period in music that Monday Evening Concerts was not particularly eager to promote any more. But he had been a very important figure in music in this city. There were other celebrations, but none of them was timed precisely and some of them came a year later. I have put into our archives his very charming letter.

January 21 was a Fromm program to be dedicated to Ernst Krenek, who had been a rather close friend of Fromm. I had some problems here. As I told Krenek, I don't like one-composer programs, I think it is a mistake, and what could he suggest to go with half a program of his own works? He didn't come up with any ideas, but I suddenly remembered that he had, some years ago, made a version of the Monteverdi opera L'Incoronazione di Poppea. So I suggested to him, how about playing all Krenek on the first half and then doing something from the Poppea on the second half? He was very willing and very happy to do that. Actually, he had made a suite many years before that had been handled by the European publishers of that opera, Universal; and he selected parts out of that suite

that could be very well played by chamber orchestras, that is, with single strings. We had to add to it, of course, the four voices. So we had a selection consisting of the Sinfonia, the scene between Seneca and Nero, a march, a scene representing the death of Seneca, and an intermezzo. It made a very good suite. I must say that all of us were rather surprised at how Viennese it sounded.

TUSLER: Because of his arrangement?

MORTON: Yes. Krenek has always been a middle-European and this was what one would expect, but the music sounded more Viennese than it did Italian. But it was a good piece to do and I think Krenek was very glad to be represented in part by a work like this because he is one of the great musical scholars; his work and his devotion to people like Monteverdi and some of the older composers is really profound, and he has done a good deal of studying there. Of his own pieces we played the "Alpbach" Quintet, which is a piece for wind quintet. He had done this piece for the little community of Alpbach in Austria, and he had added percussion interludes, so that the work turned out to be a choreographic work. It was danced, I believe, at its first performance there in Alpbach. We played it with the percussion interludes--that is,

each one of the interludes uses percussion with one of the instruments in the quintet. I must say that this makes the wind quintet much more palatable as an instrumental group.

TUSLER: You didn't present it with dancing?

MORTON: No, we didn't do that. That is another one of the things for the future. I hope that we will be able to do something with dance. Then we had the Flute Piece in Nine Phases, played by Gretel Shanley and Pearl Kaufman. The major work, which had been commissioned by the Fromm Foundation, was Quaestio Temporis (A Question of Time), which is a large work for twenty instruments. He conducted it himself, as he conducted the Monteverdi. This was a Los Angeles premiere but not a world premiere (I believe it had been premiered in New York, but I don't have any notes on that). Well, that turned out to be a very good program, although I must say I was rather shaky when I thought we would have to carry out a whole Krenek program, and I thought the Monteverdi was a brilliant idea.

For February, we introduced some new music: by Donald Martino, a young composer at Yale, a really fascinating little piece called Five Fragments for oboe and string bass; Richard Hoffmann, who is the nephew of

Schoenberg and had been in Los Angeles as Schoenberg's secretary for a number of years, was then at Oberlin, and is now at Berkeley--this was a piece for piano solo that he had written in 1957, played by Leonard Stein, who also played on that program another American premiere, Caractères for piano solo by the Belgian composer Henri Pousseur. So we had those new pieces.

The old pieces on the program were the Paul Hindemith Trio for viola, heckelphone, and piano, opus 47, which I think is not the strongest of Hindemith's pieces, but it has the interest of having a heckelphone in it which, you know, is sort of a bass oboe. Strauss used it somewhere in his operas, and there are a few other compositions for it; but it was an oddity in a sense. We had the man to play it, Charles Gould, who is really a bassoon player, but he owns a heckelphone. We ended the program with a piece by Zelenka, whose dates are 1679-1745, a contemporary of Bach and a Bohemian. It is only in the last few years that he has been rediscovered through the publications of some of his works, and I think he is a major composr, or let's say a major minor composer--not in Bach's category but still extremely interesting in both harmonic and rhythmic materials. This was a suite in five movements, the first movement being in

French overture style--slow, fast, and slow. Unfortunately, it was not much cherished by the reviewers, and there were some other Zelenka pieces that we have played that the reviewers have turned thumbs down on. I think they are very, very wrong; I think this is striking and original and very good composing.

On February 18: Mozart, [Alexei] Haieff, Netty Simons, Halsey Stevens, Rodger Vaughan, Joseph Haydn. The only one of these pieces that was really new was the Netty Simons. She's a New York composer, and the piece [of hers] that we played was called Facets II, for flute, clarinet, and string bass. This was quite an interesting piece and the audience reaction to it was very good; I am looking forward to the time we play something else of hers. I met her in New York just a few weeks ago for the first time, and naturally she is very eager to have some more works played. The Halsey Stevens was a rather old piece, Suite for Violin Solo (1954), but we try to get Stevens on the program every other year at least as one of our "elder statesmen." Then we had a piece by Rodger Vaughan, who only recently graduated from USC, Variations for Flute Solo. So we had new and old composers on that program.

On March 4, I suppose the only pieces worth mentioning

were those that were played by Leo Smit. Again, we had a major classical piece, this time the Schumann Faschings-schwank aus Wien, opus 26, which he played in marvelous style; and then we did a piece of his for voice and clarinet, cello, percussion and piano, called Academic Graffiti. They are ten quatrains by W. H. Auden--very amusing little pieces named after people like Henry Adams, Queen Mary, George Frederick Handel and so on--they are just four-line poems, all of them very witty. Leo had set these ten and it made a very good composition. We ended with Leo playing, with Richard Dufallo and Frederick Seykora the B-flat Trio of Beethoven, opus 11.

On March 18 I think the outstanding works were the pieces that the Gregg Smith Singers sang: a new piece by Luigi Nono, Ha Venido, songs for seven solo sopranos; Arnold Schoenberg's Pieces for Male Chorus, opus 35, but [as some seasons earlier], we could get only three of them ready; and Irving Fine's The Hour Glass, a cycle of poems. Irving Fine just passed away prematurely as a very young promising composer. Then we ended the program with a work called Ugma-Ugma, (Structures) for oriental instruments and voices by Jose Maceda, who had been working in the Ethnomusicology Department at UCLA, and that was quite a striking piece.

Then to end the season we had a visit from Pierre Boulez. This was a big program that we couldn't produce by ourselves; so we did it jointly with USC. The whole first half of the program was devoted to Mallarmé; the Ravel settings of Mallarmé poems, the Debussy piano settings of three Mallarmé poems, and the Boulez Improvisations on Mallarmé--the two Improvisations, numbers 1 and 2. Then we did the Boulez Structures, Volume II, which was an American premiere, that Boulez played with Karl Kohn, and that was just a bang-up, marvelous performance. Then Boulez conducted the Concerto, opus 24, of Webern. This again was one of the all-time exciting programs that we have ever put on. That was our second visit from Boulez, and actually he made a hit with everybody. It was a hectic week of rehearsing plus some social engagements; I remember putting Boulez on the plane on a Sunday night, and after all this stress and trials I ended up the season by having a heart attack. That was the way the season ended. As you can see, I've recovered completely. Well, if one had to go out, to go out after that Boulez concert would be about as good a way as I can think of, because that was a marvelous, marvelous concert.

TUSLER: Was he here for some other occasion?

MORTON: No, he came out, as usual, at his own expense just to do a concert for us, because he likes us. We had a good time socially that week, with a lot of good eating and good drinking and parties, along with an awful lot of work.

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JULY 13, 1966

TUSLER: Today we are starting on the 1963-1964 season.

MORTON: Right. We had a very important opening concert that year, conducted by Robert Craft. We were able to produce a number of works that were fairly large, with fairly large and odd instrumentation, simply because I disregarded the budget for the sake of the opening concert. It was worth doing because we had two premieres that were fairly important. The first of them was the Eight Instrumental Miniatures of Stravinsky. I mentioned them in connection with the 1961-1962 season when we observed his eightieth anniversary, when we had done four of the little pieces from the Five Finger music that he had orchestrated. Meanwhile, he had gone ahead and orchestrated all the pieces in that set and they came out as Eight Instrumental Miniatures. I think the first performance was in Toronto, and they were recorded there. We repeated the four we had done plus the other four; so we had the complete suite. And to toot my horn--this was the piece that Stravinsky dedicated to me. He gave me the manuscript, and I have a very marvelous possession there that I am very proud of. That was the principal piece insofar as novelty was concerned.

The second piece that was novel was that in return for the Sibelius award that Stravinsky had been given, he orchestrated a small piece of Sibelius's, Canzonetta, opus 62a, and arranged it for four horns, clarinet, bass clarinet, harp, and bass. This piece was supposed to have its premiere in Helsinki in connection with the ceremonies for the presentation of the award, but Stravinsky couldn't wait that long to hear it so we played it. I think it is already written in at least one book and two articles that I know of that the Helsinki performance has been called the first performance--I suppose that Stravinsky let them think so just for the sake of the occasion, but actually we did it on September 30, several weeks before it was done in Helsinki. The Eight Instrumental Miniatures were, of course, a Los Angeles premiere. I think this was the twelfth world premiere that we have given [of a] Stravinsky work.

On the program we had two pieces of Haydn that Bob Craft had been very interested in. One of them was one of a group of Notturnos that Haydn had composed for the king of Naples. They are very mature works from the 1790s, and they were written to use Neapolitan instruments, but he subsequently rescored them so that they could be played in London with a normal group. We had

already done one of them. These are marvelous pieces, real masterpieces, not much performed because, for one thing, there haven't been good performing editions and, secondly, they don't fit into the orchestral repertoire and are a little bit large for many chamber music groups. They were brought to my attention first by Ingolf Dahl, since the USC Music Library had purchased the ones that were available.

Then we had another piece of Haydn's which had only recently been published for the first time in the Doblinger edition, an Austrian firm which has been bringing out quite a few Haydn discoveries. This Cassatio in D is scored for four horns with solo violin, solo viola and solo bass. It is an extraordinary piece; we opened the program with that and closed the program with the other Haydn. In between, we had Schoenberg's Suite, opus 29 for piano, three clarinets and three strings. This had been performed by us several times before, and it was our hope that this performance could be the basis of a new recording by Bob Craft. Actually, we felt afterwards that the performance wasn't really quite strong enough for recording. Last year we did it again with the Westwood Wind Quintet, and it was recorded by Columbia, in Bob Craft's regular series of the complete works

of Schoenberg which he is still working on.

TUSLER: Did the Monday Evening Concerts get credit for that?

MORTON: I'm sorry to say, no; this is one of my beefs against Columbia Records. We haven't ever had proper credit.

The other novelty on the program was the Wagner Siegfried-Idyll, which I think I'm correct in saying had never been performed in Los Angeles in the original instrumentation that was used when it was played on the stairway of the Wagner residence as a Christmas present for Cosima. We had those instruments handy. The Wagner was very interesting, but I must confess now that after our performance I was reading about Wagner's, and I am not positive that we had actually the precise version that Wagner used. I learned later that when it was published he had already made some changes and the only version that is generally available is, of course, the orchestral version. One would have to do some research with the original manuscript to find out what the differences were between the original version and the version we played. Nevertheless, we took advantage of, let's say, the ignorance of most people, and went ahead with it.

The second program was under the direction of Ingolf Dahl, and the work of his that we did was the Trio for Piano, Violin, and Cello (1962), which had not yet been played in Los Angeles. Ingolf had made some small changes in the score after its premiere in Stockholm which had taken place, I think, two years before that on the Swedish Radio. He had with him on this program Malcolm Hamilton, a harpsichordist, and with such a good player available we did the Falla Concerto for Harpsichord, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Violin, and Cello. That was quite a remarkable performance. Malcolm is not generally very interested in contemporary music, but the Falla is really a contemporary masterpiece and he played it beautifully. He also did four Scarlatti sonatas, and played continuo in the Handel C-minor Oboe Sonata. So that was really a very, very beautiful program. Every time we have Malcolm we have a very good audience; he has a large following.

TUSLER: Maybe this reflects some of the current interest in the harpsichord, too.

MORTON: Oh, without any doubt.

The next program, November 4, was centered around two string trios that I had long wanted to present. We had scheduled them tentatively the previous season, but

one of the players was ill and we were unable to do them. First was the [Goffredo] Petrassi Trio, a work composed in 1959 and a large one, played by Howard Colf, Myra Kestenbaum and Vance Beach. They also learned the Schoenberg Trio, which is one of the most difficult of all trios, and they worked on it a very long time. The published edition is supposed to have, according to Milton Babbitt who had done some work on it, over one hundred errors. We think we had the corrections for all of them.

TUSLER: How? From the original manuscript?

MORTON: No, mostly through advice from Milton Babbitt. Milton Babbitt corrected the score, together with a student of his, on the basis of testing it against the row. I think this is probably valid because I can remember being at Schoenberg's house shortly after [the trio] was composed and was to be played here with a group headed by Adolph Koldofsky. I remember a question about a note came up at the rehearsal, and Schoenberg excused himself and said, "I have to look at my charts," meaning that he made the charts of the row in its various forms and kept them in front of him while he was composing. He came back and made a correction; and so I think it is probably valid to make corrections that way.

An interesting story about that trio is that it was composed for a conference on music criticism at Harvard University in 1947-48, which I was going to [attend]. I was driving East with the present chairman of the Music Department of UCLA, Walter Rubsamen. Just before I left, I was in Westwood one day and I passed by the post office. Mr. and Mrs. Schoenberg came out and I stopped to chat with them for a moment. I told him that I was going East to hear the piece and I was very eager to hear it--the usual small talk--and he asked me, "How are the players that are going to do it at Harvard?" I said (I don't remember the name of the group, but I think they were from the University of Illinois [or] some [other] Midwestern college) that I didn't know their playing, but I assumed that since they had been engaged for Harvard they were a first-class group. And Schoenberg smiled and said, "I hope they are very good, because I wrote the piece without any consideration for the instruments." [laughter]

TUSLER: That was a very late work then, I take it?

MORTON: Yes, it was one of his last works, in the late 1940s.

TUSLER: Does that explain, then, why the corrections were not made in the printed manuscript--that he didn't

have time to go back and check it out?

MORTON: No, it seems to me that it was not actually published until after he had died. But of course errors can creep in. You know, there are errors in Beethoven and everybody's works. A new edition was supposed to come out just around the time we performed it; it wasn't out at that time, and I don't know if it has come out yet or not.

Anyway, we had very good performances of those two works and to have had them at all, to get a group together [which could do them], was a real accomplishment. I was hoping that that would be a standing string trio, but it has [broken up] as all of them have. Eventually I wanted to get from them the big Mozart Serenade for String Trio, which is a forty-five-minute piece.

TUSLER: What was the group called?

MORTON: It was Howard Colf, Myra Kestenbaum and Vance Beach. They didn't have a name; if the group had stayed together, maybe a name would have been forthcoming. It seems to me now, as I remember, that one of the reasons they broke up was that Myra Kestenbaum got married and the responsibilities of setting up a home made that amount of rehearsal rather difficult for her.

TUSLER: How much rehearsal time did they have to spend

on it? You said it was so very difficult.

MORTON: I don't remember because I didn't keep track of their rehearsals. I know they had rehearsed throughout the summer and that might have been once or twice a week, but there was a tremendous amount of work. We did have a private performance at somebody's home just a few days before the performance so [the players] could get the feel of playing for other people. I remember then that they discovered things about it that needed more rehearsal and, of course, in the last days they would [work on] all those places.

The other piece on that program was a novelty. It had been suggested to me by the baritone Maurice Allard. I had been looking for a good solid chunk of vocal music for Grace-Lynne Martin, and Maurice had suggested that we do the Berlioz Nuits d'été. I said, "Well, that's an orchestra piece." And he said, "I think it [was] originally published in a setting for piano." I looked it up and this was true. We don't like to do transcriptions, as I have said many times, but if a work has originally been done for piano and subsequently orchestrated there is justification for doing it with piano. So we did it, and as it turned out, some of the songs are not very strong. It was, nonetheless, a novelty and an important

work for us to do.

TUSLER: You mean some of the actual effect comes through the orchestration.

MORTON: Oh sure, sure. An orchestra, of course, covers a lot of faults, and especially a rather brilliant orchestration such as Berlioz's, covers some faults of composition. He is not a favorite composer of mine at all. I like to quote Stravinsky on Berlioz, who said that Berlioz, being a guitar player, never learned what the proper bass notes ought to be. There is a peculiarity of harmony in Berlioz that I suppose one could attribute to the fact that he was a guitar player rather than, say, a pianist. Oh, I think it is a superficial remark and I think that Stravinsky meant it, you know, half humorously; but there is something peculiar about Berlioz's bass parts, though I am sure they were consciously cultivated.

Stravinsky is a very strong classicist, even though he is writing twelve-tone music nowadays, and bass parts are something he has been very attentive to. I was aware of this just a week ago when he opened the Hollywood Bowl season and played his arrangement of the Star-Spangled Banner, which no one seems to like except musicians. I remember at the time that it was first played

by a WPA orchestra here at the old Embassy Theater, twenty-five years ago. I recalled that instance to him the other night at the Bowl and I remember saying what a marvelous bass line [it has]. He said, "Of course, that's the only thing that the song needs--a good bass line." So he is sensitive to this.

To finish up that program we had Bartok's Out of Doors Suite which hadn't been played for many years at our concerts. Pearl Kaufman played that.

The next program was the beginning of an attempt on my part to enlist a number of church choirs for the performance of Bach cantatas. Already I was thinking of the new museum and I thought then, as I have thought for years and am still thinking, that it would be wonderful to give the whole cycle of Bach cantatas. It would take, you know, four or five years to get through. But I thought, "Let's try out some church choirs." On this occasion we invited the choir from All Saints Church in Beverly Hills, which is conducted by Owen Brady. For that we prepared some Schütz pieces, the Symphoniae Sacrae (Three Biblical Scenes) which Owen had done with a small professional group for me at the Ojai Festivals a number of years ago, marvelous pieces, and the Bach Cantata no. 78. We had to do [the Bach] in English because that

was the way [the choir] was learning it for church, so the title is Jesus, Be Thou Now My Shield. (I still don't like the Bach cantatas in English.) Those two choral works were done and quite well done, but like most church choirs their groups are not well matched--I mean, there are never enough tenors. I don't mean this as an adverse criticism, but by the end of the season, when we had heard three choruses, I began to feel that we would never get absolutely first-class performances with church choirs. They were large, always twice as many singers as Bach had, but they were not professional singers and a certain tone quality was missing. We needed an organ for the cantatas, and William MacGowan, who is with All Saints Church in Pasadena, has a portable organ without pedals, a manual organ. He played some pieces from the Mechanical Clock by Haydn, which were charming, delightful pieces, six of them from the complete set of thirty-two. They sounded quite lovely. We also had a Los Angeles composer, Donal Michalsky, on this program, his Trio Concertino for flute, oboe, and horn, which were instruments we had handy for the Bach.

TUSLER: You said in connection with getting the church choirs together that you were already thinking about a Bach cantata cycle for the Los Angeles County Museum

[of Art]. Were your arrangements already under way with the museum at this time?

MORTON: Oh, yes. We were here in the fall of 1963. The museum opened in March 1965. So plans were already well on the way, and we knew from our conversations with Dr. [Richard F.] Brown of the museum that we were going to be welcomed there, although there had been nothing official said. We were just assuming on Dr. Brown's authority that we would be moving into the museum. At this moment, since it was still two years off, there was no point in his making any announcement or even issuing an official invitation.

Sometime later when I asked him if we couldn't do something about it, he said, "No, it would be much better"--since it's a county organization it would be run by the county although the building was put up by private subscription--"it would be better in view of the general situation in town not to make an announcement of this sort. Then somebody else would come along and say, 'Well, why can't we be there?'" And he said, "Just let it be quiet."

And we did, until I picked the season that we were going to go in. Then we simply announced that our concerts were going to be there, and the museum never made

any announcement that Monday Evening Concerts would officially make its home there. It was just wiser from a political point of view to let it go without any big publicity flourish.

TUSLER: To avoid stirring up any kind of opposition. From whom did the idea come?

MORTON: To go to the museum? Actually, the moment we heard that a new building was going to be put up, knowing that the great museums around the country do have musical programs and knowing that Dr. Brown himself was interested in [music], I met with him informally. He was always talking about the concerts that he used to hear at the Frick Museum, where Wanda Landowska did a number of series, and at the Metropolitan and so on; and to have music was one of the things that he looked forward to. They were planning an auditorium of some sort just for their own lectures and films as part of the museum activity. Our main connection with the museum was, of course, through Mrs. Moss, who is interested in art. It is her principal interest; music is her secondary interest personally. Music was the major interest of her husband. She knew Dr. Brown very well and this was our principal connection there, and we just kept in touch with the museum as time went along. The Bach series is still something left to do, but it doesn't seem practical

or feasible right now.

TUSLER: Has Mrs. Moss a formal connection with the County Museum?

MORTON: No, it's just that she's interested in the arts and she knows all the people in the artistic world, so she could go to Dr. Brown any time she wanted.

TUSLER: So very likely this is the spark that started the whole idea in Dr. Brown's mind?

MORTON: Yes, I am sure that the first mention of it must have been made by Mrs. Moss. So, anyway, that was the beginning of an attempt to do something about the Bach cantatas.

