

1960

Henri Temianka Correspondence; (lees)

Benjamin Lees

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Keywords

Henri Temianka, Benjamin Lees, culture, virtuosity in musical performance, violinist, chamber music, camaraderie, musical recordings, discontent, humor, holiday, family, recreation and entertainment, wife, husband, children

acknowledge call

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Benjamin Lees
5 Rue de Paris
Longpont sur Orge
Seine et Oise, France

Mr. Henri Temianka
2915 Patricia Avenue
Los Angeles 64, California

My Dear Henri:

I want to hasten to answer your good letter, and tell you that I have a copy of our Quartet NO.2. It was sent to me by friends from Los Angeles. After listening to it many times all I can say is "bravo, bravo." All of you performed it with a sense of dedication and authority, and it shows up. I could not ask for a finer performance and I thank you most sincerely for your efforts in bringing this work to the public.

Yes, I am sorry about the mix-up in the announcement, but Liberty did withdraw it and change the number. My jacket liner bears the title Quartet NO.2, so all is well. Of course it's a shame that your relations with Liberty have become so strained as to force you to leave them. It is all quite understandable. I think, too, it was gross negligence on their part to have recorded Lucien's practise pizzicato in the Debussy, thus marring a perfect performance. I only hope that you will now have an opportunity of signing with a more reliable company.

The Quartet will be issued during the first quartet of this year and I promise to send out the score and parts immediately thereafter. I am as impatient as you to finally receive it.

All is confusion here, as not only do I have the Violin Concerto to complete, but have recently been commissioned by the Louisville Orchestra to write the Symphony NO.2 for their 1958-59 season. It must be delivered by July, so you can imagine the amount of work I have in store. In August my wife and daughter and I will heave a sigh of relief and take a four week vacation in the south of France. That sigh had better last a long time, for in September I start on a three act opera. Composers are simply gluttons for punishment.

Your tour must have been tiring as can be, but it surely must have been one of the most successful yet. It sounds like a mighty schedule and you deserve a rest. When does the next one commence?

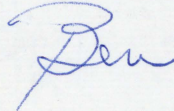
Henri, in closing I want to thank you again for all you have done for our quartet. It is really my hope that, in the future, you might be tempted to ask me

for another quartet for the Paganini. Believe it or not, my notebook is already filling with themes, snatches, phrases and what-not for a future quartet, and all I would need would be the excuse, and a little time, to write one! Perhaps for 1959? or 1960? Who knows. All I know is that, as a medium of expression, the string quartet is the purest and finest and most challenging of all. And, since I am enamoured with the way the Paganini Quartet plays, perhaps we can get together again on another opus. That is an honest wish.

Meanwhile Lea, Janet and I want to wish the Temianka Ensemble of Patricia Avenue all the best for 1958, in the hope that this year will be the best yet for all of you. Do keep us posted.

With kindest regards,

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ben", written in a cursive style.