

# AGMA

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# AGMA

Official Organ of the AMERICAN GUILD OF MUSICAL ARTISTS, INC.  
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# GUILD TALK

WE have received, during the last week, a letter from one of the well known musical managements in New York, which runs, in part, as follows:

"In spite of the fact that, so far as I can understand it, the AGMA is one of the most difficult of the hazards which the small 'independent' concert manager, such as myself, has yet had to face, I believe it is only right, in the interests of economy (if for no other reason), that we should assist in correcting your mailing list."

(AGMA had sent copies of the Magazine and other literature to various artists under this particular management.)

Preserving the anonymity of the manager concerned, and assuming, not without justification, that his attitude of hostility (or his conviction of the hostile attitude of the Guild) is one fairly representative of managers throughout the country, both "independent" and otherwise, the AGMA membership, through "AGMA" Magazine, herewith sends this open letter to all managers, to their colleagues and to any one of the musical public who may be interested in the matter. It is absolutely necessary that the purposes of AGMA and its policies be clearly understood if the Guild is to accomplish as much for the musical profession as it hopes to do.

Gentlemen:

You are greatly mistaken in your assumption that the American Guild of Musical Artists intends to constitute itself a hazard or a destructive agency to any management or to anyone making his living legitimately in the musical profession.

If the intentions of its officers and its membership are carried out, AGMA will be a most constructive element in the industry. It is unreasonable to suppose that any organization that is made up of the individuals who are the very substance of the profession should wish anything but good to music or should work for anything but an increase and extension of musical activity.

Our objectives are variegated, but basically they all stem from the simple desire to establish equitable standards of compensation and conditions of employment for musical artists throughout the country. This, we believe, can be done if the artists, on one hand, and the managers and impresarios

who employ them, on the other, can agree to certain fundamental conditions of contractual relationship which, in the condition of confidence and security that their acceptance will entail, will work to the mutual advantage of both.

Certainly you must be aware of some of the flagrant abuses practiced upon artists by some impresarios and some managers who are not in the least responsible or scrupulous as most of the managers and impresarios in New York are.

We are sure you will agree that it is to the best interest of the profession and all concerned with it to wipe out these abuses and to regulate the activities of those individuals who practice them.

And even in the case of recognized and responsible managers, we feel that it is to the best interest of artist and manager alike, that certain basic standard conditions be accepted by all in regard to tenure of contract, mutual responsibility and the like.

Of course, in drawing up such standard contracts and in putting them into practice, we will need the confidence and cooperation of all managers, and so we hope that this letter has served to alter, in some measure, your attitude toward us and your opinion that we intend to be a 'hazard' to you.

Cordially,  
AMERICAN GUILD OF MUSICAL ARTISTS, INC."

## How Bored Can You Get—Safely?

BY this leading and pusillanimous question we do not mean to imply that AGMA affairs can ever be boring to AGMA members. However, a printed account of some of the more technical business may at times be a bit dull reading.

Nevertheless it is of vital importance that all members acquaint themselves fully with the workings of the new dues scale and such other matters. To receive the full benefit of our organization it is necessary, especially in the first formative years, that you understand every detail of the organization's functions.

We have tried to make "AGMA" Magazine an interesting publication and one through which the membership throughout the country can keep in touch with one another.

By the inclusion of articles of general interest as well as reports of formal Guild business we have tried to make the Magazine a thing to which the members pleasurable look forward. We should like to hear from you as to how far we have been successful.

And we earnestly appeal to you to stick it out and read it all.

L. T. CARR

# AGMA'S CHARTER GRANTED

## *An Account of the Final Happy Outcome of an Involved Situation*

IN the last issue of this journal a special notice was inserted informing our members that the Associated Actors and Artistes of America had granted AGMA a charter covering the fields of Grand Opera, Concert and Recital.

As our last issue went to press, the jurisdictional dispute between AGMA and the Grand Opera Artists Association, which had held up the granting of the charter, was still unsettled.