The next concert was under the direction of Karl Kohn, and with his wife Margaret, we had a group of pieces for two pianos: the Stravinsky Sonata, Three Pieces by Arthur Berger which were new, and some Schubert. That was the center of the program. Then Karl himself participated in the Webern Quartet for Violin, Clarinet, Tenor-sax and Piano, and that was a superb performance. We ended the program with the Mozart Divertimento no. 11 that Karl conducted. The Webern performance was really memorable. We had William Ulyate playing sax; he hasn't played with us very much recently because he's very busy with the Elliott Brothers' band, but every once in a

while for something special we can get him. His performance was really superb, and Karl is marvelous with this sort of music, so that was as good a performance of Webern as we have ever had.

TUSLER: Is it a terribly difficult piece to do?

MORTON: Well, all Webern is hard to do. It is rhythmically difficult and requires a precision and a fineness of performance that are terribly important for that kind of music.

On January 20 we had the choir from St. John's Church, which is under the direction of James Vail. He is on the faculty at USC and works in the department headed by [Charles] Hirt. I don't know exactly how they divide the work out there, but Jim Vail is a very good man. We had from him two Bach cantatas, no. 6, Bleib bei uns (again it had to be done in English) and Cantata no. 61, both superb pieces. On this program also we observed the seventieth birthday of Walter Piston. Some years before, actually it was in 1950, Sven and Kurt Reher had commissioned a duo from him which was premiered at our concerts. On the program I had this note: "This work was commissioned by Kurt and Sven Reher, is dedicated to them, and was first played by them at these concerts on 13 February 1950." So we thought it appropriate

to repeat that piece. Kurt is much too busy to do very much work with Monday Evening Concerts these days, but I asked him if he wouldn't at least do this one piece and we'd get another cellist for the other pieces, and he said, yes, of course, he'd be glad to. So that was a rather nice thing. The [other] Piston work was one of his first pieces and I remember that it had been played in the old days of Evenings on the Roof, though I can't remember the date of it--Three Pieces for flute, clarinet, and bassoon, which he composed in 1926. So we had an early work and a late work of Piston, both of them small pieces, but appropriate enough for a birthday observance.

TUSLER: His name hasn't shown up on the programs very much throughout the years, has it?

MORTON: No. Piston is what you'd call a neoclassical composer, and he was doing much of what I regarded as his best composing in the early years. Of course, in recent years he's been composing string quartets and symphonies, and they are just not within our possibilities, so when we have done Piston we've had to fall back on his earlier pieces. We did his Nonet a number of years ago, and I would like to get a repeat performance of that sometime, but the occasion for it hasn't come up

because there is an instrumental problem. It is a short piece for nine players and it has many difficulties for us in programing. He is, of course, one of our leading composers, and if he would just stop writing those symphonies all the time and string quartets. . . . [laughter] We did have a piece of his, of course, last season--we'll come to that in a minute. But it's true that his name appeared more frequently on our programs in the '30s and '40s than recently. Here again we had some very good performances of the Bach cantatas, but not up to the standards of professional choirs.

In February, we had for I think the first time in Los Angeles [a composition of] Ralph Shapey, a piece called Evocation, for violin, piano, and percussion, played by Diana Steiner, Leonard Stein at the piano, and Charles De Lancey [for] percussion. This is a fairly good work, but just in the last couple of years Shapey has come into his own and is now head of the Rockefeller project at the University of Chicago. I'm expecting that he will be out here next season in connection with our annual Fromm program. I saw him in Chicago a few weeks ago. He is a very forthright and original and self-contained person who doesn't have too much respect for the Establishment, a real individualist, and I like him very

much.

TUSLER: You mentioned the Rockefeller project at Chicago. What is it?

MORTON: Well, Rockefeller has set up several projects around the country for the performance of new music, always in connection with educational institutions. The one at Buffalo that Lukas Foss was working with was the first. This one at Chicago was the second. A third one is at Rutgers with Arthur Weisberg in charge. The fourth one is jointly by San Francisco State and the Mills College performing group. Another one is being set up this year at the University of Iowa, and I just heard recently that another one is going to be set up at Sarah Lawrence College. We've been trying very hard to get one of those grants from Rockefeller, but we are not affiliated with an educational institution, so we haven't been successful.

Anyway, this was the first time that we had had Shapey; and Evocations, as I say, is a good piece but not to be compared with his later works, one of which, Incantations, might possibly be done this season with us. It has been done in San Francisco and has had a number of performances around the country.

We also had Morton Subotnick down as a guest from

Mills this season. We did his Second Serenade for clarinet, horn, piano, and percussion. The percussionist was playing on the inside of the piano, using mallets directly on the strings. Morton played the clarinet, David Duke the horn, Leonard Stein the piano, and Charles De Lancey the percussion. We ended that program with another Mozart Divertimento for solo strings and two horns. That was a good program. Morton Subotnick's piece was a little bit of a shocker. One of the effects he calls for is that the clarinetist should put the bell of his instrument inside the bell of the horn--he gets some very peculiar resonances there, and also an image that the audience interpreted as you would expect. [laughter]

On February 17, we had a marvelous performance of the Elliott Carter Violoncello and Piano Sonata by Laurence Lesser and Ellen Mack. Laurence Lesser, as you know, was just competing in Moscow, and he came in fourth, I believe--really a fine artist. The team of Larry Lesser and Ellen Mack is a beautiful team that was broken up last year when Ellen got married and went off to live in Baltimore. We also had Louise di Tullio playing Bach's Unaccompanied Flute Sonata on that program, and we introduced here for the first time in America a young Italian composer named Aldo Clementi, with a piece of his called

Triplum for flute, oboe, and clarinet--a very striking piece, a very good piece. Then Larry Lesser also played a Beethoven sonata, the G-minor, with Ellen Mack.

We ended the program with a serenade by Seymour Shifrin for oboe, clarinet, horn, viola, and piano. This is an early work of Seymour, but it was one that suited our instrumentation for this evening. Last year we had a newer work of Seymour that is much more representative of him. He is from Berkeley, and just this year he's leaving Berkeley and going to Brandeis University next year. That's a rather sad loss for Berkeley but, of course, a gain for Brandeis; he's a very bright young man and a good composer.

The next program in March we had the Pomona College Glee Clubs directed by Bill Russell. We had from them a motet of Palestrina and a mass by Cristóbal de Morales, a late Renaissance composer, a very good repertoire, a kind that we don't get very frequently. The Westwood Wind Quintet took part in this program, and they introduced a Polish composer, Tadeusz Baird, which simply means a Scotsman by the name of Baird had gone to Poland and become a Pole. When you said Baird is a Polish name people are always a bit astounded, but the first name, Tadeusz, sets it straight. It's a fairly early work of

his, but it is in strict twelve-tone technique, [though] a rather mild work. We also had a woodwind quintet by a Los Angeles composer, Robert Linn. Then we had from the Pomona people another group of contemporary pieces: the anthem "The dove descending. . ." by Stravinsky, and Ernst Krenek's Canon for Igor Stravinsky's eightieth birthday, a very complex piece in which the text is worked out so that the initial word of each line spells out the name I. Stravinsky, in Latin. It is serial in every [literary as well as musical] way so that even the Latin letters of each line spell out Stravinsky's name. It is a canon, and I believe it is a reverse canon also, if I am not mistaken. We ended that group with the Trois chansons of Ravel, a very lovely piece.

Then the wind quintet ended [the program] with Paul Hindemith's great opus 24/2, the Quintet for Wind Instruments (which is still, I think, the best wind quintet that's been written in our times). It is a wonderful piece, full of humor and wit, and it used to be very, very difficult. I can remember when it was first played here at the Evenings on the Roof and was recorded by a local company with that group of players--that was at least twenty-five years ago--and at that time, to tackle that piece was a major undertaking. Now every wind quintet

in the world plays it and tosses it off as nothing.

TUSLER: Why is that?

MORTON: We learn, that's all, and the players have become conversant with the idiom that was regarded as very modern in those days and [now] is just tossed off. It is a classic, like the Stravinsky Octet, another wind piece which was a shocker and very difficult years ago, and now everybody can play it.

TUSLER: So there is hope for the difficult music of today. I mean, this will happen in its turn. Do you believe that?

MORTON: I certainly do. I can think of the principal performance that the Westwood Wind Quintet did for us the following year, the Schoenberg Quintet. That is still a very, very difficult piece--that will take a few years yet; but when the first recording of it was made I think by the Philadelphia Wind Quintet, it was considered a terrific undertaking, but nowadays there are many people who perform the Schoenberg. It doesn't come off as well as Hindemith yet because it is a much more difficult piece than that, but the time will come when everybody will be tossing off the Schoenberg. I heard an extraordinary performance of the Schoenberg just two years ago out at Pomona College by [the Danzi Quintet], but they played

it with great ease. It is in their repertoire and they play it constantly. It is not in the repertoire, really, of the Westwood group because they don't get enough opportunity to play it. When they learned it for us they did get a chance to play it at least twice more--I think once was at Pasadena, Caltech, and they got another performance or two of it. So it was possible for them to work it up.

TUSLER: To spend the amount of time.

MORTON: Right.

The next program we introduced a Swiss composer, Klaus Huber, who as it turned out has a sister living in Pasadena. This piece is a cantata entitled Des Engels Anredung an die Seele (The Angels Address Their Words to the Soul). It is a poem by Johann Georg Albini from the seventeenth century. Huber is composing very contemporary music based in general on the principles of Baroque music--you might call him a neobaroque composer, but using a completely modern idiom. He is regarded as one of the leading composers of Switzerland now.

TUSLER: A serial technique?

MORTON: Yes. This is an excellent piece, one of the best contemporary pieces we've had. I'm looking around for other pieces by Huber to do. This was conducted by

Lawrence Foster who is now, as you know, the assistant conductor of the Philharmonic. He also conducted the Suite, opus 11, by Alexander Goehr, an English composer. A few seasons back I think I mentioned that we had done another piece of Goehr, The Deluge, based on words of Leonardo da Vinci. Larry Foster has become quite a good friend of Alexander Goehr now. When he goes to England he stays with him, and he just reported to me by letter that he had heard a new work of Goehr played in London for a rather unusual combination of strings, I think just violas and cellos, with a solo flute and a solo clarinet and something else--I've forgotten what. Foster reported to me that it was really one of the best pieces of contemporary music he has heard.

Then we had some vocal duets on this program that I'd been trying to get for a long time, and I did get them from Richard Robinson, tenor, and his wife Caterina Micieli--two Italian Duets by Haydn that had just been published for the first time, again by Doblinger from Vienna; and four duets by Schumann from opus 78. Really very, very beautiful pieces, and they had been on my list for a long time. I hadn't been able to get them, but this time it turned out very well. Peter Hewitt was on this program; he played the Roger Sessions Second Piano

Sonata.

On the next program we had our first try with a young pianist from USC, Charles Fierro. He played some sonatas by Antonio Soler, a Spanish composer who has had a sort of revival in the last few years, mostly due to the work of Frederick Marvin, a Los Angeles pianist--he hasn't been around; I believe he was in an accident of some sort and wasn't able to play for several years--who edited the Soler sonatas and they are rather delightful eighteenth-century pieces. Charles Fierro also played the Schoenberg opus 11 piano pieces. Then Margery MacKay, who had been absent from our programs for some time, came back to sing the Schoenberg Three Songs, opus 48, which we had had some years ago. She also gave the whole set of Zigeunerlieder of Brahms, opus 103. These were originally done by Brahms for vocal quartet and we had done them in that form, but he also made a version for solo voice and this was the version that we did, with Natalie Limonick at the piano.

Then we had on this program the choir from St. Charles Borromeo Church. This was a sort of substitute; I had planned another Bach series here and I don't remember what happened to it, but it collapsed at any rate, and so I called on Paul Salamunovich, who is the director of the choir of St. Charles Borromeo [Catholic Church]. He

had a very, very good group of Renaissance pieces for us by Victoria, Palestrina, Viadana, Ingegneri and Sweelinck. They performed these pieces very well. It is a good chorus.

TUSLER: Does this group compare favorably with a professional group?

MORTON: Favorably, yes, if they are singing repertoire that they have known for a long time. These were all solid pieces in their repertoire. I was quite prepared to take almost anything that Paul could offer us because it was, as I said, a substitute for something else.

We had another Stravinsky premiere on this program, and this was cooked up within two days. Again, it was due to Stravinsky's eagerness to hear a new piece and, of course, our association with Bob Craft which made it possible. This was the Elegy for J.F.K. that Stravinsky had just composed to a poem by Auden. It is a very small piece for baritone, two clarinets and alto clarinet. The voice part was something of a problem, I think, for Stravinsky; originally, he had set it for baritone, but a very high baritone, and we used Dick Robinson, a tenor with a good lower range. Subsequently, Stravinsky has rescored it for alto voice and it has been done by Cathy Berberian, who is Mrs. Berio. He asked for two clarinets

and an alto clarinet; alto clarinets are fairly rare but we did manage to get one.

Well, the first rehearsal--this is sheer madness--took place on Sunday morning. Bob Craft worked with the clarinets before Dick could get there because Dick had a church job. It is a serial piece and the intervals are difficult, and I remember after rehearsal I sat at the piano and helped Dick with the vocal part. The next day we were unable to get a rehearsal until evening, at the [same] time the concert was going on, and so Stravinsky and Craft and the players had a rehearsal in another building at Plummer Park while the first part of the program was going on. It was nerve-racking, but we had every confidence in Dick. He's a good workman. He was singing somewhere in the early part of the evening and he had to come over the freeway and get to the hall, and so I put this piece as late on the program as I possibly could so that they would have some time to do some rehearsing. And while they were rehearsing on the evening of the performance Stravinsky made some changes in the music. It was a nerve-racking evening. But, of course, it's a very short piece, a couple of minutes, and with Stravinsky present we could be sure of getting it done the way he wanted it.

TUSLER: How did it come out?

MORTON: It came off very well. Again, this was an unscheduled premiere; and I think that somebody else for some other occasion did claim the premiere, but we have the documentary evidence that we did it.

TUSLER: Was this right after JFK had been assassinated?

MORTON: Well, shortly after. This program is 6 April 1964, and so it was already four or five months after. But the idea of doing a piece for JFK had occurred to Stravinsky and he was waiting for the idea of the piece to come. He had asked Auden to write a little poem, and Auden's poem is a haiku. Of course, as you could guess in advance, Stravinsky didn't want to do anything on the great orchestra-chorus idea--this is not for him.

As you might remember, he knew the Kennedys in the sense that he had been a guest at the White House. A dinner had been given for him by the Kennedys, not a big state dinner, but small and informal--but, of course, still black tie. I remember that the newspapers were full of pictures of the Kennedys standing at the door waiting for the Stravinskys to arrive and greeting them there. The whole episode is recorded by Craft in the Conversations with Stravinsky.

TUSLER: And it was given just for Stravinsky? Not for

many artists?

MORTON: No, no. Stravinsky had been invited to one of those big affairs and he had to decline. It was an occasion when the White House was full of artists; it might have been that Casals dinner, but there were other occasions when the artists had been out in force at the White House. Stravinsky doesn't like those big affairs, for one thing, and I think it was very thoughtful of the Kennedys to make a small intimate thing for Stravinsky because, you know, he is old and a little bit wobbly on his legs, and he just doesn't like big crowds of people. So Stravinsky had this very wonderful evening in mind, and when [he wrote] the Elegy for J.F.K. it had some personal feeling about it. It wasn't just for a big national figure.

TUSLER: Did he really admire Kennedy as a person?

MORTON: Well, if you read the section in the conversation books, it's there. Kennedy knew Stravinsky as a great name in music but didn't know his music. Mrs. Kennedy, of course, was much more up on this sort of thing. But Mrs. Stravinsky had to brief the President on some details of Stravinsky's career during the dinner, so that when toasting time came with the champagne Kennedy could make the appropriate remarks. [laughter] But of

course, Mrs. Kennedy knew all about him, because she had been rather intimate in the artistic circle with Leonard Bernstein, who knows a great deal about Stravinsky, and I suppose this is how they knew him most.

TUSLER: How did Stravinsky feel about Kennedy?

MORTON: Well, the nicest remark--I think it is a perfectly charming remark--Craft told me about as soon as they came back from Washington. They had had a very good time and they were really impressed by Kennedy's grasp of international affairs. He was a brilliant mind and Mrs. Kennedy and everybody adored him, naturally. But there was the eighty-year-old Stravinsky and the forty-odd-year-old President, and when they got in the car and went back to the hotel Stravinsky made what I think is just a priceless affectionate remark. He said to Mrs. Stravinsky, "Nice kids." [laughter] I think that was really delightful.

Of course, each one is an expert in his own world--Stravinsky in the arts and Kennedy in politics--and complete amateurs in the others. Stravinsky said that Kennedy impressed him, aside from his abilities which were perfectly obvious from the moment you started to talk with him, his tremendous command of the whole world situation, but he still struck Stravinsky as being something on the

order of a college football player, not only because of his physical appearance which was terribly impressive but also because of the kind of boyishness that Kennedy had. There was something, let us say, maturely collegiate about him, and, of course, his impeccable style of dress was another college attribute, you might say. So that was a very interesting encounter. I would have given anything to have been there.

TUSLER: Were there other people present?

MORTON: Yes, Lennie Bernstein was there with Mrs. Bernstein, and Mrs. Kennedy's sister, Princess Radziwill, and another lady from the Italian nobility; Nicolas Navokov was there, and Goddard Lieberson, who is head of Columbia Records and his wife, Vera Zorina. Actually, all the people who were there were friends of Stravinsky with the exception of Arthur Schlesinger, whom Stravinsky had met before and liked very much, and I think Pierre Salinger was also there. The Stravinskys left fairly early. I assume he excused himself. The old man was in Washington conducting Oedipus Rex for the Washington Opera. [The dinner] was timed to coincide with his visit to Washington, and since he had had rehearsals [that morning] he simply left early.

The final program of that year was again introducing

here another Swiss composer, named Heinz Holliger. I should have said before in regard to Huber that he's of the German (Zurich) branch of Switzerland; Holliger is from the French--he lives in Geneva, I believe--and so his compositions were in French. We had the Mobile for oboe and harp. The title Mobile means the piece can be played in several versions. We had it in two versions, and in between we played a piece of his called Sequences on St. John, a piece for harp solo [based on] a literary text using that as a separation for the two versions of the Mobile. These were played by Dorothy Remsen and Peter Christ. Holliger is also, like Huber, one of the leading [Swiss] composers. I'd say the third leading composer of that generation is Jacques Guyonnet, whom we played last year. Those are the three outstanding people of that generation.

Then we had two new works, premieres, on the program. One is called Remembrances for Eight Instruments by Lawrence Moss, who is the son of our Mrs. Moss, whom we had not represented too frequently on our programs for obvious reasons. I think this was the third piece of Moss's that had been played over a period of maybe twelve or fifteen years. He had this piece under way when we asked him for a piece (we thought it was time we played one), and so he

finished it up and he came from the East to hear it. Karl Kohn conducted it. Another piece on the program was Dorrance Stalvey's Movements and Interludes for Seven Players, an extremely difficult piece, much more difficult than Larry Moss's piece. I must say that even though Karl Kohn was conducting we didn't have quite enough rehearsal time on either of these pieces, and so the performances were not as topnotch as they should have been. But, as I say, they are both extremely difficult, and with both composers present, Karl had his hands full as you can imagine. Stalvey's piece has had a couple of performances since then and it is a solid piece.

We ended the program with a Schubert masterpiece, the Forellen-Quintett, which was also up Karl Kohn's alley. Karl is Viennese by birth and he has a great feeling for this music. We had a very good performance with Arnold Belnick, violin, Maxine Johnson, [viola], Harold Schneier, cello, and Milton Kestenbaum, doublebass. It was a joy for Milton Kestenbaum to get in a piece of chamber music of this sort because there are not very many where a bass is required. We had a preview of this Schubert performance at somebody's home in Pacific Palisades (I can't remember the name of the people now), but Harold Schneier, the cellist, was eager to get in a performance for just

a few people before this performance. It came off really beautifully. It made up for our deficiencies, I think, on the Moss and the Stalvey pieces.

TUSLER: So that ended the season.

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JULY 20, 1966

TUSLER: Today we start with the 1964-65 season.

MORTON: Right. Our whole thinking in planning this season was that this was our last in Plummer Park and we'd be moving over to the museum. It was very difficult to get commitments from the museum people as to what the timing was going to be. However, it did turn out that we could plan on eight concerts at Plummer Park; then there would be a slight interval, and we would commence at the new museum for our last four concerts. I believe in our original announcement we didn't actually give the dates of the new hall because we weren't exactly sure, but we knew it was going to be sometime in the spring, so we sold the season as eight concerts in Plummer Park and four spring concerts in the new LA County Museum of Art.

I must say that was a distraction all through the season, with much worry and concern about what the new museum was going to be like. We'd seen the plans, but there was always that uncertainty: would they open on time? And it was a little bit late in the season before we got a confirmation from Boulez that he could come at just around that time. When I mentioned this to the museum people, this was one of the things that helped them

push the date so that our first concert there and the first musical event in the hall would be the Boulez concert. He has become a very, very big name in the past couple of months, as you know, because of certain scandals that have been breaking around France, although there was one member of the Board of Trustees of the museum who had said, "Who is Boulez, and is he important enough for us?" This message was conveyed to me by one of the curators, and he said, "You'd better send the trustee some information about Boulez." Well, it happened that for a number of years I'd been saving a lot of newspaper clippings and magazine articles about Boulez, and I gathered them all together and sent them out. There was enough there to impress this trustee very, very deeply.

