

These are not reassuring days. The American press writes, the government speaks, the people demonstrate daily, reminding us of fears, anxieties, of the uncertainty of our existence. The emphasis on destroying ourselves is not a happy one. Concentration on metal and mortar, launching weapons, nuclear strikes, nuclear deterrents, mutual vulnerability - of star wars and MX missiles. We are reminded of graves in Germany, of Vietnam mistakes, Nicaragua frustrations, Soviet Union balances and leverages...South African apartheid. There is no time nor place for meditation or compassion, understanding; no thoughts as to our kinship with God and no place for the simple statement: "Love thy neighbor as thyself".

Today, let us abandon these man-made problems and deal with "soul states". Let us rejoice and give thanks for the Arts, the performing arts, the creative arts and the artist teacher. Great institutions and great movements grow out of men and women of great character, lofty dreams, urgent desires and the ability to act.

When one speaks of Quakerism, Methodism, Puritanism, immediately one remembers Fox, Wesley and Calvin. It was Peabody who dreamed of a school in Baltimore, Md. It was Eastman who created and funded the arts and it was the dream, desire and persistence of a little gracious lady that caused these doors to open to you, in 1924. I am told that by 1927 Leopold Stokowski had enlarged the Curtis orchestra to 83 members, but what is very significant is that the student body was selected from 33 states and 8 foreign countries, and this pattern has continued. The student body has always been international and interracial. This last word, "interracial", gives me a deep sense of gratitude and joy, for in 1927 my application to a conservatory was

rejected. This was in Cincinnati...and in Baltimore in 1930 I was told the same thing...I was the wrong color. And so as a young man I pondered and wondered about democracy in my country, and I recalled the words of Lincoln: "that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom--and that government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth". Later in life I heard the words of Robert Frost who defined democracy as "walking through society freely...in a harness". Then twenty years ago I heard the "I have a Dream" speech...words rang out in clear bell-like emotional tones..."Free at last, free at last, thank God all Mighty we're free at last". You will also know that in the 1940's and 50's I was soloist many times with every major symphony orchestra in the northern U.S.A., and not once did I see one person of my ethnic persuasion in a single organization. I felt we were not free. Today I wonder if I am perhaps something of a symbol. If so, we are at last free, our music is freedom of choice, without religious or racial boundaries. Let us today rejoice and acknowledge the dignity of the soul through new-found freedom. Let us recall Affirmative Action and then the Arts Endowment, which has brought new life and energy to communities all over America. The charter states that "every man everywhere should be free to develop his talents to their full potential-unhampered by arbitrary barriers, race, or birth or income. On September 29, 1965, President Johnson declared "The Arts and the humanities belong to the people". Today we rejoice.

It was in the hearts and minds of the Institute founders that the faculties here should be first class. This practice has been a remarkable and noble one...we can boast of a parade of musical giant-world celebrities, super stars. To mention only a few boggles the

mind --- Hoffman in 1924, Efram Zimbalist in 1928, Elizabeth Schumann and Marcella Sembrick - Stokowski and Rodzinski - Serkin, Barber and Menotti - and as far back as 1927 they were graduating such singers as Rose Bamton, Helen Jepson and Fredrick Schorr.

The practice of "one teacher-one pupil" can be electrifying and a lasting experience. The maestro with vast world experience, power and influence, authority - guiding, edifying, enhancing your ears, sharpening your touch, clarifying your technique, refining and polishing your sense of esthetics....and you, the super-talented student with urgency for acquisition of knowledge and skills, are surely a foil for the teacher. You are free to listen, to feel, absorb and perform. The master who stands before you performing on a level, unraveling the mysteries and delights of music, pointing to you your grasp if not your reach. Your attitude is that of a sponge, willing, optimistic, deeply acquainting your inner self with the master's cerebral responses. If your attitude is not honest, pure, optimistic and enthusiastic, you have failed in the first requirements for progress and performing.

The intellectual, spiritual and emotional association between the master and pupil is of paramount importance. Frankly, I have come to the conclusion that to be a world-renowned celebrity does not necessarily mean that you are a great teacher. Curtis Institute has invited you to be a member of the faculty because of your eminence on the performing stages of the world. Curtis does not provide you a throne to be an Emperor---your power, personality, authority and influence and narcissistic attitude can easily negate your usefulness.

Teaching is a beautiful, glorious, lofty profession---many times

misjudged, most times underpaid and ignored. Curtis does not hand you the license to be arrogant, aloof and demeaning, but Curtis Institute does provide an historical room for your humanity, understanding, sympathy and compassion --- you are here to serve Music and the student -- not your self-indulgence and importance. Confucius suggests that the superior teacher will establish three Freedoms: freedom from anxieties, freedom from perplexities and freedom from fear. It is hoped that we teachers create and maintain a high interest and a favorable attitude toward music-making without which maximum progress is impossible; break down and lessen the fear and anxieties and inferiority complexes of the student; and put emphasis on expression, communication and an enthusiastic attitude for the problems, desires and preferences of the pupil. The charter of Curtis Institute states that the doors were opened for students... we the teachers must therefore serve Music and the students, not our powerful egos.

Let me finish with a few words to the graduating class. Born free--you were born free with the capacity for wonder, for curiosity, adventure...born free to discover and grow and finally for action... free you are to make decisions either for progression or for regression. Your parents are present today remembering that you were born with a healthy body, good mind, and a little later in your life found out that you have a very special talent. They are present because they love you. The Curtis Board and teachers are here because they voted for your matriculation to the Institute...they are here today to tell you that you have finished your work here and they willingly give you

all they have - their good name. The name CURTIS will serve you well for it carries with it dignity, nobility and its name is known all over this world.

What are you saying? Is it thanks for the insights and delights of music I've gained here, or is it "I'm graduating...Thank God!"

Today, I challenge you to be grateful for your talents and abilities by accepting them as obligations to be invested for the common good, accepting your special gift as a challenge to achievement. Thank your God for each new day (like Rilke) so that every waking hour of every day is a testimony to your deepest desire.

The answer is not found with your parents, it's responsibility does not lie with your teachers nor Curtis---the answer lies deep within you. You are free to accept or reject that responsibility.

I would be disingenuous if I did not share with you, for you. Your generation expects and demands instant gratification in regards to the goals for yourselves. You expect the immediate big salary, you think your partial readiness can move the world today, when in fact your first move --- is to move yourself. Patience you do not consider, you forget that you need time for polishing and refining... a time for deepening and digesting, a time for paying bills, making a living, more intense lessons, a time for auditions and competitions, a time for reviewing aspirations, and little achievements and tiny successes, a time to reach higher and higher to your goals. You are soon to be an alumnus; we will patiently wait to read of your triumphs; we will welcome you back to this platform to sing your song, to perform your sonata and to tell your story. Your success story does not have to be in terms of how many dollars you earn, nor what

the critic writes about you. In my studio hang the words of Emerson and there are times that I ask my pupil to stop and read. May I share these words with you?

To laugh often and much, to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to hear the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty: to find the best in others: to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you lived. This is to have succeeded.

Ralph Waldo Emerson