The charge that the GOAA had not succeeded in properly organizing the field of Grand Opera had been brought before the International Board of the AAAA by Kenneth Thomson, Executive Secretary of the Screen Actors Guild. Hearings on this charge were to have been conducted by the Four A Board on August 27, and it was expected that the GOAA charter would be revoked and issued to AGMA.

As those of our members who follow AGMA news in the daily press know, the hearing never took place. A final attempt by Mr. Thomson to find a solution to the controversy acceptable to both the disputing parties was successful. The charge, consequently, was withdrawn.

On August 27, before the time set for the AAAA Board meeting, a conference was arranged between the officers of the GOAA and representatives of AGMA and the Screen Actors Guild. The meeting was held in the New York office of the latter organization. Attending were Leo Fischer and Henry Jaffe of AGMA, Giuseppe Interrante, Armand Marbiny, Mario Valle and Leonard Ruisi of the GOAA, and Kenneth Thomson and Florence Marston of the SAG.

After a short discussion, the following agreement was drawn up and signed by AGMA and GOAA representatives:

"1. The AGMA Board of Governors, on August 28th, will adopt the AFRA scale of dues and initiation fees.

"2. GOAA members will not be required to pay any initiation fees and will be accepted for membership upon payment of one-half their annual dues in advance provided they apply for membership and pay such dues on or before November 1st, 1937.

"3. The present GOAA minimum wage scale will be adopted for opera companies that charge \$2.00 or less as their top price, until such time as a committee, composed solely of singers performing in such companies, shall determine a different minimum scale.

"4. AGMA will submit to its membership a constitutional amendment permitting additional Board members. Three such additional Board members shall be selected by such members of the GOAA as will at that time be members of AGMA in good standing. Such constitutional amendment shall also require an additional Vice President, which office shall be filled by a former GOAA member.

"5. The present officers and counsel of GOAA hereby agree to recommend to their membership meeting to be held on August 30, (1) the ratification of this agreement, (2) the surrender of their charter from AAAA, and (3) the immediate issuance of a charter to AGMA.

"6. If the GOAA membership does not so ratify this agreement at the meeting of August 30, this agreement shall be null and void."

*Signed:* LEO FISCHER      HENRY JAFFE  
MARIO VALLE      GIUSEPPE INTERRANTE  
LEONARD RUISI      ARMAND MARBINY

August 27th, 1937.

At the meeting of the Four A's Board at which AGMA's charter was granted, Leonard Ruisi, Counsel for the GOAA, requested that an alteration be made in the agreement so that the word "apply" in paragraph 2 should not be construed to mean that any application of a GOAA member could be refused.

Since the agreement had been ratified by the AGMA Board and the GOAA membership as it stood, no alteration could legally be made, but Mr. Ruisi and the AAAA Board were assured by Leo Fischer, Executive Secretary of AGMA, that no GOAA application would be refused.

Since all the terms of the agreement had already been offered by AGMA in previous negotiations with the GOAA, the AGMA Board of Governors promptly ratified the document in a meeting held on August 28.

On the afternoon of August 30, a membership meeting of the GOAA unanimously voted to ratify the agreement.

Later that same evening, the Four A's Board granted AGMA a charter covering Grand Opera, Concert and Recital.

The amicable settlement of the GOAA dispute and the acquisition of the AAAA charter should be causes of extreme gratification to AGMA members. A val-

*(Continued on Page 8)*

# New GRADUATED DUES SCALE

## How the New System Will Work— Adjustments on Overdue Accounts

THE membership has already received official notification of the adoption of the new dues scale. There are several details of the working of the new system that should be thoroughly understood by the membership.

First, in declaring the dues classification in which they belong, members must be careful to remember that only *income derived from Grand Opera, Concert or Recital* should be considered for purposes of dues payments to AGMA. Income derived from radio, motion pictures or any other source should not be calculated. An artist with an annual income of \$100,000 may yet fall in the lowest dues bracket so far as AGMA is concerned, if his income from opera, concert and recital is \$2,000 or below.