So everything promised that we were going to have an auspicious opening. As I said, that was a sort of distraction all through the season. We weren't entirely concentrating on the needs of the moment because of the worrying about what would happen in the spring, and would they be open, and so on.

Just before the concerts began (the first concert was October 5), on the first of October Ernst Toch passed away and we felt we had to make some observance. We had not played a great deal of his music recently, but throughout

the years we had played an amount of it and he was one of the kindest and sweetest old gentlemen around. Just the season or so before we had played his Sonatinetta, opus 84, for three wind instruments and we decided that we would open this program with the slow movement which was entitled, "Slow, with utmost tenderness." Louise di Tullio, John Neufeld, and Don Christlieb prepared that piece in the few days we had. It was too late to put it on the printed program, so I could only make an announcement, and for my files I typed up some little slips and pasted them in.

We had rather novel things for this opening concert. We began with [our earlier] commitment to Lalo Schifrin, a "third stream" composer [who combined] jazz and serious music. He is an Argentinian of Russian descent, and he has a mixed name--Lalo being Argentinian and Schifrin being Russian--but he had been schooled in Paris. He had studied with a number of people over there, the most important one being a composer who lived to be ninety years old but none of whose works was published during his [lifetime], Charles [Koechlin]. [Lalo] had worked in the Musique Concrète group at the French Radio, but he was really interested in jazz. So we had first performances of some of his works which are mixed jazz and

serious music. They were The Living Cell, Etude on Rhythm, Lalo's Meditation, and The Ritual of Sound. A rather large group of instruments was required, and because Lalo is working in the movies and TV he did succeed in getting a number of very important musicians who were skillful in jazz to play at this concert, including Shelley Manne who played the drums.

TUSLER: And he himself conducted it?

MORTON: He conducted, yes. We had Lenny Niehaus and Jack Nimitz on saxophone; Buddy Collette played flute; Don Ellis, who had only recently come from New York where he had played some jazz music at the Philharmonic under Bernstein, was the trumpet, and Jack Sheldon was the other trumpet; Frank Rosolino was trombone; Red Callender, the tuba; Pearl Kaufman, the pianist--she was a friend of Mr. and Mrs. Schifrin and had been working with him on his commercial scores; and Red Mitchell was the bass. That was a long half program with four pieces.

To begin with I wanted a piece of classical music, and we found one that had not been played a great deal, namely, the Beethoven Trio, opus 38, for piano, clarinet, and cello, which was Beethoven's own arrangement of the famous Septet, opus 20. John Neufeld was the clarinetist, and he had come across the music through Mitchell Lurie,

who had been his teacher. That's a long work, the septet, a good forty minutes long, with six movements. This version was a novelty, not as good as the original, of course, but nonetheless it was Beethoven's own arrangement so it was valid for us to play it. The reviews pointed out, as they had with the Beethoven previously played (the Grosse Fuge, didn't sound like the string quartet), that this didn't sound like the septet [laughter], which we knew of course beforehand.

So that was a rather interesting program contrasting Beethoven and jazz. We had a huge crowd. Don Ellis has a big following among jazz people, and Lalo Schifrin was becoming better known all the time through a number of records he had made.

On the second program we had another novelty, a piece that I had read about and that Larry Foster had known about. He conducted it. It was by Hans Werner Henze, a young German composer (he is in his forties by now, born in 1926). This is a cantata, Being Beauteous, for soprano, harp, and four cellos, a very unusual combination of instruments. I remember when I first heard about it [wondering] what that title meant, Being Beauteous, and I couldn't place it. It was Larry Foster who said he thought it was a poem by Rimbaud and, of course,

it was from Les Illuminations. I kept thinking of the "being" as a participle and, of course, it is not; it is a noun. Carole Bogard, a San Franciscan, came down to sing this; she was going to sing it in San Francisco a little bit later so we thought that it would be worthwhile having her do it because Larry Foster was also going to conduct [there]. Carole was willing to come down without any large fee.

To begin the program she sang a song of Purcell, Altisidora's Song from Don Quixote for soprano and continuo, and Larry Foster himself played the harpsichord. The other big event--well, the whole program was full of big events: at the previous Ojai Festival the Los Angeles String Quartet had played the Alban Berg Lyric Suite, a piece which I had wanted to program for years and the usual string quartet problem had not made it possible. But [this group] had given quite a good performance of it up there, and I thought it was a shame not to give them a chance to play it again and also get a good chunk of repertoire for us. So they played it and did quite a good job of it. I think they also got four or five other performances of it.

TUSLER: Is that still a difficult piece today?

MORTON: Yes, it is extremely difficult. At one of our

last rehearsals Bob Craft sat in to give me some pointers on various interpretive aspects of it, because Bob is so well up on the second Viennese school.

Also we had Halsey Stevens's Sonatina Giocosa, for doublebass and piano. Halsey had written this piece only ten years ago and had dedicated it to Monday Evening Concerts, and it had been played by Henry Lewis before Henry had gone into his conducting activities; Henry was not available to play it, and so young Tom Pedrini played it. He is a member of the Philharmonic and he's still doing graduate work at USC and a very good player. Martin Katz played the piano. Then, considering the instruments we had, it naturally followed that we would end the program with the Brandenburg Sixth. We had, you see, plenty of cellos there for the Henze; we had the harpsichord from the Purcell and we had the viola from the string quartet, so we had to get just one other viola. That was really a rather distinguished program.

The third concert was conducted by Bob Craft and the idea here was to do a group of works, one in particular, the Webern Symphonie, opus 21, which we have been waiting twenty years to hear in this city and which had never been played. Webern had said that it could also be played with solo strings, and so we decided to try it

this way because obviously no one was going to play it at the Philharmonic with a full string section. It turned out to be just a nonet that way and we were able to give that work its first Los Angeles performance. It worked out very well. One of the results of it was that Gunther Schuller in New York heard about this performance and so he did it, also; of course, the Symphonie had been played in New York, but it had never been played in this chamber music version.

Then Craft also wanted to do another one of those Haydn Notturnos--I mentioned them before--that Haydn had written for the King of Naples and had rescored for a London performance. This time we played no. 1, in C major, a real masterpiece. All eight or ten of them really should be played. Another novelty we had was by Giselher Klebe, a German composer who had written Seven Bagatelles, opus 35, for basset horn, trombone, harp, and bells, a very strange combination of instruments. The pieces were inspired by a visit to a church in Rome, Santo Gésu Bambino dell' Aracoëli. What the religious significance is of all the individual movements, I don't know--I could never figure it out--but it doesn't sound like religious music at all. But it was an extraordinary combination of instruments and it was a novelty. We had

done Klebe before; we had done a string quartet of his years ago, and we had done a solo violin sonata. His Second Solo Violin Sonata was played just last season by Bob Gross at Occidental.

The first half of the program was all classical music. We had an organ brought in belonging to William MacGowan from Pasadena All Saints Church, and he played a little sonata by Pergolesi in one movement, a charming little piece. We needed him also for continuo on a piece by Biber, a Sonata a tre that I had had around for some time and just hadn't found the occasion for performing. It was for two string instruments, trombone and continuo, a very unusual combination; but of course in that period the trombone and string instruments were considered equal. Eudice Shapiro was on this program, Sanford Schonbach was the violist, and the trombonist was Bob Marsteller, the first trombonist [of] the symphony. This time we used a double bass in the continuo because of the register of the trombone. That was an unusual piece, although I must confess that stylistically it didn't come off the way I had hoped at all. It was played as though Biber were a nineteenth-century composer, but this is a long struggle that has been going on for years. It is hard to get musicians to give up the espressivo style. And that is

one of the things, of course, with Eudice Shapiro, who played a Bach solo sonata, the G-minor, on the same program--Eudice does not play an authentic Baroque style. She knows how, but she just doesn't like it. The same happened with the Biber. She doesn't like that kind of sound.

TUSLER: It is the sound, not the phrasing that she objects to?

MORTON: Oh, no, no, it's the sound and it has to do with the phrasing and embellishments and stylistic things. But as she says, she is not playing an old instrument, so she doesn't see why she should play a modern instrument in an old style any more than to take an old instrument and play it in a new style. This is one of the great performance problems all over the world in our time. Musicology has discovered much about the performance of Baroque music, but its application, however, to performance is extremely difficult. For instance, if we are going to play on modern violins, are we justified in using a harpsichord for a continuo instrument?

TUSLER: You mean it should be all one thing or all the other.

MORTON: Yes, or all the other. But it is impossible. The harpsichord has also become a modern instrument, and

does the modern harpsichord sound like the old harpsichord? Well, harpsichord specialists say, of course not.

TUSLER: There are more stops on it now, more deep registers so that it would balance the sound of the modern violin, wouldn't it?

MORTON: That's right. They are louder, but nonetheless every time we have a harpsichord playing with another instrument, the other instrument drowns out the harpsichord. Later in this season we will come to a program when that happened, with Malcolm Hamilton playing with Larry Lesser. No matter how discreet Larry tried to be, you just simply couldn't hear the harpsichord. So you have no balance, no real balance between these instruments.

To get an old instrument played authentically means that everyone in the ensemble has to have an old instrument played authentically; and, of course, we don't know exactly what authenticity is. But this is really a very serious problem, and I don't know how it is going to be licked at any time. Sometimes I feel we should just forget the old instruments and play everything in a modern style, and then when I hear it I don't like it, as in the case of the Biber and the Bach on this program, which doesn't mean that they weren't well played--they were

well played--it is stylistic things I am talking about. And then I'll say, no, we have to do it stylistically. Well, that means, for instance, with a piece that requires a flute, maybe you have to use a recorder instead of a flute. Bach always specified when he meant the flauto traverso, and we've done a lot of Bach using the horizontal flute. This is certainly incorrect, too; but when we occasionally try things with recorders, the recorders are not in tune with our modern instruments. They may actually be in tune, if you took an oscilloscope and could measure the vibrations exactly, or maybe not; but they don't sound in tune because of the whole question of tone production and vibrato, and everything changes.

TUSLER: Of course, there are so many variables, the size of the hall and the placement of the instrument. Maybe in Baroque days the halls were smaller. Is this a possible aspect of it? So that the sound of the harpsichord would balance or fill all the corners of the hall in a different way than now.

MORTON: Well, of course, they didn't have huge halls such as we have; some of the opera houses were big, but chamber music was played in chambers, in comparatively small rooms. Of course, these things make a difference, but there are many small rooms that have more liveness

than big rooms. So, again, this is another variable, and you can't control it. Anyway, this is a problem that I have struggled with for years and years and there is no solution.

TUSLER: How much control do you yourself have over the determination of the end product? I mean, are you present at all of the rehearsals and do you have something to say?

MORTON: This all depends on the personnel. I have to be very discreet. With some of the younger performers who respect my grey hair, I can control a performance to a certain extent. With some of the older performers it is quite impossible, and I wouldn't even dare make a suggestion. Or if I do make a suggestion it has to be done so discreetly, always in the form of, "Don't you think that maybe. . .?" even though I may be absolutely certain that they are doing the thing completely wrong. But there is no reason why we should be required to put on perfect performances any more than, say, the LA Philharmonic, where we hear lots of things going on with the most distinguished guest conductors, or even with our own conductors--things that are very badly done from the standpoint of interpretation, from the standpoint of musicology, and so on. I would hope always that we could

do a little bit better and, on the whole, I think we do because the people who are conductors at our programs, people like Ingolf Dahl and Karl Kohn and Leonard Stein, are all much better musicologists and much sounder musicians from the standpoint of intellect than, say, any conductor that comes around at the Philharmonic. They have other qualities which our people don't have, such as personality and control.

TUSLER: And technique?

MORTON: No; I would say that Ingolf Dahl has as much conducting technique as any conductor around. But he is not a flashy, I might say, "sexpot" like Mehta. [laughter] This is an important quality in performance, and Mehta has it. He's quite an astounding person.

TUSLER: A quality of the personality that goes across the footlights.

MORTON: Well, there was another thing that we had done this year that we didn't do on our own programs because I didn't consider it as concert music. Just a few months previously, a volume of canons by Schoenberg had been published, thirty canons. These dated from his earliest days until shortly before he died. I wanted very much to perform them, but you see it does not make a concert. We prepared them and before the opening of the season we

performed them privately for the members of the Southern California Chamber Music Society in a private home. Leonard Stein was in charge of this, and it was a sort of lecture concert. We invited our members to this special performance and it turned out to be very interesting. Leonard talked very well. We did sell this program [later] to Pomona College, to the Pasadena Art Museum, and we had one other performance down in Long Beach. This was one of our very important productions. We used a string quartet and a vocal quartet, and Leonard's commentary [was] illustrated [by] slides made of some of the canons and shown on a screen. It was on [November 4, 1964] that we gave it at Long Beach. (I believe that there were not printed programs for either of the two other performances because if there were I would have them here.)

I had hoped, actually, to sell this program to a number of other colleges, but it was rather expensive, you see, with nine participants, and if it meant going out overnight then, of course, the bill would come to $1000 or $1200, so we didn't succeed in selling it.

TUSLER: What combination were they written for?

MORTON: [Schoenberg] didn't specify the instruments. He specified voices, of course, but the publication came out edited by Rufer and he had [suggested] string quartet.

We used the Los Angeles String Quartet. We hadn't been in rehearsal very long before I realized that the string quartet was not the ideal ensemble for this because the instruments blended too well and the counterpoint tended to become obscure. It was my intention that if we could ever do this again we should do it with a wind quartet, although there would be great difficulties there in terms of breathing because some of these canons go along without allowing time for breathing. But if the singers could do it the wind instruments could do it, even a little bit more easily. Some adjustments in phrasing and so on would have to be made.

But so far the occasion for a repeat hasn't come up. As I say, it can only go to colleges because of the lecture. It is not concert music. You don't come to any big climax, although the last canon is really sort of a rouser. There are a couple of them that are rather pretty--for instance, a canon in the form of a lullaby that Schoenberg wrote in honor of the birth of Artur Rodzinski's boy. He made the canon using quotes from an old German song. This was always a "killer-diller" in performance. Another that was very successful was one written to the late Richard D. Saunders, who had been a music critic in this town and had done some favor for

Schoenberg that Schoenberg wanted to acknowledge, so he wrote him a Christmas canon. This was very amusing. So the canons ranged all the way from the most serious and profound ones, like the one to Thomas Mann or the one for Carl Engel, who was then editor of the Musical Quarterly, up to these lighter ones. There was a vast range. None of them is twelve tone, not a one.

TUSLER: So it wasn't a didactic thing.

MORTON: Oh, no. Some of them were exercises in counterpoint. All composers [play] with this sort of thing just to keep their hands in shape. And, as I say, they are really not concert pieces, but they made a very good lecture-recital, an educational evening.

November 16. Here we accomplished several things. The program was in charge of Karl Kohn, and there were two new works that I was particularly anxious to get. One was a new Polish piece by Wlodzimierz Kotónski. He is of that new avant-garde generation, the postwar generation in Poland, and a very good composer. We did his Trio for flute, guitar and percussion, the first American performance (it has been performed since then several times), a very successful piece. The other one was by a French composer, Gilbert Amy, whom I had heard about from Boulez. He had a piece for flute, piano and celeste, harp,

and one percussion player on vibraphone and marimba. It was called Inventions I and II and was an extremely difficult piece, one of the most difficult pieces we have ever done. Karl Kohn's preparation of this was really something quite fantastic. Everyone had to play from score and there was a real problem there in page turning--the music was on horizontal pages and everyone had to stretch [his part] across two music stands, so there were these physical things that were uncomfortable. We could not turn the pages without making noise. Karl practically had to memorize the whole score because in addition to giving cues to people and playing two instruments he just didn't have much time to look at his music. He demonstrated to my satisfaction that he really knew that whole thing by memory, and he found some errors in the music that were subsequently corrected when the published edition came out a little bit later.

TUSLER: What do you mean? In the row?

MORTON: No, errors in the copying job. He made a list of them and sent them on, and they were all corrected.

We had also some chansons of Machaut for which Karl Kohn had made the instrumental realizations--the instrumental parts were never clearly indicated and everything from that period has to be arranged. Karl did four pieces

that were sung by baritone and soprano. Then later, the soprano sang the Four Russian Songs for Voice, Flute, Harp, and Guitar by Stravinsky, and we closed the program with the E-major Trio of Mozart, the piano trio, K. 542.

The next program was one that I was very proud of because we managed to get a whole program with only four players and this was going to cut costs and allow me to do some of the more expensive programs on the season. We had on this program Grisha Goluboff, violinist; [Laurence] Lesser, cellist; Ellen Mack, pianist; and John Neufeld, clarinetist. Goluboff was a child prodigy around twenty or thirty years ago. (I don't know how old he is.) Really a child prodigy. His press book shows he was playing [all over the world] when he was eight or ten years old with every one of the major symphony orchestras. He was a real genius. I don't know what happened; many child prodigies don't turn out to be adult prodigies, but he still is a very, very good violinist. He had wanted to play for some time, and I didn't have a solo piece for him (I expect to have one this coming season), so he did only ensemble pieces.

We began with Charles Ives's Largo, for violin, clarinet, and piano. Then Larry Lesser and Ellen Mack

introduced to Los Angeles the New York composer Charles Wuorinen, and they played a stunning piece of his, a real way-out, avant-garde, wild one called Duuiensela. Wuorinen is of Finnish ancestry, and everyone assumed that this word was a Finnish word. Actually, his publisher wrote me that it was not Finnish at all but a Spanish transliteration of the French phrase, "D'où vient cela?" ("Where does that come from?") compressed into one word, the second "u" being pronounced as "v." I explained this to the audience; and this was one of my most successful public speeches, I must say. Everybody laughed! Actually, there was on old medieval folk song entitled "D'où vient cela."

TUSLER: Is it based on that?

MORTON: He says so, but I don't know anyone who has been able to find the tune in the music. I remember saying to the audience that this was a very avant-garde work and if in the course of it they found anything that sounded awfully good, that was probably from the old folk song. [laughter] It is quite a stunning piece. Both the piano and the cello have marvelous virtuoso parts to play. Wuorinen himself is an extraordinary pianist.

Then we had [a work by] William O. Smith--I think I've mentioned him before; we've had other pieces of his--

he is formerly of Los Angeles, now living in Rome, a clarinetist, a composer, and a marvelous jazz performer. He had written a Duo for Clarinet and Recorded Clarinet. He had discovered some instrumental effects that were entirely original and had written them out and recorded the clarinet. You see, when you get the music you also get the tape, so the tape and the live music are going on simultaneously. It was played by John Neufeld, and this was really the most magnificent virtuoso performance. Once again I had my old beef with the newspaper critics, for if it had been an internationally famous violinist or pianist who had played with such virtuosity and such skill, the newspapers would have been ecstatic. John's performance on this occasion was really one of the wonders of the world, but so far as the newspapers were concerned it was just "also played."

Then we revived a piece that we hadn't had for a long time, Aaron Copland's Vitebsk for violin, cello, and piano. It hasn't been easy to program Copland in recent years because he hasn't been writing much chamber music, so we have to repeat some of his older pieces. Vitebsk is a very good piece and this was a first-class performance. We ended the program with the Schubert B-flat Trio, opus 99; so the first part of the program was

entirely contemporary music and the second half was Schubert.

The next program was built around the Schoenberg Wind Quintet, which I had been trying for years to get. It is a very difficult and demanding piece, forty minutes long--nobody gets a chance to rest his lips--but the Westwood Wind Quintet did undertake it. They had worked for over a year, off and on, to get it in shape with, of course, a lot of woodshedding. They gave a very respectable performance of it--not a great performance, but a very good one--I think far better than we have ever had in this town before. Again, they asked Bob Craft to come in for their last rehearsals and give them some points, and he did tell them some very important things about tempi. He felt so encouraged about this performance that a little later he did have them record it for his complete works of Schoenberg, which is still in progress. That piece has not yet been released; I think it is going to be in Volume IV or Volume V. He tells me that on the record it is not the great performance he would have liked to have had, but in respect to tempi and certain other expressive things it is far better than anything that has come out so far.

TUSLER: I didn't realize that Craft had that connection.

One thinks of him as a Stravinsky expert, and you mentioned before that he was an authority on the Second Viennese School.

MORTON: Oh, he is. Well, [his recording of the] complete works of Webern grew out of these concerts--not only the first recordings, but the first performances of several of the Webern works. At the time that his friendship with Stravinsky began, he was already very much concerned with the Viennese people as well as with Stravinsky. He knew Schoenberg quite well. As a matter of fact, just shortly after Schoenberg died, Mrs. Schoenberg sent Bob a note that Schoenberg had written to himself and left on his desk which said, "Encourage Craft." I think he was very much impressed by Craft's knowledge of the music.

We began this concert with the Mozart Sonata, K. 296, for violin and harpsichord. There's a strange thing. We took an early sonata because we had to have a harpsichord on the program for other things, and so I thought, "Let's try a Mozart sonata with harpsichord." It was done a great deal during the period. Malcolm Hamilton was the harpsichord and Arnold Belnick the violin. A very interesting sound. Newspaper review: "Very questionable if this sonata should properly be played by harpsichord."

I wrote a letter to Mr. Goldberg of the Times which he published in part, but he didn't publish the crucial part. I said, "Welcome to the circle of the purist. I am eager now to see what you will write the next time Glenn Gould and Rosalyn Tureck play Bach on the piano." [laughter] Which is perfectly acceptable, but it is very dubious as to playing Mozart on harpsichord; although we know (I also quoted the passage from Bernard Shaw's writings) that way into the nineteenth century when Shaw was still at home in Ireland, the harpsichord was still, in many of the older homes, the standard keyboard instrument--it wasn't the piano. The piano had been in use for a hundred years, but there were still harpsichords around and people were playing [any keyboard] music on the harpsichord. And, of course, if you want to be really pure, we couldn't use the modern piano at all for Mozart; we would have to use a Stein piano which is something quite different. It is just another indication of the reluctance of the local critics to listen without prejudice.

The disaster on this program was that Richard Robinson, who was scheduled to sing two pieces, was taken to the hospital the day before the concert for an appendectomy. He was to sing four songs to poems of Robert Herrick by Rodger Vaughan, a local composer, and the Bach Cantata

no. 189. Fortunately at one of the rehearsals that we held at UCLA (where Malcolm's harpsichord was), another tenor, Richard Levitt, had come into the rehearsal. He is a very good friend of Dick Robinson; so I called and asked him if he could sing the Bach Cantata no. 189 and he said, sure, that he knew it almost by heart. I said, "Good. Can you do the Vaughan songs?" He said, no, that there wouldn't be time--that was a piece in the contemporary idiom and there were some problems of ensemble with piano, harpsichord, and percussion. So we had to cancel that. But Malcolm Hamilton had Three Italian Dances for Harpsichord by Giovanni Picchi and he played those instead, and then Dick Levitt sang the Bach cantata. We did get the Vaughan songs in the next season.

TUSLER: That was the first time Levitt had appeared on your program, wasn't it?

MORTON: Oh, no. He had sung with us many, many times, but he hadn't done any solo singing. I'm not very fond of Dick Levitt's voice except in certain things. I like him very much in an ensemble such as his own madrigal group; I don't like him very much as a tenor soloist. He should be singing countertenor all of the time; I think that's where his voice sounds its best. He is a very good musician, he has excellent taste in repertoire,

and I have admired his programs very much. Well, we got through that program, but there were a couple of very bad hours there.

The next program was a rather odd one. It centered around the performance of a Capriccio for piano left-hand and wind septet by Leoš Janáček. Janáček was a composer whom I had a [bad] conscience about and that Ingolf Dahl always felt was a neglected composer. There were two pieces that he had written for piano with a few instruments, the Capriccio, and I've forgotten what the other one was; this one had as accompanying instruments: flute, two trumpets, two trombones, and a tuba. It is for piano left-hand, and it was my idea that this should be a real virtuoso show-off piece with the piano reversed on stage--that is, with the left hand toward the audience instead of the right hand, and that the pianist should conduct the ensemble with his right hand. Now, this would be kind of fun. John Crown had asked for a performance of this piece many years ago and we just never got around to it. After the rehearsals got started, he found it was just really too complex--he wouldn't be able to play and conduct. We had to get another conductor in and we had some difficulties there; but we finally got Frank Salazar, who had been a student at USC some years ago and was now living

in Ventura and was the conductor [of] the community symphony orchestra there.

Then with that group of brass instruments, we had the perfect occasion for finally doing the Charles Ives Scherzo, Over the Pavements, which is a knockout, one of Ives's most brilliant pieces. It is very poorly written; Ives's notation was eccentric. Ingolf was conducting this piece and he rebarred it and rewrote some of the note values, not changing any of the notes but just making it simpler from the standpoint of performance and reading.

We opened the program with Ingolf's Music for Brass Instruments. I kidded Ingolf by saying it was his Firebird--it is one of his early pieces and it has been played a great deal, maybe more than any other piece of his, and it is hard to remember that it is already about twenty-five years old. I can remember the first performance; the piece was considered just terribly, terribly difficult. I remember one performance at UCLA at Royce Hall that broke down; Ingolf was conducting and it had to be started over again. It was that difficult, and now it is as easy as pie.

Also on this program we introduced another composer, Barney Childs, an English professor at Arizona (or was

then at Arizona, he has moved somewhere else now). It is a Duo for Flute and Bassoon, not a terribly distinguished piece but a very interesting one. Once again, we had one of those absolutely incandescent performances that nobody paid any attention to because it was for flute and bassoon, and nobody can tell a good performance on flute and bassoon, I guess. Sheridon Stokes was the flute and Don Christlieb the bassoon. I think it was as good a performance as any we've had.

On the next program, February 15, there was a long-time dream of mine come true--namely, a big selection of Schubert's music for chorus with piano accompaniment. I asked Bill Russell of Pomona College to undertake this, and we had six choral pieces with piano accompaniment, some of them amongst Schubert's most beautiful works. That was only a drop in the bucket considering the Schubert repertory that is available; it's another area that I hope we can explore more of.

On the first part of the program we had a Sonata for Bassoon and Piano by [Nikos] Skalkottas, a Greek composer who had studied with Schoenberg. It is a fantastically difficult and abnormally long piece of about forty minutes that I had wanted to get for a long time, although actually as it turned out I was less interested in it now than I had been a few years before, but it was possible to get

it at this time, and it was played by Don Christlieb and Lincoln Mayorga.

The other new piece was a fantastic one by Charles Whittenberg, a New York composer who has been spending this year in Rome at the American Academy. It is a Vocalise, for soprano, viola, and percussion on nonsense syllables, no words at all, a very demanding and difficult piece. It was sung by Brenda Ferencz, with Albert Falkove on viola and Robert Winslow, percussion. It took a great deal of rehearsal to put it together. One of the conditions I made to Brenda Ferencz when she sang it was that she had to wear a most dramatic evening gown. She did. She is a very handsome young woman, and I think she must have been sewn into that dress. It had a very, very low-cut back and high in front so that when she walked off stage, of course, the gasps would come. This was not an original idea of mine at all; I was thinking only of Cathy Berberian when she sang Berio's Circles. Cathy is very aware of theatrical things, such as the kind of dress to wear, and so on. Well, Brenda looked stunning. I don't know if she has had a chance to wear that dress again or not, but it was really very dramatic.

So that was the end of Plummer Park. Of course, many people commented, "How strange, Monday Evening Concerts

is moving out of Plummer Park to the sounds of Schubert, of all things." And it was rather strange. Maybe we should have gone out to the sounds of Stravinsky or Schoenberg or Boulez.

TUSLER: Were there any feelings of regret at that point over leaving Plummer Park?

MORTON: I don't think so. Not regret. I had feelings of gratitude to the people at the park who had been taking care of us for all these years. They had their problems, and I must say that they were very, very accommodating and did everything they could for us, and they were always pleasant. Our relations at the park were very happy.

That last concert was February 15, and it was six weeks later, March 26, that the museum opened and Boulez arrived. This was really one of the most hectic periods I ever went through. Boulez was supposed to bring with him or send to us a new piece. He didn't finish it. He didn't answer my letters. I didn't know where he was; I heard that he was in Rome. (I'm talking about maybe two weeks before the concert.) We didn't know what the program was going to be yet. We knew part of the program; we knew that we were going to have the Machaut mass, and we knew that Karl and Margaret Kohn were going to play both volumes of Structures for two pianos. The rest of the program we didn't know about.

I couldn't find Boulez. Mrs. Moss's son, Larry Moss, was living in Rome that year. On a Sunday morning I phoned him and I said, "Please, can you find Boulez? He is supposed to be conducting this week in Rome, and tell him I've got to know what the program is. What are we going to have?" I got a telegram, and this was as good as a telephone call because of the time lapse between here and Rome: "Boulez has left Rome."

The next day my telephone rang. "Lawrence, c'est Pierre." "Where are you?" I said. He said, "I'm in Cleveland." (I didn't know he was going to be conducting in Cleveland.) And I said, "What's going on? What are we going to have?" He said, "I think I'll have the new piece ready." And I said, "Good. And how long is it?" He said, "It'll be only ten minutes." I said, "It isn't enough music. We'll have to have something else." I was so unprepared for this conversation that I said, "Pierre, I'm going to have to call you back, to give me a chance to think about it."

I had to go through all the music I had around here to find out: is there another piece that we can do on this program? So I got out all the scores that were pending, and I came across--I can't say "came across," it had been staring me in the face for months--a piece by

one of Boulez's students, Jean-Claude Eloy, called Equivalences, for eighteen instruments, much too many for us. But at this time I didn't know how many instruments I was going to need for Boulez's piece, anyway, because he hadn't sent the music.

So I called Boulez back and said, "Do you want to play the Eloy piece?" And he said, "With pleasure." Of course, he knew it; he had conducted it already.

The problem now was how, in less than two weeks, was I going to get the music from Paris? It was published by Heugel, whose American representatives are Presser. Well, to deal with a European firm through its American representative is always very dangerous and very difficult. However, I called Presser and asked them to get in touch with Heugel and to please send the music for this piece immediately, to send it directly to me airmail, special delivery and not have it stop over in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, where the Presser office is. We had only a few days to get this material ready for performance. Well, Presser didn't do that. They had to have it stop at Bryn Mawr. Do you know why? They had to stamp their name, "Presser, American Agents" on the front of it! So we got the music a day late, but nevertheless we did get it.

Oh, yes, I should say this: in the interim between

the end of the Monday Evening Concerts, as a matter of fact, on the night of the last Monday Evening Concert, at the time of this concert, I had my own little problems, namely, I had surgery again and I was in the hospital.

I think it was two days after I was out of the hospital (no, it was a little longer than that; it must have been a week because meanwhile these conversations with Boulez had been going on), I got a telephone call from the manager of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra saying, "You know Boulez can't come to Los Angeles." I said, "Why?" He said, "He has no visa." I said, "Well, how did he get to Cleveland?" "He got a visa for Cleveland, but between Cleveland and Los Angeles he's going to Toronto." He had forgotten that Toronto was Canada, and he had no way of getting back to the United States.

So, fresh from my recuperation, I had to go down to the Department of Immigrations and file affidavits and had to ask them to do everything by telephone and charge it to my telephone bill (my telephone bill that month was around $90) in order to get a visa for Boulez. Well, it worked out all right, but it was hectic.

Then Boulez arrived and, of course, the piece wasn't finished. He had twelve pages done. The twelve pages we took over to the Xerox Company and had them reproduced,

getting three copies of each page. It was impossible to use a copyist to copy parts, so the first night that Boulez was here we came up here [to my apartment], we had a drink, we went out to get some dinner, we came back and went to work. We took these pages and with a razor blade sliced off the top of each page, the flute part, and then began to paste them onto the cardboards. This is the way the music was assembled.

The concert was on a Friday because this had to coincide with not only Boulez's schedule but also with the dedication schedule at the museum. On Thursday at one o'clock the last page of Boulez's piece Éclats was completed. It was pasted up on the cardboard and brought to rehearsal Thursday afternoon (I think it was at four or four-thirty) to get ready for the performance on Friday night. The stage at the museum was not yet ready, so we rehearsed in the foyer. We carted percussion instruments back and forth, chairs, music stands and whatnot, and I think that [the fact] we brought this concert off was a miracle. I must say that Boulez's patience was inexhaustible. He's a man who gets sixty rehearsals if he wants them and would never think of lifting a music stand when he is on his own home grounds, but he just pitched in here and was marvelous.

TUSLER: Was he still actually completing the writing of the piece at the same time that you were pasting it up?

MORTON: Yes, right.

TUSLER: And where did you get all the instrumentalists since you didn't know what it was scored for until the last minute?

MORTON: As soon as he came I could see what the score started with. Our main problem was how to get a program printed, you see, because it usually takes a week and we had only about ten days; and I had to get the instrumentalists and the extra people for the Eloy piece. Meanwhile I had a telegram from Eloy: he was coming over to hear the performance. He flew from Paris, and I thought he must be rich until Boulez told me that his sister is in the travel agency business and she undoubtedly got him one of those very inexpensive excursion rates. So here we were with a new museum not quite completed, impossible to rehearse on the stage, two visiting composers, music on the way from Paris, other music being prepared, being composed--this was about as hectic a period as I ever went through.

It came off marvelously. We had a very, very good crowd. Boulez was great. Karl and Margaret played the Structures so that Boulez was beside himself with joy.

He said that Karl Kohn is the best performer in the world of any of his piano music. The concert came off in great shape. It was long and we got a late start, and there were many little things that were annoying and didn't come off the way they should, but musically it was fine. Boulez was happy about it and he dedicated the new piece to me, "To Lawrence Morton." I'm very proud of that, and it's a marvelous piece.

The Eloy was a very stunning piece too. Eloy was very happy with the performance. It was in the realm of a miracle that this concert came off. That was the dedication of the first musical event in the museum and I don't think that anything could have been more distinguished--or nerve-racking.

TUSLER: Was this the first time that the Bing Auditorium had been used? Had the museum been opened yet to the public?

MORTON: [The concert] actually came a couple of days before the dedication. Well, I must say that it was an electric evening; everybody was excited and Boulez was marvelous.

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JULY 27, 1966

TUSLER: Last time you described the first concert at the new museum, the Boulez concert [March 26, 1965], and there were some other comments you wanted to make about Mr. Boulez.

MORTON: Yes. In the midst of all the excitement that was going on, with the copying of the music and getting rehearsals set up, one rehearsal had to be held in the lobby of the Bing Auditorium because they were still working on the stage. We were in a room with a stone floor and a very high ceiling with a big chandelier, and the light was bad. Circumstances were as unpleasant as possible. We had to cart all the percussion instruments and the piano from the stage out to the lobby and there was some traffic with the workmen passing by all the time. In the midst of this rehearsal our mandolin player became tempermental and decided that what Boulez wrote was not music and he would not play. So he dropped out and we had great difficulty in finding another mandolin player who could read [music]. We ended up with Sol Babitz, a violinist, but since the fingering of the mandolin and the violin are identical he managed the part which was

not terribly difficult. This sort of crisis happening in the midst of other crises was almost unendurable.

Well, in the midst of all this commotion Boulez had his fortieth birthday. Actually it was Margaret Kohn who had remembered this some months earlier and she had said, "When Pierre is here we've got to do something about his fortieth birthday." And I said, "Oh, yes, we'll have to do something." It slipped my mind until he came and because of the tight schedule the only thing that we could arrange was that I should give the party. He was staying at a little hotel up on Sunset; he doesn't like big fancy hotels and I had put him at the Chateau Marmont, which has for a long, long time been the Los Angeles residence of a lot of theatrical people, many of whom still live there. It is the hotel where Stravinsky first stayed when he came to Los Angeles until he found himself a house. It is an old-fashioned hotel now, but Boulez liked it very much and it is not terribly expensive; compared to the fancy hotels you'd probably call it cheap. But the Chateau Marmont is within walking distance of here, and he was here [at Mr. Morton's home] a great deal of the time.

TUSLER: You were working on the score together.

MORTON: That's right. Well, who would come to the birthday

party? Of course, I began with the Stravinskys and Bob Craft, and Karl and Margaret Kohn, of course, because they were playing his two volumes of Structures on the program, and, of course, Mrs. Moss, and Ingolf and Etta Dahl, because I regard Ingolf as the outstanding musician in this community.

Now the big problem was that with all the rehearsals how I was going to get any cooking done, and so I called my sister-in-law who has a way with turkeys (she says she doesn't do anything but stick them in the oven, but her turkey is better than anybody's I know). I asked her if she would cook the turkey and bring it over around six o'clock--our rehearsal was going to run until six-thirty. I asked Mrs. Moss to bring a risotto of wild rice which Boulez is crazy about, and she also brought a birthday cake which she decorated herself. The Stravinskys came in with a jeroboam of champagne, so that all I had to do was make the salad and provide drinks and canapés before dinner.

Well, we had a really marvelous time. Stravinsky started drinking Scotch and got to feeling very, very good; and by the time we started to eat, Boulez and Stravinsky had gone over in a corner and were going at it in French, fast and furious. The rest of us were making

smaller talk and sort of eavesdropping on the Boulez-Stravinsky conversation. Well, it went along until about ten o'clock and we all had a marvelous time, and Boulez said it was one of his best birthday parties.

And it must have been, because just a few months ago on his forty-first birthday (which was March 25) my phone rang and someone in German asked me if this was Lawrence Morton. "Yes." "One moment, Baden-Baden calling." It was Boulez calling on his birthday. He said it was the first anniversary of that marvelous birthday party and his concert in Los Angeles. I was so flabbergasted to get a long distance call from Baden-Baden that I hardly had anything to say! But it made a very, very pleasant evening, one that he remembers, and it certainly is a very charming memory for myself. Eloy didn't arrive until the next day.

Actually, on this visit our social activities were cut to a minimum as compared to the previous visit of Boulez. This was simply because there was so much work to do. But the other time we had had more time for driving around the city. I remember one night we went out to the beach for dinner with Mrs. Moss and we took a new freeway and got lost on the way back. Boulez enjoyed this terrifically. He laughed and laughed when we came to the end

of the freeway and had to get off--I think it was the Santa Monica Freeway--completely lost. I had no idea where we were and nobody seemed to care. We just laughed about it until it began to get very late driving around in strange territory. Then I began to get a little bit worried and a little bit tired. But this visit was not so active socially.

TUSLER: Is Stravinsky a great admirer of Boulez?

MORTON: Yes, he admires his music very much, I think. This is a situation that I do not completely understand because in his earlier years Boulez was a very severe critic of Stravinsky, although he had, while he was still at the conservatory, written the authentic analysis of the rhythmic procedures of the Sacre du printemps. That exists in an essay called "Stravinsky Demeure," published in a book about Russian music put out by the University Press in Paris. It has not appeared in English. It is the classical analysis, the most precise and detailed analysis of rhythmical structures. But when Stravinsky came to his neoclassic period, Boulez seems to have lost all interest in him. He resumed some interest in Stravinsky's music since he became a serial composer around 1953. But I think he has more respect for Stravinsky as a person than as a composer during those middle years of Stravinsky's

career. He does play the earlier pieces of Stravinsky, particularly the Sacre du printemps, which he has played many, many times and has recorded. He plays Histoire, Renard, the Études for Orchestra--those pieces from the so-called Russian period--and he has played the pieces since Canticum sacrum, I believe. Without having any firsthand information about it, I have, nonetheless, the feeling that Boulez is tolerant rather than enthusiastic about this late music of Stravinsky, because many of Stravinsky's procedures in serial music are the classical twelve-tone procedures and Boulez has passed, or shall we say gone on beyond that, and has gone off in other directions where he is making use of aleatoric devices and open forms and so on, a thing which is just contrary to Stravinsky's musical nature. But I think that in spite of the criticisms that Boulez leveled against Stravinsky during the 1950s some reconciliation has taken place. I know they always see one another when they are in Europe. Stravinsky has written in his conversations with Robert Craft that he likes pieces like Marteau sans maître, and so on.

Actually composers of that calibre are not likely to be enthusiastic about any other composer's music. They are interested in their own, really. There's a lack

of enthusiasm on Stravinsky's part for, say, Schoenberg and Berg. Of the Viennese composers the only one he is enthusiastic about--and has consistently been--is Webern. You can see that that almost ascetic temperament would appeal to him because it is something that is like his own temperament. Schoenberg and Berg both exist in an emotional world where I think Stravinsky is just not comfortable.

I think the same is true of Boulez in respect to the music of Stravinsky. I wouldn't expect him to be enthusiastic about it because it is so different from his own. When Boulez plays Stravinsky's works he is playing them partly because he thinks that they are good pieces, maybe great pieces, and he is interested in the rhythmical structures more than anything else. He is also interested in Stravinsky's instrumentation (this he told me himself). He very much likes Stravinsky's ventures into the use of unusual instruments; for instance, the sarrusophones that he asks for in Threni and the use of the twelve timpani in the memorial piece for T. S. Eliot, that sort of thing, the extension of the instrumentation of large ensembles.

Boulez is very much interested in this and he has told me that he very much resents the economic setup of music in general that makes the use of these instruments

a problem for existing orchestras and for existing ensembles. Well, I understand this. This is a terrible problem for us at Monday Evening Concerts, too. We cannot put on a program with, say, a piano quintet or a string quartet because the advanced composer is not writing for those combinations. They want vibraphones and strange percussion instruments and a lot of combinations which make it impossible to use those instruments for anything else on the program except that one piece, and this becomes an economic problem for us.

TUSLER: Do you think that is antisocial on the part of the contemporary composers who are doing this?

MORTON: No, I don't think so at all. I simply think it is the stretching of the range of timbres, which has happened constantly before--say, when the clarinet first came in around the middle of the eighteenth century--there might have been some problems there, or with the very large orchestras that began to be assembled around the time of Richard Strauss and going on into Mahler. Some of Mahler's symphonies require tremendous orchestral resources, with chorus and solo voices. Debussy's orchestras are large when he [requires] four [each] of the woodwinds. You can see that automatically some of the repertoire is excluded, even classics like Debussy, from the repertoire

of the normal symphony orchestra where they have, say, only three woodwinds per part--three oboes, three flutes and so on. And when you come to Debussy's works that require four of everything--well, it's only in the last, I would say, decade or so that even the Los Angeles Philharmonic has had four in a department.