It is unnecessary to remark that no artist need hesitate to declare his "AGMA income" for the purpose of this dues classification. In the first place the declaration is seen by the

*Executive Secretary alone*—no Board member has access to the file of declarations—and it is considered impersonally by him merely for purposes of bookkeeping. In the second place, an artist's income from opera, concert and recital is never indicative of his total income.

Most of the classification blanks have already been re-

turned—it is absolutely indispensable that every member return his blank before November 1st.

Members who are in arrears under the old system of dues must make up their back payments. This is the only policy that the Board can follow in this regard without injustice to those members who have kept their accounts in good standing under the old system.

Members who have paid under the old system beyond November 1st will be credited with the balance of their payments under the new scale.

This new dues system was adopted in order to conform with the dues scales of other AAAA organizations. As a result of its adoption, Class "A" membership is abolished and all members will have an equal vote.

If you have lost the classification blank mailed you, please apply at the office for another as soon as possible.

The new dues scale is as follows:

Approximate Gross Income from Grand Opera, Concert and Recital During Past Year	Annual Dues	Initiation Fee
Up to \$2,000	\$ 12	\$10
\$2,000 to \$5,000	18	10
\$5,000 to \$10,000	24	10
\$10,000 to \$20,000	36	25
\$20,000 to \$50,000	48	25
Over \$50,000	100	25

## FINANCING AGMA's New CAMPAIGN of ACTIVITY . . . . .

A RECENT MEETING of the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors voted to authorize the floating of a loan of from fifteen to twenty thousand dollars among the AGMA membership for the purpose of financing the broad program of activity that will now have to be undertaken as a result of AGMA's assumption of exclusive jurisdiction over Grand Opera, Concert and Recital in the United States.

A Loan Committee, headed by Richard Bonelli as Chairman, was appointed to secure subscriptions and already over five thousand dollars have been subscribed. One year notes are being issued against all advances, bearing six percent interest annually.

It is the intention of the Board to repay all debts contracted in this manner with the receipts of an AGMA benefit to be held in New York next Spring, similar to the AGMA Flood Relief Benefit last year in which the Guild cleared over \$26,000.00 for the Red Cross. Suggestions have been made for a series of benefits in several of the large cities of the country. Final plans will be made by a Committee appointed for that purpose.

The uses to which the moneys secured through this loan will be put are manifold.

An advance of \$10,000.00 will have to be made at once to AFRA, the American Federation of Radio Artists, in

*A Loan, Subscribed by Members, Will Be Repaid With Benefit Receipts—The Outlook for the Future—The AGMA-SAG-AFRA-Equity Agreement (see page nine).*

accordance with the agreement between SAG, AGMA and Equity to finance AFRA's first activities. This was reported in the last issue.

Campaigns are being pushed now to completely organize all opera companies throughout the country. It is expected that several impresarios will have signed recognition and AGMA-Shop contracts when this issue goes to press. Leo Fischer, AGMA Executive Secretary, left on October 1st for San Francisco, Los Angeles and Chicago where he will attempt to conclude agreements with the local opera companies for recognition and AGMA Shop. In the meantime plans are being laid for the organization of the concert field.

AGMA has concluded an agreement with the Screen Actors Guild, AFRA, and Equity providing for a system of interchangeability of membership cards and cooperative action in requiring the respective memberships to join the various other organizations when they enter their respective fields.

A full account of this agreement will be found elsewhere in this issue. (Page 9.)

# *The EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES*

By L. T. CARR

**T**HERE is a very charming fable of German vintage which has the same title as this essay, in which most of the characters are very vain and very stupid and two of the characters are very clever, which is a pretty accurate universal proportion.

The fable has to do with two knaves who came to a king's court disguised as tailors and got a commission to replenish the king's wardrobe. They claimed to have some very wonderful cloth, possessed of a special characteristic, which made it visible only to intelligent people. Dolt, boors, ignoramus, said the knaves, cannot see the cloth at all—it is to them as if there were none—but to the clever and cultured the fabric is clearly visible in all its peculiar beauty.

Of course, no one could see anything in the thin air which hung from the two gentlemen's fingers, but everyone was afraid to say so. The Grand Vizier and members of the cabinet had known for some time, of course, that their intelligence was not very keen, but until now they had been able to conceal it from each other.

And so they all began to emit cries of delight as the clever young men pretended to hold up new fabrics, so that the poor king, who was by this time quite bewildered, realizing that it would never do for the head of State to show that he was not very bright, ordered a complete outfit made so that he might wear it in the state procession that was to take place later in the week.

The two "tailors" made a great show the next few days of cutting the air with large scissors, and threading needles carefully, and, on the appointed day, the king took off his robes and made motions of dressing himself in the new outfit. Several of the ladies wanted to faint when he appeared from his dressing room clad in the garments that only the clever could see, but they restrained themselves out of consideration of their reputations, for they had all been considered great wits.

When the procession was ready, the king stepped under a silk canopy and walked down the street between the crowds of villagers, with his royal rump uncovered to the public gaze, feeling very chilly.

According to the tale, the townspeople fell in with the pretense and made motions of admiring the king's coat, supposing in their innocence that the officials of state were naturally smarter than they, until some-

body's little boy asked bluntly why the king was marching about undressed.

Of course, all this happened many years ago when people were not as sensible as they have since become, so that I must be wrong in supposing that a great many of the people who sit in concert halls listening to art songs sung in German and French, are equally as bewildered as the members of this unfortunate king's cabinet, and that they are pretending in the same way that they understand the music which is reputedly "cultured" and "highbrow." A great deal has been said about the necessity of translating opera into English in America, as it is translated into Italian in Italy, etc., and to me it seems that the case is very clear and the arguments very conclusive. But I think that an even stronger argument can be advanced for the translation of the "art song" into English. Many of the melodies in the scores of opera, other than the operas of Wagner, are simply pretty tunes and they have considerable musical value divorced from the text which is sung with them. That is to say, they are not essentially dramatic melodies; the form of the music does not depend, as it does in Strauss' "Salome," for example, upon what is going on and what is being said by the actors on the stage.

But this is decidedly not the case with an art song. With a few exceptions the music of art songs is essentially dramatic and it is set to the words of the poem very carefully and with conscious purpose.

When Schubert's "Erl Koenig" is heard by one who understands German, the stirring tragic music is an integral part of the performance together with the lines of the poetry; when the child cries "Father, father," the music takes a definite turn so that the listener is moved simultaneously in two ways; by his conscious literary apprehension of the significance of the words and by his aural and emotional apprehension of the significance of the music. Together they heighten their mutual significance and the listener is stirred deeply. This is what Schubert intended; every note of music was weighed with every syllable of poetry with consummate artistry in order to bring about this effect.

When a concert goer sits listening to this song and is unable to understand the German poetry, he does not really hear the song as its composer intended he should. Even if he has a general idea of the bald meaning of the poem, he gets no part of the effect of the song because he misses all the subtle shadings;

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# A MUSICAL ARTIST LOOKS AT TELEVISION . . . . .

By EDWARD HARRIS

TELEVISION, although as yet an unborn infant, is beginning to show some signs of life. Already the movie moguls and stage satraps are awaiting its delivery with apprehension, for they fear the advent of the threatening child. Even concert managers and artists occasionally succumb to the prevailing dread, and, when under the spell of their disquietude, prophecy that the arrival of Television will spell the doom of the concert hall.

Well, easily frightened prophets have foreseen the death of the concert hall several times in the past, yet the concert hall is still with us, and in fairly healthy condition. They viewed with alarm the development

of the phonograph. But the phonograph eventually created a new musical public, and added to concert attendance. They greeted with wailing the increasingly ubiquitous radio. Now radio is contributing to a further growth of the public's interest in music and attendance at musical affairs.