Now, in respect to the composers who are writing less and less--it seems to me--for the normal symphony orchestra and [more for] stranger and stranger combinations of instruments, they don't want the normal symphony orchestra. They want different instrumental combinations. This is true of the instrumentation of Boulez's Pli selon pli, which requires a very large orchestra, an orchestra that is not within the range of the normal symphony. They'd all have to hire extra players in order to do it, which is one of the reasons, I suppose, it won't be performed. Then when you come to smaller pieces, I know of no other piece that has the exact instrumentation, for instance, of the Marteau sans maître, although a new piece of Krenek's which we will perform next season has just exactly that instrumentation. But who can tackle Marteau sans maître and another contemporary piece using the same instrumentation on one program? It is just impossible to learn it.

Well, that was the Boulez visit, and that was the first of our four programs at the end of that season [1964-1965] at the museum.

We had three more programs. One of them was given by Alice Ehlers, or half the program was given by Alice Ehlers at the harpsichord and Eudice Shapiro [violin], and the other half involved Laurence Lesser and Ellen Mack. We had on this program two of the "Crucifixion" sonatas of Biber, Numbers X and XI, which Alice Ehlers owns with the continuo part realized by Hindemith. These are scordatura sonatas, that is, the violin has to mistune. It had been my hope to get the whole series (I believe there are twelve) as a season project sometime, but somehow Alice Ehlers has lost some of the sonatas in Hindemith's realization. I don't know what has happened to them and, of course, she has searched high and low but they've disappeared.

TUSLER: And they exist only in the manuscript?

MORTON: They only exist in the manuscript. [Ehlers and Shapiro] also played the Haydn Sonata no. 1 in G-major, for violin and clavier, the only one of the Haydn sonatas which was authentically a violin and keyboard piece, the others being versions of other compositions like quartets and so on. Then we had the Hindemith Sonata for Cello

and Piano, the 1948 one, played by Larry Lesser and Ellen Mack, and we closed the program with Harold Shapero's Four-Hand Sonata. I think this was the third time that that piece had been played at our concerts. Harold Shapero doesn't compose a great deal of music and this is an old piece of his, but it is a charming one. We had a very nice performance there.

Now we had an extra program at Caltech which was made up of pieces we had performed during the season. This was a program of American composers, repeating the Largo for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano by Ives, the Duuiensela by Charles Wuorinen, Bill Smith's Duo for Clarinet and Recorded Clarinet, the Vitebsk of Copland; there was a Concertpiece for Violin Solo by Seymour Shifrin which we had not done before but which we prepared for this program; and we repeated the Vocalise by Charles Whittenberg and the Four-Hand Sonata by Harold Shapero. This was another one of our attempts to spread our concerts out, which goes by fits and starts (we don't always succeed in doing it), but this was a very nice program that we cooked up for them.

Our third program at the County Museum was the annual Fromm program. We had planned a piece by Donald Martino, Concerto for Wind Quintet; the Claudio Spies

Tempi for Fourteen Instruments; Mario Davidovsky's Synchronisms no. 2, and Harvey Sollberger's Chamber Variations. Well, this was too big a job for us to tackle. We did not succeed in getting the Sollberger piece prepared, and we had to replace it with Elliott Carter's Sonata for flute, oboe, cello and harpsichord. It was simply too much music to get ready. Spies came out from the East to conduct his Tempi. It required fourteen instruments and it was such a big piece that it was as much as we could get ready. Leonard Stein conducted the Martino quintet and the Davidovsky Synchronisms no. 2, which was for four instruments: two winds, two strings and tape recorder. That's a very strong piece. We've done the other two Synchronisms of Davidovsky, and I think it is generally agreed that in the combination of tape and live instruments Davidovsky is about the most successful composer.

TUSLER: What sound is provided by the tape recorder?

MORTON: This is some prerecorded material, electronically generated sounds. The tape recorder had to be operated on stage with signals being exchanged between the players and the tape recorder operator. It wasn't an easy sort of thing where you just turn it on and let it go; there was synchronization between the tape and

the players. That was a sad lesson for us in dropping the Sollberger, which we had to bring on the next season.

We ended our season with the Lyrica String Sextet doing two pieces, the Schoenberg Verklärte Nacht, which was the first time we had done it at these concerts, and the Brahms Sextet in B-flat, opus 18 which we had done in 1955. The group, the Lyrica String Sextet, was basically people in the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and we used them again the following season. For at least two seasons they have been a permanently organized group. Unfortunately the repertoire for a string sextet is very small, so I haven't found a place for them for next season. I'm very sorry about that because they are a very good group.

Well, that concluded that hectic season and we were by this time well established in the museum. We knew our places on stage, we knew the place acoustically, and we were ready for our 1965-66 season, our first complete season in the new quarters.

We began this season with two out-of-town concerts--one program that we gave at Pomona College and one at Berkeley, at Pomona on September 29 and at Berkeley two days later, Friday, October 1. That program was built around the Gilbert Amy piece, Inventions I and II that

we had done the past season and Karl Kohn's Capriccios for harp, cello, flute, clarinet, and piano. The group played under the title of Ensemble I of Monday Evening Concerts. It was hard to think of titles, and I decided then that if we succeeded in selling a lot of programs out of town, Ensemble I would be any group that played under Karl Kohn, and Ensembles II, III, and IV would be anything that we might organize under other people such as Leonard Stein, Ingolf Dahl or someone else.

TUSLER: Was this sponsored by the university then?

MORTON: Yes, it was, and it was announced as part of their regular season. The program was the Debussy Trio Sonata for flute, viola, and harp; the Dallapiccola Ciaconna, Intermezzo and Adagio for cello solo; the Webern Three Little Pieces, opus 11 for cello and piano; and then the Amy. After the intermission we had the Karl Kohn Capriccios and the Mozart Trio for piano, clarinet, and viola. A very good program. It was marvelously played. The reviews--for what they are worth--from up north were all very good with particular praise for Larry Lesser's performance of the Dallapiccola, which he does do marvelously.

TUSLER: Is this sort of concert meant to benefit the group financially?

MORTON: It doesn't pay, let's say, as well as it ought to, but the musicians get enough money for a weekend out of town. Since the concert was on Friday night we left Friday noon; it took us only an hour to get there, and we had a quick rehearsal in the hall just to get set acoustically and get the physical properties lined up, and so all day Saturday and Sunday the musicians were in San Francisco, having made enough money to make a decent vacation out of it. Monday Evening Concerts, of course, loses money on it, because [of the cost of] the preparation of publicity material, photographs, rental of music and so on; the organization gets nothing out of it. But it is worth doing for the sake of the musicians and also for sake of the prestige.

We had hoped as a result of this that we could get on the University of California circuit with their many campuses. Actually, it didn't work out that way. I submitted a list of repertoire and performers to a meeting of representatives of all the campuses who were getting up their programs for the coming year, but nothing came of it. I understand (I don't have this officially) that since an ensemble of this sort is going to cost close to $1,000, they figure that for that much money they could get a name group like the Budapest Quartet or the Juilliard

Quartet, which is certainly a more saleable group than anything we can send up, although I think our repertoire is more interesting. But they have their own problems of selling tickets, and generally I think they feel they can do better for themselves with more established groups.

Our first concert at home was essentially a percussion concert. We were having the world premiere of a new piece by Carlos Chávez, Tambuco. This, of course, meant Bill Kraft's percussion group. The other percussion pieces on that program were Favola for clarinet and percussion by Sven-Erik Bäck, a Swedish composer, and Aurelio de la Vega's Exametron for flute, cello and four percussion players. Because this was as much percussion music as we could prepare on one program, we had some vocal music. We had the first American performance of Three Songs on Poems of Henri Michaux by [Henri] Sauguet, which were for baritone unaccompanied, quite an unusual setting of poetry. Sauguet had written them for a farewell concert for Doda Conrad in Paris. Conrad had been singing in Paris and Europe for many years. He is the son of the famous singer Marya Freund who had been with the Milhaud group that had performed Pierrot Lunaire during the 1920s. She had sung early Stravinsky pieces in Russian and her son Doda Conrad was a rather distinguished singer. So

for his farewell concert Sauguet had written these pieces, and we gave the first American performance.

Then we did the Chansons Madécasses of Ravel for piano, flute, and cello (instruments that we had on the program). They are generally sung by a mezzo, but we decided to do them with a baritone because of the text, which really requires a male singer. The story is--which I've never been able to verify but on this occasion I made use of it--that the reason Ravel originally had them sung by a woman was that he couldn't find a male voice at that time that was suitable for the songs. Actually, as it turned out, they are better in a woman's voice regardless of the text because a woman's voice seems to cut through the ensemble much better than the male voice. Maurice Allard was the soloist in that.

The second program was centered around the performance of the Schoenberg Serenade [opus 24] which we had performed in 1952 and 1957; so it was almost ten years since we had had it. This was one of Bob Craft's recording projects; it was subsequently recorded. The rest of the program was Mozart, Haydn and Brahms, the Mozart being a Divertimento for two clarinets and bassoon. The Haydn was the great E-flat Sonata for piano, played by Xenia Chasman. The Brahms was the G-major Sonata for violin

and piano played by Dorothy Wade and Xenia Chasman. I liked that combination of one big modern work with a number of smaller classical pieces.

The next program was a favorite project of mine, namely, to get a group of Tchaikovsky songs. Tchaikovsky I don't think had ever been performed at these concerts, and the reasons for it are obvious. However, I felt that there were a number of songs that were absolutely first class. We did have a soprano available, Valeria Vlazinskaya, who could sing them in Russian. It had been my expectation, my hope to do his first group of songs, opus 6 and his last group of songs, opus 73, which would show the very early Schumannesque Tchaikovsky and the Tchaikovsky of the last years, 1893. Actually when I went through the songs, I found that some of them were intolerable, so sentimental. We ended up by making a choice all the way from opus 6 to opus 73, and we had twelve of them. I wanted to play piano on these myself because I thought in this way I would have some control and would get what I would regard as classically oriented performances, but it was just too much work. I haven't played piano enough and I had no technique and I had no time to practice; so Vlazinskaya had Ralph Linsley play piano for her.

I'll say that from my own point of view it was a disappointment. Vlazinskaya, being Russian, had her own notions about the songs, which were perfectly valid ones, but they weren't mine; and although I spent a great deal of time with her emphasizing that we must try to bring out the best qualities of Tchaikovsky's songs, not the popular virtues, it turned out to be [the wrong] kind of performance [for me]. It was excellent in many ways, particularly in having the sound of the Russian, which makes all the difference in the world. It strengthened my own feelings about always doing things in the original language. The sound of Russian consonants is something that just cannot be duplicated, and even the vowel sounds, too--the combination of vowels and the particular kind of accents in the words. It was a good project. It didn't come off to my satisfaction because I wasn't playing the piano!

Then we had the first performance of a new piece by Henri Lazarof, Tempi Concertati, a Double Concerto for Violin and Viola with a few other instruments. I think it is without question Lazarof's strongest piece to date. I haven't heard his orchestral pieces except some that he has taped from European performances. But this was very good. The program was filled out with a sonata by François-

Joseph Dizi for harp solo. This was a chance to present Dorothy Remsen who is, I'll say, our chronic harpist. I wanted to give her a solo piece and, of course, the repertoire is not very good for harp in solo pieces. This is an early nineteenth-century piece, and as I looked at the score I found out that it was rather Beethovenish. But, of course, the harp is not an instrument on which to become Beethovenish. The music itself, if it were played on piano, I think could be done rather in a Beethoven style. Then we had the Stravinsky Sérénade en La for piano solo. That was a sort of Russian program in the sense that I liked the juxtaposition of Stravinsky and Tchaikovsky.

In the next program we got the first local performance of the early string quartet of Webern, written in 1905. It was not included in Webern's official list of works but had been uncovered by the Webern Society, Mr. Moldenhauer, and had been published by Fischer. It is a piece modeled very closely on Verklärte Nacht. So between that 1905 quartet and the String Quartet, opus 28 [1938], we had the beginning and end, so to speak, of Webern's work in the string quartet. Between those pieces we put in the Four Little Pieces [for violin and piano], opus 7; the Piano Variations, opus 27; and the Little Pieces for

Cello and Piano, opus 11; so that we had a half program of Webern.

For the second half of that program I had asked a choral group directed by Harold Kjellberg to give us the first American performance of the Paul Hindemith Mass, an a cappella mass. It was one of his very last works, composed in 1963, a very good work in Hindemith's mature, ripe style. To close the program we had Four Motets of Schütz from the Cantiones sacrae, 1625. So there were good premieres on that program.

The next program was one sponsored through a grant from the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation in the Library of Congress. I'd been trying to work out something with the foundation through its director, Harold Spivacke, who has been head of the Music Division of the Library of Congress for a number of years. They don't do very much sponsoring of programs in outlying communities except where attempts are being made to establish new chamber music groups. Most of their outside monies have been spent along these lines. But just the season before had been an anniversary season for the Coolidge Foundation celebrating Mrs. Coolidge's one-hundredth birthday--she had lived way into the nineties--and they had commissioned a number of works. From those commissions we selected five

works that we thought we were able to produce. They were the Sonata à quattro by Juan Orrego Salas; the Dallapiccola Parole di San Paolo; William Schuman's Amaryllis, Variations for String Trio; Riccardo Malipiero's in time of daffodils; and the Walter Piston Sextet for Strings. This was a very elaborate program requiring a lot of performers. This was the second time that we had been able to use the Lyrica String Sextet that I spoke of in the last season. They played the Piston, and they did a very beautiful job on it. The other pieces were of varying quality. I think that the best of them was probably the Dallapiccola. It was sung by Marvellee Cariaga, the wife of the critic from the Long Beach Independent-Press Telegram. She's a mezzo, has a very good voice, and learned this very difficult work and sang it quite well. Larry Foster was the conductor.

This is the only time we have had sponsorship from the Coolidge Foundation, and it's probably the only time we will. It was the result of long campaigning on my part with Mr. Spivacke. He came through on this occasion simply because it was a boost for us in our new position at the museum; he had seen the hall and was impressed by it and felt that the foundation should be represented there in some way.

TUSLER: And the sponsorship consisted of a grant for the occasion.

MORTON: Yes, a grant. It was, as you see, a much more expensive program than we could afford on our own resources.

The next program centered around Seymour Shifrin's Satires of Circumstance, a piece that had been commissioned by the Fromm Music Foundation but had not found its way into our Fromm programs. It is for soprano and six instruments. In a sense this was mutual back scratching because Seymour Shifrin had been on the Music Committee at Berkeley and was very helpful in getting us set up there with our program. He and Karl Kohn are rather good friends, and Karl Kohn was entrusted with the performance of this particular work. On the same program we played a new piece of Karl's, the Sonata da camera, for alto flute, clarinet, and piano. The first half of the program was J. S. Bach and Johann Christian Bach. The J. S. Bach was Three Preludes and Fugues from Das Wohltemperierte Klavier, played by Malcolm Hamilton, and the G-minor Sonata for viola da gamba and harpsichord played on the cello by Larry Lesser. The Johann Christian Bach was a charming piece, a wonderful piece for flute, oboe, violin, cello, and harpsichord (the harpsichord part was a big part, not just a continuo part). It was

played by Malcolm Hamilton with Larry Lesser on cello, which was also not a continuo part but a good concertante part, with Louise di Tullio on flute, John Ellis on oboe, and Toni Rapport on violin. That was really a surprisingly good, rich work. Johann Christian Bach is a composer we must investigate more.

The next program was the Fromm [Music Foundation] program. We did then succeed in getting a performance of the Sollberger Chamber Variations which we had failed [to produce] in the previous year. We also had Charles Wuorinen's Chamber Concerto for Flute and Ten Players. Both Wuorinen and Sollberger came out from New York for this performance. Sollberger conducted his own work and played the flute solo part in Wuorinen's piece, and Wuorinen conducted his own piece and also played the huge piano part of Sollberger's piece; so each of them appeared as composer, conductor and performer. I had [asked] Mr. Fromm whether, if we undertook these two very difficult pieces, we could please do some easy music on the other part of the program, and he consented. We had Peter Hewitt play both volumes of the Études of Debussy. This made a program that we could handle. It was also possible for us to do it because the Sollberger and Wuorinen pieces did not use any of the same performers except for the percussion and the double bass; so

we could rehearse the pieces separately and get plenty of time to learn them.

We had very, very good performances, but we had a crisis. Just before the afternoon rehearsal I had a call from the flutist. He couldn't make the performance. He had been at the rehearsals, but he couldn't make the performance of the Sollberger because he was tied up at a studio. Well, I got on the telephone frantically and called the studio manager to see if we couldn't get him off. Nothing was possible. So at the last minute Gretel Shanley came in to substitute on the flute. She had one rehearsal and I must say she did a magnificent job. It came off. Sollberger worked with her privately between the rehearsal and the concert--she's a real trouper and came on and gave the performance. It was a miracle that that came off. When I got the message by telephone I didn't know what to say to Sollberger; I was so embarrassed; but they have crises of this sort in New York too, and since they have been doing concerts at Columbia University they were accustomed to crises. I must say they took it in very good spirit.

Sollberger and Wuorinen spent the whole week here (this was a vacation week from their duties at Columbia). I had met them previously in New York, had spent an evening with them, and I knew they were very serious, hard-working

men who at Columbia University have the same kind of difficulties in putting on their concerts that we have here. So there was a mutual understanding about this sort of thing. They are both very demanding, however, of the performers and we had lots of rehearsals, and the performances came off quite well. We had plenty of time for social activities. We ate together frequently, went out to dinner, and after the concert I had a party. Sollberger and Wuorinen stayed until four-thirty in the morning. I was exhausted, but they were relaxed. We had had things to drink, and they just didn't feel like going home and going to bed. It is a usual musicians' reaction after a concert. We had a very nice party here and I found out that Wuorinen's main interest, outside of music, was in the cabala. He had been doing a great deal of reading and studying. I said, "What made you interested in that?" And he said that he hopes that through the exercise of magic he'll be able to control performances and influence critics. [laughter]

TUSLER: Do they have quite a national reputation, both of them, now?

MORTON: Yes, they are becoming more and more known. Vogue magazine, just a month or two after this, had pictures of them and a big article about their work at Columbia, and just last May they were invited to Paris for

a concert of American music conducted by Gunther Schuller. It was put on by the State Department or the Information Service, some government agency. The concert was very successful, although Sollberger wrote to me subsequently and said he thinks there was a plot against Americans since certain French musicians boycotted [them] because of their general contempt for things American or because of their opposition to our presence in Vietnam. But all the Americans suffered from food poisoning after a party there, and so they were saying: "Oh, it's just part of the French anti-American spirit." However, I heard from other people in Paris that the concert was really very good, very successful and very much admired except by certain French composers who boycotted it. Well, that's to be expected.

The next program introduced the British composer Harrison Birtwistle. I wanted to play a piece of his simply because of his name--I wanted to see that name Birtwistle on a program! We had a quintet of his called Refrains and Choruses. It was played by the Westwood Wind Quintet.

On this program we also had [the] Los Angeles premiere of a piece by Jerome Rosen, who is from the Davis campus of UC. This was an extremely interesting piece

for soprano voice and alto saxophone. There are two movements which are improvised and two movements written out, but even in the written-out movements there are many things to be improvised by the players. It was done by Brenda Ferencz, soprano, and I was able to get Bill Ulyate back (I've mentioned him before in connection with the Elliott Brothers' band). He used to play with us a great deal but is not available so much now. He and Brenda did a wonderful job; Bill got into the spirit of it and made a sort of musical game out of it--I would say with a little bit of ham, maybe--but it came off very well, although I must say I am glad that Rosen wasn't here. He was in Rome on a sabbatical.

TUSLER: How do they improvise a whole movement? Does the composer give some basic directions?

MORTON: Yes; as a matter of fact, in our program notes I had copied out part of the score just to show how the composer indicated things. He gives general areas in which the notes are to be sung or played.

Then we had a piece by George Crumb, Night Music I. He is a young American composer. We had not previously had him on our programs. This was really a first-class piece for piano-celeste, the pianist also playing celeste, with soprano and two percussion players. This

piece was in charge of Leonard Stein who trained the players. There are two movements using texts from Lorca. A great deal of the piano playing is done inside the piano with plucked notes and special effects of that sort. It is a very, very strong piece, a good piece, and one of the best modern pieces that we've had by an American composer. The second half of the program was classical music, Beethoven Duo for clarinet and bassoon and the Mozart Quintet for piano and winds, K. 452.

The next program was in charge of Milton Thomas, a violist, who got together a very good string group of young players in order to do David Diamond's Nonet which had been written for Stravinsky's eightieth birthday and which Stravinsky wanted us to play. A very difficult piece; and with that combination of instruments naturally we had the Third Brandenburg Concerto, which Milton also conducted. Milton played, with Georgia Akst at the piano, Ingolf Dahl's Divertimento for Viola and Piano that we had given twice before--in 1948, its first performance, and in 1955. The piece was dedicated to Milton Thomas, and he gives a beautiful performance of it. Then we were able to get Rodger Vaughan's Four Songs to Poems of Robert Herrick, which had been cancelled the season before because of the illness of Dick

Robinson who went to the hospital just the day before the performance. We also had Dick Robinson sing a couple of Sacred Symphonies of Schütz with two violas and continuo.