Just why has the concert hall not only withstood, but actually benefited from, the development of the phonograph and radio? Is it because the public's curiosity, whetted by records and broadcasts, stimulates it to attend concerts merely in order to see the artist as well as to hear him? If this be so, then the coming of television may well disturb those whose interests are bound up with the concert hall, for television will supply, with limitations, the visual aspect of a performance that the radio and phonograph lack.

However, a concert, in comparison with a radio production, exerts an attraction stronger than that which comes from the simple addition of sight to sound. For the sake of understanding this peculiar attraction, it may be well to review some familiar theories.

The final effect of a concert is the result of a number of complex and subtle elements. The musician on the stage projects his performance to his audience. The audience reacts as a whole to the actual sound of the music and to the personality of the artist as revealed in the music and in his appearance. The audience's reaction stimulates a further reaction in the performer, which, in turn, is sent back to the audience with provocative result. Thus, throughout a concert there is a constant psychic play between audience and performer.

Moreover, the individual attendant at a concert is not only affected by the music, which itself has

been affected by the audience, but he is also influenced by what might be called the mob spirit of the audience. To an individual in a concert hall, a virtuosic rendition of an exciting composition takes on added excitement by reason of the extreme stimulation produced in his fellow listeners. Likewise, the almost breathless hush that suspends itself over a concert assembly when a poetic number is being consummately played, intensifies in the individual the effect of the music itself.

Most of these particular influences are missing when one listens to the radio. Even when an actual concert is broadcast, the radio listener can contribute nothing to the performance. In the important psychic byplay between artist and audience, he is an observer and not a participant.

A concert, then, possesses completely individual elements that radio can never hope to have. This is the reason that so many new listeners, having first gone to a concert because of a curious desire to see as well as hear some favorite radio star, have fallen under the particular spell that music, performed and listened to in public only, can exert.

Since this spell is the result of more than the addition of the visual to the aural aspect of a performance, television, which will be able only to add sight to sound, and which will not be able to offer these special qualities of concert, can hardly hope to succeed to the concert hall.

The musical artist of today, however, may be interested in aspects of the future influence of television other than its possible relation to the concert hall. Most successful concert artists find radio an important field of activity. To them, the possible effect of television on the broadcasting of serious music may be of some concern.

Television will, of course, offer the temporary novelty of seeing a reproduction (crude enough, at first) of the performer in action. Although, through the radio, people have learned to divorce their ears from their eyes, the instinctive desire is to use the two sense organs in collaboration. In ordinary life, hearing is seldom employed independently of sight. One hears a noise and immediately looks to see what made it. One watches the face of a friend when conversing with him. In listening to music, there is a natural inclination to supplement the ear with the eye. To be

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# AGMA FORUM . . . *Important Notice of the First Meeting of the New Season*

## NOTICE

THE next meeting of the membership in AGMA FORUM will be held Tuesday, November 2, 1937, at 2 P.M. in the Mirror Room of the Hotel Plaza, Room 126, 59th Street and 5th Avenue.

Please indicate on the enclosed postal card whether or not you can attend.

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The October AGMA FORUM meeting will be the first meeting of the membership since the momentous events of last Spring. It will be the first opportunity the membership has had to discuss the granting of the Charter, the formation of AFRA, the agreement for mutual support between AGMA, SAG, AFRA and Equity, and all of the other important happenings of recent weeks.

The Board of Governors will be prepared to an-

swer questions on any of these matters and to receive suggestions and proposals from the membership in regard to future activity under our new charter.

It is obvious that this will be, in all probability, the most important and interesting membership meeting in AGMA's history.

Every member who is in or near New York should spare no effort to attend and to take part in the discussion.

A postal card is enclosed to every member so that you may indicate whether or not you will attend the meeting. Please do not fail to mail the card, whether you do or do not attend, because, since this will undoubtedly be a very large meeting, it is necessary to make extensive arrangements in advance.

Until November 2nd . . . !

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## AGMA'S CHARTER GRANTED

*(Continued from Page 4)*

uable field of constructive enterprise is now opened up. With the live and vigorous support of its membership, AGMA can confidently hope in the coming months to do much to improve the conditions under which solo musicians labor.

These conditions have long needed improvement. Solo musicians have long needed purposeful representation. The machinery now exists by means of which such representation and improvement can be effected. Through AGMA, the musical artists of this country should shortly enter into a new period of high achievement—one that should benefit the art itself as much as its practitioners.

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## *Attention GOAA Members!!*

To date, a large number of former GOAA members have applied for membership in AGMA. All others are urged to do so as soon as possible. Although they have until November first to join under the special terms defined in the recently effected agreement between the two organizations, the sooner they join, the sooner AGMA will be able to begin the organization of all opera companies for the coming season. No former GOAA member should delay

in availing himself of the benefits that a strong AGMA has to offer.

Some misunderstanding appears to exist in connection with the clause of the AGMA-GOAA agreement providing for three additional members to the AGMA Board.

At the GOAA meeting of August 30, when the members voted to relinquish their charter under the terms of the agreement, they also voted to elect these three AGMA Board members. The next day's newspapers reported that Delfina Calzolari, Armand Marbiny and Lawrence Power had been chosen, and that Giuseppe Interrante was to be AGMA's Fifth Vice President.

Thus, two errors require correction.

First: According to the terms of the agreement, only *three* additional Board members are to be elected, not *four*. A vice president, like all other officers of AGMA, is a member of the Board. Therefore, the additional vice president will, when elected, be one of the *three* new members of the Board provided for in the agreement.

Second: The election of Messrs. Interrante, Marbiny and Power and Miss Calzolari is premature. The agreement provides that a constitutional amendment must be submitted to the AGMA membership allowing for three additional Board members. After the amendment is approved, "such members of the GOAA as are at that time members of AGMA in good standing" will vote for the three members of the Board.

It is obvious, then, that any election held before GOAA members had joined AGMA cannot be accepted under the agreement. Furthermore, no one will be eligible to the AGMA Board who is not a member in good standing of AGMA at the time the official election is to be held.

These corrections are made so that no former GOAA member may be under any misapprehension regarding the clause in the agreement which provides for the representation of former GOAA members on the AGMA Board.

# The AGMA-SAG-AFRA-EQUITY AGREEMENT

• • •

ON September twentieth an agreement was drawn up between AGMA, the Screen Actors Guild, the American Federation of Radio Artists, and Actors Equity and Chorus Equity Association.

This agreement sets forth the conditions under which AGMA, SAG and Equity have advanced funds to AFRA, prescribes a system of interchangeability of memberships between the four organizations, and provides for the compulsory transfer of an artist from one organization to another when the artist enters the field over which the second organization holds jurisdiction.

The principal features of the agreement are as follows:

## THE AFRA LOAN . . .

AGMA, SAG and Equity will each advance the sum of \$10,000.00 to AFRA to aid in the initial organization of the radio field. These moneys shall be repayable on demand and shall bear interest at the rate of six percent annually from the date of demand to the date of final repayment.

## INTERCHANGEABILITY

1. Each of the four organizations agrees to instruct its members to apply for membership in any of the other organizations in whose jurisdictional field such member works. This means that if an AGMA member appears on the radio or in motion pictures he must join AFRA or the Screen Actors Guild. He is granted special terms, as follows.

2. A member of one of the four organizations, upon entering the field of another organization, shall be required to pay only half the initiation fee and half the dues in the new organization, or the difference between the initiation fee and dues of his parent organization and those of the new organization, whichever is greater. Thus, if an AGMA member in the \$12 dues classification made a motion picture and was required to join the SAG, if he fell likewise in the \$12 classification in SAG, he would be required to pay only half of the \$10 initiation fee and half of the \$12 dues, or a total of \$11. Thereafter, if he were again required to join the SAG for another picture engagement, he would not have to pay any further initiation fee, but only one-half of the annual dues as long as he continued working under SAG jurisdiction.