We had a guest for the next concert. This was an unusual thing. We don't usually bring a pianist in from out of town, but Jocy de Oliveira, the wife of the conductor of the St. Louis Symphony, [Eleazar] Carvalho, wanted to play here. She had appeared here with the symphony in Hollywood Bowl, but she had an avant-garde program. So we had a series here of two avant-garde concerts of the kind we could not produce ourselves: a piece by Claudio Santoro of Brazil; the new Sequenza IV by Luciano Berio; Machine Music by Lejaren Hiller from Illinois; Knocking Piece by Ben Johnston, also from Illinois; and two suites of Erik Satie for piano. This program involved percussion, and she brought with her the percussionist from the St. Louis Symphony. The St. Louis Symphony was on tour at that time and was appearing in Los Angeles at the Shrine [Auditorium]. Miss Oliveira was traveling with her husband, and their percussion player, Richard O'Donnell, was also available. All we had to provide was the tape player for the Hiller piece.

It was quite an unusual program, not a long program. Much amusement was had from the pieces because

there was illumination in the Ben Johnston piece, and it was played entirely inside the piano with various kinds of hammers knocking on the strings. There were also special lighting effects--Miss Oliveira wore a dress that was black in front and white in back, so that at times she could not be seen at her position at the piano in the dark auditorium.

TUSLER: Was that all specified by the composer?

MORTON: Yes. The two Satie pieces had texts, of course, the kind that Satie always wrote into his music, and she recited these. Some of the recitation, however, was on tape; the reason for tape was that at the end of the second suite, the Vieux sequins et vieilles cuirasses, there is a passage that is supposed to be played 267 times. We weren't going to go through that, nor did she want to; so we had that passage on tape and after she played it a couple of times it was repeated on the tape. After it had been heard on tape a few times she simply got up from the piano, left the stage, and I left the stage (I had been operating the tape machine), and we just let the tape run. That was the end of the concert and people could get up and go whenever they wanted. A rather amusing effect.

For the next concert we had the San Francisco Tape Music Center, with a performing group from Mills College,

to get pieces that we could not produce here since they involved tapes, slides, film, and visual projections of various kinds. We had a piece by Gerald Shapiro from up there; Ramon Sender, one of the founders of the Tape Center; Anthony Martin, the man that does all the visual effects for the Tape Center; Mario Davidovsky's Synchronism no. 3 for cello and tape, a very, very strong piece and the most successful piece on the program; and Morton Subotnick's The Tarot, Part III, for five players, soprano, tape, and visual projections. Well, this is the kind of thing that though we have the equipment to do it, we don't have the people who are doing that sort of thing. That was really a way-out, avant-garde concert. It was very interesting and very successful.

On the next program we had a new piece of Krenek's, the Fibonacci Mobile, which he had written for Dartmouth College the preceding summer and for which Karl and Margaret Kohn were playing the four-hand piano. They also played Improvisation on a Bach Chorale by Busoni for two pianos, which was a very, very good piece; it came out just around the time of Busoni's one-hundredth birthday. Their main offering, however, was the [Jacques] Guyonnet Polyphonies. Guyonnet is a Swiss composer, and Polyphonies is for two pianos, flute and viola. It turned out to be not quite as strong a piece as we had hoped but still

representative of something that is going on. Guyonnet belongs to the Boulez circle. To begin the program we had two old pieces: Sinfonia for flute, violin and continuo by Fux, and Alessandro Stradella's Sinfonia for violin, cello and continuo, played by the sisters Steiner, Diana Steiner, violin, and Frances Steiner, cello. I appeared on the program as "John Doe, harpsichordist." I played, but I was embarrassed to put my own name down, and so a lot of people have been calling me John Doe since then.

The next program, the last program of this season, we had two Bach Cantatas, no. 82 and no. 51, and a half program of Ives's choral pieces--many of them first performances--done by the Gregg Smith Singers. Gregg was in town for some recordings at that time. There was a catastrophe on this program. We were supposed to have Karan Armstrong, who had just won the Metropolitan Auditions on the Air, as soprano for Cantata 51 and she became ill. At four o'clock that afternoon I had a phone call saying she wasn't going to come to our dress rehearsal nor could she sing. Fortunately, in Gregg Smith's group is a soprano named Gloria Grace Prosper who had sung for us before. Yes, she knew the Bach 51, and with one rehearsal we had it ready. She gave a perfectly beautiful and exciting performance that night, and I

must say that though many people were, of course, disappointed that Karan Armstrong didn't sing, everyone agreed that what Gloria Grace Prosper did was heroic. She knew the cantata, of course, and only had to get used to Craft's conducting to get the thing prepared. The Cantata no. 82 was sung by Harold Enns, a baritone. He is going off now with the Metropolitan National Company. Perfectly beautiful performances. I would say those two Bach cantatas were as good a Bach representation as we've ever had.

The Ives pieces were superb, admitting the Ives clichés which do appear when you get a great mass of choral music as we did on this program. The clichés are there; but still he is a remarkable composer, and the Gregg Smith performance was very, very good. That was as good a representation of Ives as we had--some of the things with instruments, some of them a cappella and some of them with organ. We were able to get this only because Gregg was recording. Again, it would have been beyond us in cost and in equipment, but it was possible as a sort of rehearsal for Gregg's recording.

TUSLER: So the season ends.

TAPE NUMBER: IX, SIDE ONE

AUGUST 3, 1966

TUSLER: You've spoken already about the move from Plummer Park to the County Museum, but I thought you might summarize today as to just how that came about. I believe you said it was Mrs. Moss who made the original contact with Richard Brown, the director of the museum.

MORTON: That's right. I can't remember how many years ago it was that the announcement came out that there was going to be a new museum of art. Somehow the idea came to us (and I say "us" because I don't remember if it can be attributed to any one person) that here was an opportunity for us to find a decent home, which we had never had, from the time that we began on Peter Yates's roof, down to the Assistance League, the old KFWB Studios, to the Ebell Theatre, Hancock Auditorium for part of a season, the little concert hall at the Ebell Club, West Hollywood Park, Plummer Park--none of these places had really been satisfactory. The only one that had any equipment satisfactory to us was, of course, the Ebell Theater. But that became very expensive and it was always too big for us because there are about 1,300 seats there. We never had that kind of

an audience. But the prospect of moving into the new museum seemed a very desirable one. We were influenced by the knowledge that practically all the great museums in this country do have musical programs. We felt that with a new building going up that there would be a good hall in it, and maybe it was the place for us.

The first conversations about it took place between Dr. Brown and Mrs. Moss. My own involvement in the question, I believe, occurred at a luncheon with Mrs. Moss and Dr. Brown and Bill [William] Osmun, who was one of the curators at the museum. He had been a long-time friend of our concerts and a man who was close to Dr. Brown. I think it is possible that Jim [James H.] Elliott was there, too.

TUSLER: Is he a member of the board?

MORTON: No, Jim Elliott was second in command, I believe, to Dr. Brown, at least at this time when the art collection was at the old museum. I remember certain points that were made at that luncheon meeting. One was--and it was a phrase that we used continuously and still use--that Monday Evening Concerts is performing a kind of museum function in respect to music in that it "exhibits" music, so to speak, from the earliest times up to the present. And this is what the museum does with its art works. We felt that there was at least an

analogy between their attitude and ours. Dr. Brown agreed to this. Dr. Brown had known about us for a long time, although I am not aware that he had been coming to the concerts--he was, of course, a very busy man. Bill Osmun had been coming to the concerts and so had Jim Elliott, and I think that their influence on Dr. Brown must have been considerable.

In any case it was more or less, shall we say, assumed from that point on that we would be coming into the museum. The only thing that we had to emphasize was that we were to maintain our own organization and our own attitudes--in other words, that we were eager to cooperate with the museum in every way possible, but that we were going to be the bosses of the music; that if we were invited in, it would be because of what we stood for and what we had accomplished and not because we were going to be amenable to any kind of outside management. We wanted the name of Monday Evening Concerts to be preserved and we wanted to maintain the Southern California Chamber Music Society, which was our money-raising organization.

During the years that followed we had occasional communications with Dr. Brown. I used to write him letters to remind him of us and said not to bother answering but to just remember that we were hoping to

come in. As the time drew close I was looking for some sort of official announcement. Dr. Brown was under the opinion that we shouldn't make any official announcement because this would open the matter to the public in general and lots of other people would be wanting to come into the museum. He said, "Let's just assume that you are coming in and then you will come in, and in this way we will avoid any public discussion of it."

At the beginning of our 1964-65 season, I had to ask him once more whether we were at liberty then to announce that our concerts would take place in the new museum. This meant that they had to commit themselves to an opening date for the museum and consequently [a date] for us. He wrote back and said yes, that he had got approval from the Board of Trustees of the museum and that everything was set, and that we should announce that starting on April 1, 1965, which was the opening date for the museum, we would move in. So we announced it. How correct Dr. Brown was has become evident since that time--numerous organizations and individuals have been requesting use of the museum and practically all of them have had to be turned down on the grounds that there isn't time.

Well, the hall was built essentially for the use of the museum, for its own activities, lectures, films

and other things of that sort, and also for meetings of their own intramural groups such as the Docents Council and the Costume Council and so on. There have been a couple of dramatic presentations put on by the museum and there have been, of course, numerous lectures--the most recent a series in connection with the current show on American art. So the hall is busy, and we have to have some time for rehearsals. We usually need anywhere from three to six sessions there before concerts; the only time we don't make serious demands is when we have small concerts which the players rehearse in their own homes.

TUSLER: How committed is the museum to this, then, in the long-term sense? Is it something that has to be passed upon by the Board of Trustees every year? Do you have a contract arrangement?

MORTON: No, we have no arrangement at all. We have no formal agreement. We are simply there. We [Monday Evening Concerts] don't fulfill all of the desires of the museum in respect to music, and that's why they asked me to be chairman of their own Music Committee. I have prepared a number of concerts there in conjunction with specific shows, but these have not been Monday Evening Concerts and I try very hard--and I think so far successfully--to make those concerts of a different character

from Monday Evening Concerts, both in terms of repertoire and in terms of personnel.

TUSLER: How do you mean, "in terms of repertoire?"

MORTON: The museum concerts that we've done have in general been connected with specific exhibitions. For instance, recently the museum presented a concert entitled "A Collage of American Music" which was to complement the show of American paintings from the Metropolitan Museum. We performed music all the way from Francis Hopkinson up to Charles Ives, which was approximately the period represented by the paintings. There was music by people--such as [Louis] Gottschalk, Francis Hopkinson, some of the New England hymnodists, and MacDowell--who certainly wouldn't find places on our programs. Those are composers, I'd say, of the second, third and fourth rank, but nevertheless significant composers from the historical point of view; and certainly those composers were just as good as many of the painters whose works were appearing in the exhibition. The idea of this concert was an historical review and consequently I might say that the quality of the music didn't quite measure up to what Monday Evening Concerts would do; but still it was a valid concert and it was certainly as valid as the exhibition itself.

Previously, I'd say about a year ago, the museum

put on a concert of Japanese music in connection with a show of Japanese art treasures. There again it was repertoire that, well, I won't say we wouldn't have produced, but we would not have produced in that way. We had half a program of classical Japanese music that was performed by three Tokyo artists who happened to be passing through Los Angeles at that time; we made our connection with them through Mantle Hood of the Institute of Ethnomusicology at UCLA. Then we did half a program of contemporary Japanese music, most of which is avant-garde. The avant-garde music might have found its way into our programs, but at least so far it had not. I would say that of the Japanese pieces perhaps the only one we might have used at one of our own concerts was a tape work by Mayuzumi.

The museum has put on a couple of jazz concerts which would not fall into our category. One of them was in connection with a showing of paintings by an American painter, R. D. Kitaj. How jazz got mixed up in that I don't know. It was sort of a far-fetched idea, but it was a reasonable thing to do. Many of the museums in the East are putting on a lot of jazz concerts. We had a jazz concert just a few weeks ago, not in connection with any show at all but simply because the museum

felt that the one last summer outdoors on the plaza had been successful, so let's do it again. I engaged Ornette Coleman for that concert, on the grounds that he had never appeared in Los Angeles with his present trio, although he personally had appeared a number of years ago. It was a fresh and new idea. Coleman had not appeared either at the [Hollywood] Bowl or UCLA where most of the jazz concerts are taking place.

TUSLER: How did they musically implement the Kienholz show?

MORTON: We didn't do anything about the Kienholz show. [laughter] I guess there was enough excitement then without music.

TUSLER: As far as you know, there hasn't been opposition from any trustees anywhere along the line to having the Monday Evening Concerts there?

MORTON: No; we don't know the people of the museum board very well. The ones that we do know are Mr. and Mrs. Norton Simon--Mr. Simon is on the Board of Trustees. He is a friend of the Mosses. We became acquainted with Mrs. [Caroline] Liebig, who is secretary of the museum, but at one point Bill Osmun asked me to send her some literature about us and particularly about Boulez, whom she didn't know about. (I have a clipping collection on Boulez and, of course, the two programs

he had done previously with us.) I think Mrs. Liebig was convinced that if we were doing people like Boulez we're doing something of considerable significance. Since that time, Mrs. Liebig has become a subscriber to the concerts and she comes quite regularly. The other trustees are people whom I know by name but I have not met. I don't imagine Mr. Edward Carter is going to go around listening to concerts, and I don't suppose the chancellor of UCLA, Dr. [Franklin] Murphy, has much chance to go off campus to concerts. There are other people on the Board of Trustees who I think are obviously content to have Monday Evening Concerts there because of its reputation. I dare say that when Dr. Brown presented this matter to the board he must have told them who we are, what we stand for, and, what is most significant, I think, that we are the oldest concert-giving organization in Southern California with the exception of the Philharmonic and the Coleman concerts in Pasadena.

TUSLER: The reason I ask about the opposition is that, being as notable as you are for your avant-garde policy and realizing that there has been much criticism from the Board of Supervisors, more perhaps than from the trustees, about various avant-garde things there, that

maybe there'd be some latent criticism of Monday Evening Concerts.

MORTON: I think not, because for the last five years the Board of Supervisors had included us in their musical budget due to recommendations of the County Music Commission. We've been getting $1,000 a year from them, and whether the Music Commission actually likes the music that we do, I haven't any idea. I daresay that, if I looked at the list of names and would know who most of the people are, [that I would] think they are not lovers of the avant-garde and are probably not lovers of the rather esoteric older music that we do. But I think they recognize that this is something that belongs in a community; and certainly from the standpoint of publicity for Los Angeles, Monday Evening Concerts are very important. I once made a check over a period of two years on [references to] Los Angeles in the international musical press. This was in connection with a book put out by a man named Greenfield--I can't remember the title of the book, but it had to do with musical activities in the United States for a certain year, probably around '58 or '59. I counted the number of references to Los Angeles, and Monday Evening Concerts had more than the Philharmonic. All the references to us were in terms of repertoire, whereas most of the references to

the Philharmonic were in terms of traffic jams, appearances of great soloists, and that sort of thing.

So what we stand for I think is generally recognized. In magazines like the British Music Review, Tempo and Music and Letters; the German magazine Melos; and in the European press, it is generally the Monday Evening Concerts representing Los Angeles, not the Philharmonic. While our Philharmonic is in the first class of orchestras, it still follows a general pattern of activity that is not unlike the orchestras elsewhere in the country, whereas the programs of Monday Evening Concerts are unique and there is no comparable organization anywhere in the country, or for that matter, as far as I can tell, anywhere in the world. I remember an article written by Colin Mason--was it the Manchester Guardian that he was writing for in those years? He had made a visit to the United States and he referred to Monday Evening Concerts as being unique not only in Southern California, but he said even in England they had nothing quite like that.

What he meant by "quite like that," is that we give twelve concerts a year where most of the other organizations [give fewer concerts], such as the Domaine Musical in Paris which gives five concerts a year, originally

four; the Columbia University group which gives four or five a year; the new organizations set up under Rockefeller grants which give maybe three or four concerts a year; and we are doing an extensive season of twelve concerts. And we are mixing the old and the new which none of the others do. Most of them are propagandizing for new music. Well, this we do, too, but we do it in connection with the old music.

So I think on those grounds, with this kind of information, Ric Brown induced the Board of Trustees to invite us in; and on these grounds also the Board of Supervisors is content to give us the $1,000 a year, which is not as much as we ought to have, however, considering the total amount of money that is spent by the county in support of music. But we are glad to have that money.

TUSLER: What other specific advantages are there? Obviously, the rent-free hall is the big item; what else do they contribute?

MORTON: They had purchased a piano for the hall, and this is a rather large item because ever since Monday Evening Concerts and Evenings on the Roof have been in existence, or from the time it moved from Peter Yates's roof, we've been using the Baldwin piano. The Baldwin

people have been most cooperative with us. When we were at West Hollywood the stage was large enough so that one of their pianos could be stored there regularly instead of being put in a warehouse. They would take the piano out when they needed it somewhere else; but instead of bringing it back to the warehouse they would bring it back to West Hollywood, and so we never had any expense at all in regard to the piano. When we moved into Plummer Park, it could not be stored because there was no room on the stage for it and we had to pay drayage fees during all the years we were there. This amounted to I would say maybe $400 a year. Now this is an expenditure that we no longer have because the museum has a piano and also has a contract for keeping it in tune.

TUSLER: Is it a good piano?

MORTON: Yes; it is a Grotrian-Steinweg. There are some pianists who don't like it, but then there are always some pianists who don't like a piano. Some prefer the Baldwin to the Steinway, others prefer the Steinway to the Baldwin and so on; but I don't pay much attention to any of these complaints anymore because no matter what piano you have, someone is going to be unhappy.

TUSLER: Do they also pay for lighting and the expense of moving things around, all this sort of thing?

MORTON: Yes. We have no expense at the museum in respect to the production of our concerts except strictly musical expenses, such as hiring a few stage boys, college kids to move the piano on and off stage or set up stands. But this is a very small item.

TUSLER: What has this meant to you financially? Does it mean that it saves the Southern California Chamber Music Society a sum of money, or do you have that same sum to put into something else--more music or performances?

MORTON: Well, of course we are spending more, although our expenses are in some ways less as we don't pay rent. I estimated (and it is only an estimate, I can't come up with actual figures) that in our first year in the museum we saved, in terms of rent, piano rental and moving, between $900 and $1,000. This is a pretty good-sized item for us. Of course we spent the money in other departments. It just happened that last year we had huge expenses in terms of instrument rental, percussion, harpsichord and so on; and also our rental of music last year was very high. So at the end of the year we were no better off than we were at any other time except, I would say, the spending of the money was more productive. I don't look upon the payment of rent as a very productive way of spending money. It is an unnecessary expense.

TUSLER: You can make your programs more interesting this way, with that leeway.

MORTON: We did spend more money on our musicians. So that the museum represents a saving, or a gift, you might say, of $900 to $1,000 a year.

TUSLER: One more question about the museum: how does the hall itself suit you? How does it compare with the other places?

MORTON: Well, first of all we are in a beautiful hall. We've never before been in a beautiful hall. We have a raked floor, opera chairs, continental seating, and conveniences and beauty that we've never had. We are on the right side of the tracks now, and we have an ideal location. I think that the neighborhood between La Brea and Fairfax, around the tar pits there, is practically the geographic center or population center of greater Los Angeles. At least this was so a few years ago when I remember reading such a study in the newspapers; now people are generally moving further west, but I think in general terms we have as good a location as anyone could possibly have. Since we are not looking for the huge audiences that the Music Center has we don't have that kind of parking problem; and on Monday nights the museum is closed, so our people can park across

the street or on the street or in the May Company lot, and we don't have any serious parking problem on this evening. In every physical respect we are much better off than we have ever been before. But what pleases me most is that we have a hall that is beautiful, comfortable, and acoustically perfect. We have never had such luxury; we've never had such comfort. The backstage area is not everything that could be desired.

There was a meeting at the old museum and we saw the plans [for the new museum]. I'd asked Gerald Strang who knows a great deal about acoustics to come to this meeting so he could look at the general plans of the auditorium. Ingolf [Dahl] was there, Mrs. Moss, Bill Osmun, Jim Elliott, and Dr. Brown; and everyone was talking about the acoustics, the angles of projection, and so forth. I didn't know anything about this. Finally, toward the end of the meeting when everyone seemed to be fairly well pleased with the prospects (we are still talking about the blueprint stage), I had to point out that there were no backstage facilities, such as places to hang up coats, places to put instruments, no toilet facilities, and no drinking fountain. They were all a little bit surprised--how could such things be overlooked? I was concerned, of course, with such physical

things because I know from previous experience in many halls that such things make a vast difference in the general attitude of the musicians when they are going on to play. They don't want to have to walk a block in order to find a restroom.

As a consequence, the museum did have to add to the plans a greenroom and restrooms upstairs. They are not terribly convenient because [there are] three flights of stairs to get to it. It is not bad on the way down to the stage, but if a musician is playing the first number on the program and then again the third or fourth number, it is a long climb; and for singers and wind players who get out of breath it is not very comfortable. This is a weakness in the backstage area, that it is not large enough, and it is not large enough for some of the museum's own activities. I think that eventually they are going to have to do some more building there, though I don't look forward to that in the immediate future.

TUSLER: How is it acoustically?