If the member fell in the \$12 classification in AGMA and the \$36 classification in the SAG he would have to pay the difference between his AGMA dues and his SAG dues to the Screen Actors Guild—the difference between \$12 and \$36 which is \$24. These provisions for half dues payments do not apply to any artist who earns \$25,000 per year or more; such artists must pay full dues in each of the organizations under whose jurisdiction they work.

3. Under the terms of this agreement it is important for

every artist to determine which organization is his proper parent organization. AGMA is the concert and opera artist's parent organization, even in such cases as the greater portion of the artist's income is earned from radio or screen work. Therefore AGMA members pay dues regularly to AGMA and half dues to SAG, AFRA or Equity during such periods as they are working in the movies, on the radio or on the legitimate stage. Where an artist permanently enters a new field it may become necessary for him to change his parent organization. He may do this after working one year in the new field by applying for an Honorable Withdrawal Card from his old parent and applying for full membership in the new organization.

The Four A International Board is given power to decide on any artist's proper parent organization in questionable cases.

## SPECIAL CONDITIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN AFRA BEFORE DECEMBER 1st.

The final paragraph of the agreement provides that any member of AGMA, SAG or Equity who applies for membership in AFRA on or before December 1st, 1937, shall not be required to pay any initiation fee in AFRA.

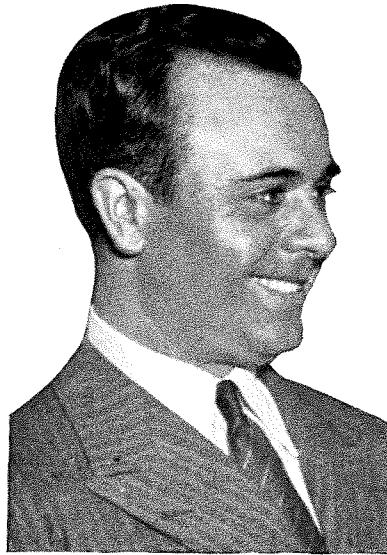
All AGMA members who will appear on the radio are instructed hereby to apply for membership in AFRA. For your convenience an AFRA application blank is enclosed.

In order to take advantage of this final provision and avoid payment of initiation fee, you are urged to send in your application before December 1st.

This agreement will have the effect of bringing all the benefits of the whole group of AAAA organizations within the reach of every member of each separate group and will eliminate the necessity of paying full dues to more than one parent organization.

It will have an especially beneficial effect as far as regards AGMA and AFRA in getting many new members. Many artists who are in the jurisdiction of AGMA and AFRA and who have not joined these organizations will be required to join them by Equity and the Screen Actors Guild when they come under their jurisdiction in motion picture and stage work. Because Equity and the SAG have established Equity and Guild Shop in their fields they will be able to influence such concert or radio artists as might otherwise refuse to join AGMA or AFRA.

A printed copy of the Agreement is enclosed herewith. You are urged to apply at the office for an explanation of any provision that is not entirely clear to you.



# ITURBI

## Answers . . .

THE following is Jose Iturbi's explanation concerning the concert given in Robin Hood Dell, where he conducted the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra.

"The President and Secretary of the Musicians' Union put me in charge of the concert, a benefit for the members of the Union in celebration of the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the American Constitution.

I felt that the best American music should, therefore, be included on the program.

"About ten days before the concert, a suggestion came from the management for a program containing, in the first half, two long groups of songs with piano. I did not accept this suggestion since, as the first half of the program was to be broadcast, I felt it was undignified for the Philadelphia Orchestra to have to wait in their chairs while little tunes, that anybody can hear at any time on the air, were being sung.

"I tried to reach the management several times in order to check the program with them, but each time they were reported 'out.'

"I gave my program to the man in charge of programs four days prior to the concert. The manager came that morning, however, to the rehearsal. No mention was made of any change the management wanted to suggest. It was therefore completely to my surprise that I found upon arriving at the Dell on the night of the concert, that the program rehearsed that morning, which had the approval of the President and Secretary of the Musicians' Union, was changed.

"The group of songs which I had relegated to the second half of the program were now scheduled for the first half—that half which was to be broadcast. It was my firm conviction, for the reasons cited above, that we should not give these songs on the first half.