MORTON: Acoustically it is very, very good. There is not a seat in the auditorium that doesn't have perfect vision and perfect hearing.

TUSLER: Would you like to make some general comments about the overall line of development of the organization

from the Evening on the Roof days to the present?

MORTON: Yes. I have to say one thing about the participation of the musicians. At the beginning the general idea was, as Peter Yates always stated it, that the concerts were for the pleasure of the musicians and that they should play what they wanted to play regardless of box office. Well, this is my point of view but only a partial statement. From the very beginning everyone who has been in charge of the concerts has had to exert a great deal of influence upon the musicians in their choice of repertoire. For all of the people who have been directing the concerts--Peter Yates and his wife, Mary Jeannette Brown, the musicians' committees that used to be active in the early days, Bill Hume, myself, Henry Holt, Douglas Talney--it has always been a struggle to get the musicians to go as far with new music as they ought to go. All of us have known more about repertoire, more about the upcoming young composers than any of the performers have. The performers rarely come with repertoire suggestions. They come with an ability to play and an eagerness to play. So far as repertoire is concerned they don't know what is new.

Young musicians constantly call me or write me notes saying they want to play at Monday Evening Concerts and I say, "What do you want to play?" But they have no

answers. Now in 1966 some players, especially the young ones, came up with the idea: "I would like to play new music." And I ask, "What new music?" And they will talk about Milhaud or Poulenc or Hindemith or Bartók or people who for us are already standard repertoire. None of them ever comes around with the idea of playing a new piece of Boulez or Stockhausen or anyone of that sort unless we have already exhibited those composers. If a flutist has discovered Boulez's Sonatina for Flute and Piano, for us that's an old work. So the pleasure of the musicians seems to me to be their pleasure in playing familiar repertoire.

I'm still fighting the battle of: do the Brahms two late sonatas belong to the clarinet or the viola? That's a battle that has been going on about seventy years. But I'm not eager to program those pieces. They are being played to death. They were played, of course, when these concerts began and there was little competition in chamber music in the city; that was very valid repertoire. It is not so valid now except when an occasion arises where I want to give some performer a chance to show off or where we need a piece of romantic repertoire to round out our general repertoire.

But on the whole it is we who have dug up the new music, found the new music, not the players. This was

also the case in Peter Yates's time. I remember he told me once that one of our most distinguished cellists wanted to play the "Berceuse" from Jocelyn. I said, "A very pretty little sugar plum." Peter never did succeed in getting the American Art Quartet, which was originally Eudice Shapiro, Victor Gottlieb, Virginia Majewski, and [Marvin Limonick], to take on the six Bartók quartets, which twenty years ago would have been a real accomplishment.

TUSLER: How does one explain this?

MORTON: I don't think the performers are lazy. I think what they are most interested in is playing music that will make their instruments sound good, and with a great deal of contemporary music the instruments don't sound good. Now what I mean by "good" (or what they mean by "good") is "beautiful," in romantic terms. There are other things that are beautiful in music that they are not eager to do: for instance, the nonexpressive style of a great deal of contemporary music, say Stravinsky, or the extreme dissonance of most twelve-tone music. The instruments don't sound what players call "good." They want to play anything from Bach to Debussy. That is the period which to them represents beautiful music.

It's very hard to get properly styled performances of Baroque music, for instance. I think I mentioned a

Biber sonata for two string instruments (a violin and viola) and trombone. We had first-class players and they did play very well, but it was all in the wrong style. The trombone played with vibrato, the strings all played with a vibrato; and you cannot get them to play a nonromantic kind of expressiveness. They think of expressiveness as being communicated by tone quality, whereas we, the people who are most active in preparing concerts, conceive of expressiveness as concerning such things as not only quality of tone but tempo, accentuation, articulation, and a drier kind of tone. I've often used the argument to musicians that if they are going to play the Grosse Fuge of Beethoven they are certainly not going to be able to play it in what they would call a "beautiful" manner because that piece is not beautiful. It is one of the ugliest pieces that was ever written and its qualities don't depend on beauty. They depend on structure and imagination and a kind of outgoing roughness. It can't be played beautifully.

Beauty is not the end of all music. There are things that go beyond beauty. Beethoven said, "When I am in my 'raptus' do you suppose I am thinking about your miserable instrument?" Of course he's not. This is something that has come to be very important in contemporary music. Painters understand this, I think;

they accept it more. I've often quoted to musicians the title as well as the subject matter of Bernhard Berenson's book on Piero della Francesca which he calls The Ineloquent in Art. Ineloquence is also a quality of musical expression.

This is a long way around the general topic of the attitude of the musicians and what is their participation in the music. I would say from the time of Peter Yates, although I think that he would probably deny this, the musicians have to be driven into the performance of new music. Now, when they come around to it they do very well.

We have some young players now who simply do not want to play the old music. I have a rather remarkable piece for flute and soprano that I hope to program this coming season by the Italian composer Arrigo. I called the flutist, Sheridon Stokes, and asked if he would like to play this. It's quite an unusual piece: in the first movement you play piccolo, second movement C flute, third movement alto flute, fourth movement bass. He said, "Why, yes, it sounds good. But if it's just the same old music I don't want to, if there are not some of the new effects." And he's not interested in playing it. Clarinetists like John Neufeld or Dick Lesser are not opposed to the old repertoire, but they do want to

play new things that show off the instrument in a new way. Percussion players such as Bill Kraft, Kenneth Watson, Karen Jackson want to play the new things. There are many performers now who know that they have had enough experience with new repertoire so that they like it, and they want to play it. I'd say that the generation of adventurous younger people generally are simply not interested in the older music. They will play it if I ask them to, and as a matter of fact they enjoy playing it if they've also had a chance on the program to play something new. The middle generation of performers who are in their forties or fifties are much less amenable and have to be driven into the new music.

The discovery of repertoire [doesn't come from] the musicians. These concerts are for the pleasure of the musicians--only, however, if we who are at the top of the organization find out what is their pleasure. No initiative in repertoire ever comes from them.

Now, the other point was that the concerts are for the pleasure of musicians regardless of the box office. Well, I don't think that this is quite true either, because the moment you start to put a program together with variety, with climax, with a big piece centrally located, or with anticipation stirred up during the program for the last piece--whatever--these are theatrical, showmanship,

or box office ideas. And they are not commercial. I don't think the idea that by ignoring box office you are being noncommercial or highly idealistic is true at all. One always wants to have an audience. No one wants to play for himself, and the moment you seek an audience you are conscious of box office. From the very beginning there have been campaigns to sell tickets. On what grounds do you sell tickets? Well, the programs have to be attractive. I [don't] think that this [original] philosophy is untrue, but I'll say it is only part of what the real truth has been.

When I began to work in the concerts I did question this whole philosophy, and there was some disagreement between Peter Yates and myself on these very issues. Since I have been running the concerts, naturally, I have put forward my own ideas in these matters and I am consciously after box office. I'm not looking for the box office of the Philharmonic Orchestra, but I'm looking for the box office that is possible for our concerts. I do calculate programs on the basis of box office attraction, as I say, for a very small limited audience, but nevertheless it is box office. I think that it is significant that our best attendance records in the early days of the Evenings on the Roof were for such things as Schoenberg and Stravinsky programs in the

days when Schoenberg and Stravinsky were still avant-garde. So there is this basic difference of philosophy, although I am quite aware that much of this is verbal disagreement. It is in the field of semantics.

Since I've been running the concerts there has been a great deal of criticism that the concerts no longer represent what they did originally. Of course they don't, because conditions have changed. When people say to me, "Well, you've lost the old spirit," I say, "No, I don't think we've lost the old spirit--I think that the spirit has simply changed with the times." The times have changed in these respects: (1) the musicians are not now clamoring for opportunities to play good music as they were at the beginning; there are many more opportunities for them to play good music now because there are many more orchestras in the community. And (2) they are not clamoring to play new music. They are being very active in many other groups or series of chamber music around town at various places. Monday Evening Concerts is not, as Evenings on the Roof was originally, the only outlet for performers. There are lots of musicians who don't want to play with us because of the avant-garde repertoire. They've told me this frankly. There are some people who don't want to play with us--I think I've mentioned this--because they will not subject themselves

to the kind of newspaper criticism that is being given in this city. They would rather not play than have their reputations attacked by uncomplimentary reviews that are based on objections to our repertoire.

TUSLER: Do you think that the repertoire policy has actually changed with the growth of the organization?

MORTON: Well, it has changed in this respect. There was always some sort of balance between old and new. In the early years, a lot of the old repertoire was still new to this community; and because much of that older repertoire is being played at other concerts, I feel that there is less and less need for it at our concerts. I don't want to repeat the Brahms chamber pieces which have been played three times this season somewhere else. Also, the dividing line between what is old and what is new constantly changes as the years pass. Originally, we were taking, I'd say, 1900 as the dividing line. But who can call Debussy and Ravel new repertoire anymore? This is already 1966. For awhile we took World War I as a good dividing line. Presently I'd say that the dividing line between old and new music, and the one I actually work with, is World War II. I will take a Webern, however, on the side of new repertoire although all of his music was written before World War II (he died in the year following the war) because

no one else in the city has played any Webern. It's in a way standard repertoire for us; we were the first people to play Webern on any extensive scale, and his orchestral works have not been heard in this city at all. That's why we did the chamber music version of the symphony a couple of seasons ago, in impatience in waiting to hear an orchestral performance.

World War II is presently the dividing line so far as the younger composers are concerned. Everybody is writing now in a post-Webern style. There is even a post-Boulez school; there are people who think that Boulez is already old hat. As a matter of fact I would say from the standpoint of the avant-garde that anything earlier than 1960 is generally regarded as old hat. So the repertoire has necessarily changed as the dividing line has changed. The attitude of the musicians is very different than it used to be.

Now, since the musicians are not so concerned with Monday Evening Concerts as the only outlet for the new music, the question of their pay has changed. In the beginning they played for nothing. Then it was a sort of cooperative where they would divide up any profits there were at the end of the year--and, of course, there weren't any. Then there was a period when they subsidized the concerts themselves by being responsible for

$200, either in cash outlay, which they would get back in terms of box-office receipts, or they had to guarantee the sale of $200 worth of tickets. And then [for a period] we were paying the musicians on the basis of $10.00 a unit, a unit being a major work such as a Beethoven sonata. That was subsequently raised to $12.50. Then when I was abroad in 1959-60 the union said we'd have to pay union scale, which was $25.00. The scale subsequently went up to $28.50 plus $1.50 for each player to be deposited into the pension fund. And for this coming year, simply under pressure, we are going to raise the fee to $38.50 which is $10.00 above union scale. There are a number of musicians who feel that since they don't get paid for rehearsal time (the union doesn't require that in chamber music categories), there are some concerts in town, nonetheless, where they are being paid more; many of the UCLA concerts and the concerts now being given at the Pasadena [Art] Museum are all paying over scale, and in some cases as much as $50.00 a concert. We feel, and our board has gone along, that we have to raise the fees; and so in essence, starting this coming season, our fees will be $40.00 instead of $30.00.

TUSLER: Has there been pressure on you?

MORTON: There has been some pressure from the musicians

who say, "Why should I play for you for $28.50 or $30.00 when we are getting $40.00 or $50.00 elsewhere?" So we have to meet that competition. In order to accomplish that, I am reducing the number of musicians per concert for the coming year until we see how we come out. Ideally, of course, I'd like to pay the musicians $100 per concert, but there is just not that kind of money available. With the work that is put in on some of this very difficult avant-garde repertoire $100 is not a bit too much.

The musicians are underpaid without any question, and they want the money now because they are not clamoring for opportunities to play. The only ones who are clamoring for opportunities are the very young who are just coming out of school (they are very valuable to us and we have had some first-class people among them) and some of the older people who are not very good anymore and are not getting opportunities to play elsewhere because they don't play in tune or are just not up in [new] techniques and repertoire. Some of these youngsters just out of school have fantastic technical development. Instrumentally speaking, the standard has come up very, very high in the last few years. There are youngsters coming up who can sit down and sightread some of the new music with its rhythmical difficulties, while some of the older people just can't touch it. I remember--

as a side observation--going to a rehearsal for the last Ojai concert (they were playing the Stravinsky Symphony in Three Movements) and I saw people in that orchestra who simply could not cut those rhythms. Now that piece is twenty years old, and Stravinsky's rhythmical style is sixty years old; but lots of musicians in their forties and fifties just cannot play it.

TUSLER: They've never had the experience.

MORTON: And they've not had the curiosity to learn. This is what I am speaking of. The "pleasure of the musicians" in many cases is to play the old standbys because they know them and they are easy. They have some technical problems, but from the standpoint of interpretation and style they are easy. The pleasure of the musicians in general doesn't coincide with the necessities of the concerts.

TUSLER: As the organization has grown, do you find that support for it has proportionately also grown? And what about opposition to it? Has opposition grown or has opposition softened as the years have gone by?

MORTON: This has fluctuated, speaking in terms, say, of season ticket sales and general box-office receipts. It fluctuates: up one year, down the next. When we sell a lot of season tickets we [may sell] fewer single admissions at the box office, and vice versa. I can't explain this.

I don't know what causes it. I don't know what brings a large audience to one concert and a small audience to another. I just don't know.

In terms of opposition, there have been lots of musicians around town who have been opposed to our general policy, and in a few cases they've set up concert series of their own; they go for a season or two and then they have died out. I don't think there is any group in town, or any group of musicians in town, that is able to put together concerts as interesting as ours. They don't get the backing and they don't have the stick-to-itiveness.

I've said this before, and it is perhaps immodest, but to run a series of concerts like this you need an idiot at the top: the first idiot was Peter and I'm the second. I think you need someone who is just devoted to this kind of music, who believes in it and who is going to make some sacrifices. I can tell you, frankly, to take a job like this is a terrific sacrifice in terms of money, in terms of time and energy. There has never been enough money either to pay the directors of the concerts or to run the concerts on the level on which they ought to be run. We have a constant financial problem that is always with us, and I don't suppose that we will ever solve it. We have made a lot of progress. Our budget, of course, is ten times what it was in the beginning.

TUSLER: So are expenses.

MORTON: Expenses are way, way up; yes. Opposition, yes. The newspaper columns will carry some of that evidence: the attacks on us for the performance of Boulez and known people like that, musicians writing letters in to the newspapers, and replies from the musicians and from myself indicate where the opposition [has come from].

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AUGUST 10, 1966

TUSLER: In finishing our general summary of Monday Evening Concerts, would you like to comment today on some of the people who have been especially important to the organization's success?

MORTON: Yes; I guess I would have to comment on what I would call in general a change of personnel. In 1946, Peter Yates got together something that he called the Fourth Report and had it published. It is a little booklet of sixteen pages and at the end, after listing the repertoire that had been played during those first seven or eight years, he gave the names of the people who were then most active in the organization. Of course, it starts with Frances Mullen and Peter Yates, who were the founders. There was a man named Al Spires, who was vice coordinator; Max Laemmle, who was executive chairman; and Jane Blumenthal, who was in charge of publicity. Of those people not one is anymore concerned with the concerts. Peter Yates, of course, remains on our Board of Directors, but he is also carrying on some activities under the original name of Monday Evening Concerts on KPFK. The name "Evenings on the Roof" belongs to him. I don't know what has happened to the others. Mr. Laemmle

is, I believe, on the board, or at least very much interested in the Music Guild. Actually, as it turns out he is not very much interested in contemporary music, and so I think he is much happier there with the Music Guild. There was also a list of maybe seventeen or eighteen names, members of the Executive and Assistance Committees. Oscar Moss is among them, but of the other names none of them is active with us now at all, with the exception of Artie Mason Carter, who was one of our supporters up until last year, but she has been very ill in the past year and so we've not had any contact with her. Some of the people have moved away, some of them have passed away, and some of them are just names that are completely unfamiliar to me.

TUSLER: Were they people who were not themselves musicians?

MORTON: Yes; they were a layman's committee that was interested in helping the organization.

On another page are the names of the musicians who were actually most active. Now remember we are talking about 1946, so the name of Richard Buhlig appears there. Of this list, which is probably forty names, I will mention here the ones that are still active with us. Among the pianists: Ingolf Dahl and Leonard Stein are the only two out of the eleven who are still active. Among

the cellists: none of the three here is active. Among the violinists: Eudice Shapiro is the only one out of ten who is still active. Harpsichordist: Alice Ehlers. Alice Ehlers has played for us in recent years but not for the past two or three.

TUSLER: Does that have more to do with her age than anything else?

MORTON: Partly so, and partly because she has been doing a great deal of concertizing and is very active elsewhere. The last time I spoke with her she said, "Oh, why don't you ask Malcolm Hamilton to play." She is very eager to promote her best students, naturally, and so we've had Malcolm in the past several years.

One horn player is listed: Wendell Hoss, who plays with us occasionally. Among the violas, of which there were three: only one and that's Abraham Weiss. The clarinetists, the bassoonists and singers have all moved on to other things, including the hereafter.

Then there is a long list here, maybe half again as long, of people who were not members; this first group were called members, and the second group were called occasional participants. I don't know exactly what that differentiation was. Peter Yates will explain it, I'm sure. Among the occasional participants there are maybe fifteen pianists, and the only one of them who has appeared

with us recently is Lillian Steuber. There are two flutes; we never see any of them. Among the violinists: not one out of twelve. Among the singers (there are seven): none of them is active anymore. Of the three violas: only one remains active, and that is Milton Thomas. Of the cellists: none of the five. Of the bass players: none of the two. And of the clarinets: none of the three. And of the horn: not the one who is named here.

So I would say there has been a--what?--90 to 95 percent change in personnel; but, of course, we are talking about exactly twenty years ago. We have generally tried to favor the younger, newer people who are coming up. Some of the people who dropped out were simply weary of preparing concerts. A couple of them--I think I have mentioned--refused to be reviewed by our local critics. Some of them are so busy with the Philharmonic Orchestra that they don't want to take any time for chamber music. Some of them have gone completely into the commercial world. So there are a great variety of reasons.

But if I say there is a marked change in personnel over the past twenty years, I'll have to say there is also a change in personnel over the past four or five years, not as large a change, but almost every year we bring in several new people and lose a number of the old ones.

Because of the nature of the organization at that time, there were a great number of volunteer workers, and we learned through the years that it is much more efficient to avoid the volunteers. Since the director's job which I hold now is a paid job (a poorly paid job, but, nonetheless, a paid job), I find it much more economical of time and energy to do the bulk of the work myself and to hire secretarial help for colossal jobs such as mailings and things of that sort. In that sense we are now more professional from an organizational standpoint--I don't mean from a musical point of view, because from the musical point of view we have always been professional; but the setup of the organization is completely different. We run into different situations and perhaps the concerts have gained in prestige. Certain things are required by way of, well, I won't say "show," but it has to put up a different kind of front than it used to.

TUSLER: Of course, even in its early days I suppose most of the performers and composers were young people, and that is still true today, you say, to a large extent. The organization then has had an enormous influence, wouldn't you say, on the formation of the careers of many of the local musicians?

MORTON: That has always been true. For instance, in the early years there was a trio composed of David Frisina,

Kurt Reher, and Sven Reher. Frisina moved into the Philharmonic Orchestra and became concertmaster. Kurt Reher moved into the Philharmonic and became first cellist; then he left the orchestra for a while and went back to commercial work, and now he is back in the symphony again for the last several years. Those people were getting their first press notices as distinguished artists when they were playing at Evenings on the Roof.

The same is true of many of the young people now. There are a few players who are getting their first public performances at our concerts and are now quite in demand in the studios, and sometimes it is very hard for us to get them to play, although there have always been some players throughout our history who would turn down the professional engagement at the studio because they would not pull out of a concert [with us] that they had committed themselves to. That's a considerable financial sacrifice, but some of them feel that the musical experience of playing the concerts means more to them than the money. Of course, there are others whose financial obligations are such that they just cannot afford to pass up an engagement where they might earn $100 or $200, in order to play a concert with us. Throughout the years there have been last-minute program changes and somehow or other we weather them.

TUSLER: How do you make contacts with these upcoming young musicians? Is it they, generally, who make contact with you? Of course, you are in a unique position to hear about such newcomers, but do they often approach you?

MORTON: Most of the newer people that we have are people who have called or sent me a note and have said they'd like to play at the concerts. Sometimes I know about them because I have contacts with people in all the universities in the neighborhood and with a number of private teachers. Sometimes I may call someone like Natalie Limonick at UCLA or Alice Mock at USC and say I need such-and-such kind of soprano or tenor, whom do you have, and so on. I've had some good recommendations from Gwen Koldofsky at USC. Some of the people are discovered by our university friends like Ingolf Dahl, or Leonard Stein when he was at [Los Angeles] City College. But I would say about 50 percent of them are people who simply write to me, and then I try to hear them. I do conduct auditions from time to time. I set up an afternoon at the museum; then I'll ask the people to come in at half-hour intervals so I can hear a group of them at one time.

TUSLER: Do you publicize this in any way through the newspapers?

MORTON: No, I never do that because it would be impossible

to take care of all the people. As it is, we are using over a hundred musicians per year and sometimes my problem is to find adequate representation for the people who are [already] most active with us. I try not to get any one person on the series more than, say, two or three times during a season so as to make room for lots of others who want to come in. But sometimes [there are problems] because of the difficulty of the work, or the special relationship, say, between a clarinet player and a conductor, or something of that sort where the personnel problem is tied up with personal affiliations.

In general, the players are eager to play and the same is true of the composers. I am overwhelmed with scores being sent in. Letters come to me from Europe--I had a letter just a few days ago from a Spanish composer whose name was familiar to me but I have never seen any of his works. I wrote him back and said, "Well, of course we are always looking for new material, but where can I find your music?" A letter came the day before yesterday, and he said he would send me some scores. I've had scores come from Japan, where much of the music is really avant-garde; scores from Israel, which are quite conservative. Most of the composers in Europe have publishers who represent them, and I have communications from the publishers telling me about such-and-such

composers. But the unpublished composers, particularly the local ones, are sending scores in all the time. I would say that if I received, say, fifty or seventy-five scores during a season to be considered for the following season, I'm very lucky if I can find five or six that I think are worth performing. No; I would say that I find more [scores] than that that are worth performing but probably not more than five or six new composers that I can take on in any season.

The moment you take on one contemporary composer it means that you are denying a place to some other one, and I try very hard to keep our local composers well represented. They get first choice. This is partly because it's the "civic duty" of an organization like ours and, secondly, because most of these composers have some personal connection with us and they have no personal connections with the groups in the East or Middle West that are playing [their own] music. It is very difficult for them to get performances. We have, I suppose, several thousand composers in this country and the places where they can get played are very limited. It happens that even at the local universities where there are music programs and where you would expect the university composers to be represented, somehow or other they are not adequately represented on their own campus; and some of

them would rather be performed by us than on campus because of a certain prestige. We get noticed in the international press. I think I mentioned last time that we figure in the international press more than any other musical organization in the city.

The other thing that has happened is that some of the international organizations which sponsor tours by composers are in touch with me from time to time. For instance: just a few months ago the International Institute for Education called me. (They have an office here on the university campus.) Cristóbal Halffter, a young Spanish composer, was going to be in town and would I arrange for him to meet some of the musicians? Well, he came at a very difficult time; everybody was going up to the Ojai Festival, but I managed to get him invited to the festival and he met a number of people there. The Korean composer Isang Yun is going to be in town this week, and I'm supposed to entertain him also. This gets to be--what should I say--a domestic problem, if I have to be at home. But I feel it is part of the Monday Evening Concert activity; they have heard about us and want to meet us and so on, and we have to be hospitable to them in the same way that we like to be treated hospitably if we are going to go traveling in England or France or anywhere else. I must say that from my own

experience with my friends, Americans are in general more hospitable than the Europeans are--I mean, things center in our homes here, where there it usually means meeting in a restaurant somewhere just to talk. When Isang Yun comes here on Friday night, I've invited some musicians in; he'll bring tapes and scores and will be able to "show his wares," so to speak. In Europe that is more difficult to do.

TUSLER: Premieres have been, of course, one of the big contributions of Monday Evening Concerts. I would like to ask you to what extent you feel that the premieres that the organization has brought about have become part of the standard repertoire, not just of your group but in general?

MORTON: It seems to me that as we've pioneered with new music--the first concert that Peter Yates gave on his roof in 1939 was an all Bartók concert--for the most part, the adventurous, the difficult new music has not been taken up by other local organizations. I would hope that the task of presenting new music would be shared by other organizations, but somehow or other they are not willing to do it. Certain repertoire like the chamber music of Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, Stravinsky and so on remains our province. I'd be more than glad to surrender that to some other organization--pieces, of course, which

are the great classics of the twentieth-century repertoire. From time to time there will be a concert at UCLA or USC, maybe something sponsored by the ISCM, that will take on a piece. Well, it just means that I put it [at the] back of our list so as not to repeat it very soon. But on the whole, that repertoire remains ours.

Last year, for instance, when Mr. Mehta at the Philharmonic programed during the season five works of Schoenberg--they were all practically novelties and most of them were really Schoenberg pieces that were in the romantic repertoire--a great hullabaloo was raised; and when Mr. Mehta played the Variations he had to make a speech to the audience, not only to explain the piece to them but in a sense to apologize for playing such a difficult "modern" piece. Well, actually, you see, the piece was already twenty years old and had never been played here according to what he said and what was reported in the newspapers; the Philharmonic patrons wrote him letters in great numbers complaining about the terrible music that was being played. I wrote a letter to the Los Angeles Times defending Mr. Mehta's choice of repertoire. I pointed out that the Philharmonic audience was, in my opinion, extremely backward--Monday Evening Concerts had been playing Schoenberg for twenty-five years--in the sense of "where had they been all this time?" The strange thing

was that when Mr. [Martin] Bernheimer printed my letter (he didn't print it all, just excerpts from it, which was OK with me), he pointed out that I was the only person who had written to the newspaper to defend Mehta's programing of this music. That rather shocked me, because I thought there would be a lot of contemporary composers and performers and other people who would defend it. I am sure some of the audience wrote to the Philharmonic directly to defend the repertoire. I know several people who did. But no one wrote to the newspaper, although the newspaper, you see, had been discussing the situation.

So I'm afraid that we still represent the principal outlet for new music. So far as the resident composers are concerned, we just haven't any competition at all, I'm sorry to say. There are certain groups of composers that are not sympathetic to Monday Evening Concerts. On the whole, I would say they are in the conservative camp. From time to time they get up their own concerts under some auspices or other in order to get their music heard. They have a difficult time, too, and I'm very sympathetic with [them], but I feel that since the amount of new music that we can present is limited by time (we have only twelve concerts) and by certain financial considerations, we had best do the more adventurous of the

new music rather than the conservative type. This is a practical decision. It doesn't mean anyone is opposed to conservative music. However, most of us feel that if the music is very conservative and belonging, say, to the school of Debussy or Brahms, there is not much point in playing it when we can play the original--which is Debussy or Brahms. This is a point I remember that was made on the radio in the old days of broadcasting by the New York Philharmonic when Deems Taylor was the commentator. Now Deems Taylor was a very conservative man and he wrote some very pretty music, and he himself said, when someone had written in to ask him what about music that is written in the conservative way that is comparable to the work of the old masters, that there is no reason why a person shouldn't write that way if he wants to, but that he has pretty stiff competition. Why have the imitators if you can have the original?

Now, of course, there is also plenty of imitation in the most advanced contemporary school. We had our flood of neoclassical music following Stravinsky during the 1920s and '30s, and we had our flood of neo-Hindemith, and our flood of early twelve-tone music, and we had the imitators of Webern, and now we have a whole crowd of composers all over who are writing so much avant-garde music that you can't tell what is avant-garde anymore.

They are all using tape, the special effects on the instruments, open forms, improvisation, chance, and so on; so every few years you have a new academy, so to speak. We have very definitely an academy right now. The only difference between the present-day avant-garde academy and, say, the academy of the Webern imitators is that the newer academy is newer and one can't be quite so bored by the stuff which you haven't heard quite so much as you can be bored by the earlier kind of imitative writing. Now, I am not against, nor is Monday Evening Concerts against any kinds of composers, but one has to make choices simply because the number of programs is limited.

TUSLER: Have you ever thought of trying to extend the season or does that come inevitably to a financial situation?

MORTON: Well, it is financial. There were seasons when we used to give twenty-four or twenty-five concerts, but as I think I've mentioned before, those were years when there was not much competition in the sense of other kinds of concerts going on in town. But now the musical activity in this town is just tremendous, and because this city has grown so much, there are concerts in every little community. Take, for instance, the community orchestras that exist in the greater Los Angeles area:

Glendale, Burbank, Inglewood, Highland Park. They are all over, and these programs are not taking away patronage, I think, from the Philharmonic. They are different kinds of concerts; most of them are community orchestras, which means they have some nonprofessional players, some amateur players, always strengthened and bolstered by professional players. The same thing is going on in chamber music. There are chamber music concerts being given all over the city; so the need for us to put on twenty-five concerts a year just simply doesn't exist anymore.

From time to time, people have asked why don't you cut your concerts to ten? because, you know, from time to time we do have poor audiences, although on the whole our average over the season is up. Twelve concerts seem to be feasible for us because if we put on ten concerts our overhead costs go on just the same. It doesn't cost us any more to put on twelve than to put on ten. In terms of our printing and almost everything else, the cost would remain the same. If we cut down to ten we are also going to cut our income. So we are at sort of an impasse. At this point we can't very well change our season one way or the other. This does not alarm me, because at some point other conditions in the community will change and we will adapt ourselves as quickly as

possible to them. The way we have been operating in recent years has been successful enough, and we will, I suppose, stay in our own little rut until we are knocked out of it. But we do try to be alert to whatever the situations are. We are not committed to anything that we can't change.

TUSLER: You say there has been approximately a 95 percent turnover in all of the people who have participated, but I notice that throughout our conversations there is a clear thread of names that have remained with it right down the line who have really been, I suppose, the backbone of the organization.

MORTON: Well, Ingolf Dahl, in terms of association and service, is probably the senior member. Leonard Stein was active in the early years, but then there was a period when he was not active with this organization. He was active elsewhere--I don't remember exactly when--and I brought him back into the organization. I thought he was very valuable to us, and so now he is one of the principal people. Karl Kohn, who has been out at Pomona College for, I'd say, twelve or fifteen years by now, I brought into activity here around 1956 or 1957. I'm thinking now of our board members: Dorrance Stalvey has been active three or four years; Marshall Bialosky just a year. Paco Lagerstrom, the nonmusician member of our

board, has been interested in the concerts for a long, long time and is a very generous contributor, but he is an amateur musician--that is, he can play the piano with not too difficult scores and get acquainted with them. He is active with a great many organizations in town--for instance, the Coleman Chamber Music Society, of which he has been vice-president, program chairman and whatnot. Pasadena is his home and his position is at Caltech. He's always there doing important things by way of advice, and he brings a nonprofessional attitude which is sometimes very helpful. One can get very ingrown with just musicians around.

TUSLER: Oscar Moss, without whom the organization would not have been possible, was also nonprofessional?

MORTON: He was a nonmusician. And Mrs. Moss's principal interest is in art. That about covers the few nonmusicians--Lagerstrom, Mr. Moss, Mrs. Moss. We tend to have mostly composers on our board because it turns out that the composers know more about repertoire than the performers do. It is comparatively rare, as I mentioned several times, that the players come up with first-class repertoire ideas. This may be a weakness in the organization because in the beginning the active board was made up entirely of playing musicians. But they didn't come with any repertoire ideas. It was Peter Yates and Mary

Jeannette Brown and so on who came with the repertoire ideas. This requires a lot of research, getting on the mailing lists of all the music publishers, getting their catalogs, combing the catalogs, and keeping up with new editions of the old masters, which brings a lot of old music into our range.

TUSLER: Would you say that the organization has been, aside from his work at the university, one of Ingolf Dahl's greatest enthusiasms through the years? Or has he been equally active on the total musical scene?

MORTON: Well, in the last eighteen years, Ingolf has become a very important man on the national scene. He's had performances all over. Some of his pieces are standard repertoire by now, and because he is a distinguished teacher, he goes to various campuses for special lectures or demonstrations. He has a very wide field of activity; but as far as Los Angeles is concerned, I would say his main musical activities take place on the USC campus and at Monday Evening Concerts. For the last three years, of course, he's had the Ojai Festival, but now he has finished his stint there. I think three years is about as much as anyone can take of that. It is very, very hard work and very demanding.

TUSLER: And that's going to be your responsibility next year?

MORTON: Well, I had it for seven years and then I was away from it since 1959, and I go back to it for the 1967 Festival. I don't know if I'll be glad about it or not because it is a very difficult job.

I might say something about Monday Evening Concert financing: we depend largely on tax-exempt contributions. Our ticket sales cannot account for more than half our income; sometimes it is less than half. When the concerts began they were very cheap and they have remained cheap. It is quite impossible for us to move into the category of concerts at $4.50 and $5.00 a seat. When we sell twelve concerts for $15.00, that is about as cheap as you can get a concert. We do ask our people to give us money in excess of the cost of the tickets. From contributions of this sort, we get the bulk of the money that we need to carry us through. We lose money on ticket sales, without any question. Even if we filled our hall of 600 seats and averaged $1.25, for instance, if it was a sellout on season tickets, we simply couldn't make our way at all. We do want to keep the ticket prices low, simply for the people who cannot afford expensive concerts. And of course, we have to keep our student-ticket rate down; we don't like to limit the number of student tickets per concert as they do, for instance, at UCLA, where at concerts at Schoenberg Hall they allow

a certain number of tickets to be sold to students at $1.00, or whatever their price is, but the rest of the house has to go at a fairly decent fee. We charge $2.50 for a single admission, and so that brings up the income. Actually, from the income point of view it's better for us to sell single admissions than to sell season tickets; but when we get a large number of our people giving us contributions in excess of the cost of our tickets, well, we are just that much better off.

Of course, our budgets have gone up and up and up, year after year. I haven't any idea what the original budgets were in the early years of the Evenings on the Roof. Ours have gone higher for several reasons: not only because everything costs more as part of the general inflation and the rise of living standards and everything else in this country, but because composers write music for strange combinations of instruments. We couldn't possibly put on a concert with four or five or six players. Well, I won't say we <u>can't</u> because I've just now completed arrangements for one concert next year that will be done by three players. I can get maybe one or two such concerts during the year, and they are necessary in order to pay for concerts where we need twelve or fifteen or eighteen instruments. But the instrumental combinations are so different now from what they were in

past years. And there is always the problem of renting percussion instruments. Percussion has become a major department now of chamber music, and the rental and drayage of instruments--all that sort of thing--goes up. Printing costs go up. At the present time we are operating on an annual budget that figures, you might say, around $18,000, whereas I can remember years when it used to be around $8,000 to $10,000. And in the beginning I'm sure that it was very, very much less than that. But I think it is inevitable that if the organization is going to grow at all it means some widening in the financial base. We are always in financial trouble. We never have enough money and we are always limiting repertoire, rehearsal time and everything else because of inadequate funds. Every year we go through the same process of writing letters to people and begging money, begging for more and more.

TUSLER: Let's talk about the future: how do you picture this widening of the base taking place? How stable is your present situation and how do you imagine things are going to turn out in the years to come?

MORTON: Well, this is rather hard to say. The stability of the organization depends on many factors. First of all, it depends on Mrs. Moss and her contributions, which are very large. It depends also on the amount of support

that the community will give us by way of memberships in the society. The extra money above the cost of ticket price is considered a contribution to the Southern California Chamber Music Society. How much of that income is a personal tribute to Mrs. Moss I cannot say, but I am sure that a large proportion of it is.

Another factor is the stability of the director, which is myself. I must say that people like Peter Yates and myself are not numerous. To take on a job like this is a real sacrifice because the pay is small, the responsibility is great, and the amount of labor is very great. As I've said many times, only an idiot like Peter or myself would undertake a job like this. In the years that I was away, the two years that I was in Europe, the system went along fairly decently, although I had set up the pattern for it and, as a matter of fact, brought in most of the contributions before I left. This was for the 1959-60 season. I would say 75 percent of the contributions had been brought in before I left. The plan of having one person responsible for each concert worked out fairly well, although some people are just not attentive enough to details and details can be terribly, terribly important. I haven't any idea who my successor is going to be. I have discussed this with Mrs. Moss in view of the fact that I've had a couple of serious

illnesses. What's going to happen? who is going to take over? I try to think of the young people around, and I cannot say that I find anyone. Now, I'm not trying to say that I'm indispensable. There is no such thing as an indispensable person, but so far we haven't come across anyone who is particularly interested in this kind of business. It requires a great deal of knowledge of music, for one thing, and it requires a willingness to sit around and count paper clips and work on mailing lists, things of that sort.

TUSLER: It has worked so far because special people like yourself and the Mosses have been so personally involved. Now in the future it may, if the organization is going to survive, depend upon further institutionalization. That would be unfortunate, wouldn't it? because that would bring with it certain controls which might be against the character of the organization.

MORTON: That's true; but maybe this will be no more disastrous than the institutional changes that took place at the time that Monday Evening Concerts took over from Evenings on the Roof. There were big changes then and they were weathered. I'm not going to forecast that some other change is going to be disastrous. It may not be a disaster at all. But we who are working at the organization now can only work on the basis of who we are,

what we do, what we are interested in, and so on. It can very well be that someone else will come along with fresh ideas--other ideas about financing, for instance, although we've worked very hard on trying to get foundation help but have not been successful. Maybe that is an avenue. Maybe sometime in the future, the museum itself might want to take over the financial responsibility. This is also possible because other museums around the country do have extensive musical programs. I don't know that anyone other than the people who are now active and interested in us would maintain the policy of mixing the old and the new music. There are organizations all over the country dedicated to new music, but there are very few that present the wide spectrum of music that we do; and I would think that it would be a real loss if that were to be discontinued.

I think it would be a loss also if we didn't continue to present the avant-garde music. This comes back to us as a great good in many ways. For instance, Boulez may be the most significant musician of this generation, among the people, say, around forty years old. We had him out here many years ago. He has made three appearances for us before he had appeared anywhere else in the United States. It's very good for us to be in touch with composers of that sort because they propagandize for us

in Europe and elsewhere in the United States, and if we have a certain prestige and importance, it is because of that. We presented for the first time in America such composers as Boulez, Stockhausen, Berio and Nono--people of that sort. This is, I think, one of our unique contributions, together with the principle of associating them with the old music. That is a principle that runs all the way back to the beginnings of Evenings on the Roof and is one principle of continuity that has lasted. I think it would be unfortunate to lose it.

TUSLER: Now that you are established at the museum, that would be one of the clearest solutions for the thing, particularly if it turns out that the Southern California Chamber Music Society is not going to be a lasting organization after Mrs. Moss's day.

MORTON: Well, that is hard to say. The nature of the supporting organization might be subject to change, too. Maybe there is someone else in the community who would like to support the concerts in the way that Mrs. Moss does. I think the people who know about Mrs. Moss are few, because she is a very modest person and doesn't want any particular recognition for what she is doing. Other people might undertake it if they can get some sort of personal glorification out of it, as one sees in a number of art centers, cultural centers going up in

this town and elsewhere, that bear the names of their particular donors. For instance, at the museum three buildings are named for the three people who gave the most money. At the Music Center we have the same thing. The question of personal glorification enters into it, and if that is the way things go, we will have to be--as everyone has to be--a follower. One gentleman, that I know in this city, made a very handsome contribution to the museum and subsequently withdrew it because he didn't want to support an organization that was going to be named for a lot of other people. He refused to have his own name connected. He wanted it to be a public institution, not bearing anybody's name at all; so he withdrew his rather large contribution. But people like that, I think, are fairly rare. Most of the architectural wonders of our cultural centers are bearing the names of the principal donors.

TUSLER: Yes. Will you make a few remarks about the Ojai Festival?

MORTON: Well, the Ojai Festival just finished its twentieth year. It began as an activity promoted by the Ojai people. Thor Johnson was the conductor, and after the second year, I believe, I began to write program notes for them just as a contribution (I was not paid for it). Then because of certain developments up there, they asked

me if I would take over the direction of the festival, which I did in 1954. I ran, I think, seven festivals, the last one being in 1959 when I went off to Europe.

During the years that I was there, I suppose the festival reflected some of my own interests and, in a certain way, some connection with Monday Evening Concerts from the standpoint of repertoire. I engaged Robert Craft as conductor, and for the second and third years that he was there, he brought Stravinsky along as a guest conductor. The repertoire was, I would say, in general the same kind of repertoire that we were doing at Monday Evening Concerts, but orchestrally, everything was done on a much larger scale. Then I invited Aaron Copland, as the most distinguished American composer then, to come to conduct and to play a lot of his own works; and I had Bob Craft again. Then Lukas Foss took over for several years and Ingolf Dahl for three years, and I'm going back in '67, with Pierre Boulez as conductor.

The Ojai Festival is committed to being a small festival. They seat 900 in the bowl and around 450, I think, in the indoor hall, and they do not want to become huge. They want to stay small and rather exclusive, which is a good thing for a city like Ojai. They've had an amount of national and international publicity, and it is a distinguished festival. It has always been a distinguished

festival, although its character has changed according to the directors who have come along. But, again, it has favored adventure in the field of repertoire rather than the conservative staid thing that most of the other festivals around the country do, which is simply nothing more than a repetition of the Boston Symphony season. From what I've been reading about the new place at Saratoga, it seems to be all fairly conservative.

I think that Ojai is in the front rank of the adventurous festivals with respect to repertoire, but it will never be in the front rank so far as physical things are concerned because it is operating on a small budget and it has necessarily a small audience. I think it is certainly one of the most distinguished musical activities in Southern California; and since it has survived for twenty years and seems to be fairly well established, what they need now is to improve their physical plant (which they've been doing little by little through the years). They try every year to add a little bit of something to make the place more comfortable for the performers and for the audience.

TUSLER: Is it a city-sponsored thing entirely?

MORTON: No, it is privately sponsored. They have the same kinds of problems that Monday Evening Concerts have. You have to go around and beg money from people. Their

ticket prices are very reasonable, not as cheap as Monday Evening Concerts, but they are reasonable prices, although some people regard them as very high. If you pay $4.50 or $5.00 for a concert maybe that is expensive; but if you are going away for a weekend festival, you cannot expect to find it very cheap.

TUSLER: You were not one of the founders of it, were you?

MORTON: No, no, I can take no credit for anything there.

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