"The program prepared by me began with the 'Star Spangled Banner'; then followed, in succession, the 'Adagio Eroica' of Russell Bennett, Deems Taylor's 'Circus Days', two popular songs with piano accompaniment, the duet from Sigmund Romberg's 'Maytime', the 'Rhumba' from Harl McDonald's Second Symphony, and George Gershwin's 'Rhapsody in Blue' in which I myself played the piano part. I played this program as I had intended.

"As to my attitude toward American music, I have frequently said that in my opinion, all orchestral programs should include, where possible, some composition by an American.

"In this particular program, my whole objection was that I am convinced that there is music more representative of the outstanding American composers, and more suitable to the Philadelphia Orchestra and the memorable occasion, than songs of the 'I love you' and 'kiss me' type, *which are very nice in their proper place*. I have, on suitable occasions, played popular tunes with much enjoyment. I particularly want to emphasize that the program I prepared and performed was an all-American one.

"Insinuations and malicious statements were made before both sides of the story were known. As soon as my explanation was given, the incident was viewed in its correct light.

"Needless to say I shall always give the American public the best I can in all forms of music.

"I wish to thank my many friends of the radio and concert audiences who have taken the trouble to write me their approval of the concert as given.

Sincerely,

JOSE ITURBI"



### • Richard Bonelli

ON Monday, August 30, AGMA received its Charter from the AAAA and on Friday, September 3, 1937, Richard Bonelli opened the first union meeting of the Board of Governors.

It was fitting that Mr. Bonelli should have presided over the first meeting in which AGMA functioned as a Four A union, because throughout the history of the Guild he has been a prime mover and leader in all of the important steps AGMA has taken.

Being the first Union Acting-President fills out, for Mr. Bonelli, a long list of famous AGMA "firsts." He was the first President of the Guild and called to order, as Chairman, the first meeting of the Incorporators, on April 17, 1936.

As President, he opened the first general membership meeting of the Guild, held at the Hotel Plaza on April 17. He was the Chairman of the first meeting of the National Board of the American Federation of Radio Artists.

This remarkable record is no mere series of coincidences. That Richard Bonelli should have presided at all of these key meetings is indicative of the quality of his leadership, the sincerity of his interest in the organization of the musical field and his

(Continued on Page 11)

## AGMA'S PLEDGE of Support to the Screen Actors Guild

AT the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors, on September 16th, 1937, the following resolution was proposed by Mr. James Melton, seconded by Mme. Eva Gauthier and passed by the Committee:

"WHEREAS: The American Guild of Musical Artists is in full sympathy with the Screen Actors Guild and its work in New York, therefore, pursuant to the spirit of mutual co-operation and understanding between AGMA and the SAG, be it

"RESOLVED: That all members of AGMA be instructed not to accept employment in any motion picture studio which has not signed an agreement with the Screen Actors Guild."

This action was taken because, despite the recent brilliant success of the SAG in securing the signatures of all of the major motion picture studios on the Coast to its minimum basic agreement by which the rights of underpaid extras are secured, there are several smaller studios in New York, engaged in the production of commercial films and "shorts" which refuse the SAG recognition and withhold their signatures from the agreement. In these studios the conditions of abuse and underpayment which the SAG is combating still prevail.

The Screen Actors Guild has called a strike against these studios and has asked AGMA's support to the extent of warning its members not to replace striking SAG members in these studios.

The studios which have signed the SAG agreement are listed below.

### FAIR STUDIOS

*As of September 27, 1937*

Adventure Serials of Calif.

Audio Productions, Inc.

Cots & Saddles Pictures, Inc.

Jed Buell

Burr, C. C. Prod., Inc.

Caravel Films, Inc.

Carr, Trem

Columbia Pictures Corp. of Calif., Ltd.

Condor Pictures

Conn Studios Corp.

Darmour, Inc.

Goldwyn, Samuel, Inc., Ltd.

Grand National Films, Inc.

Jewel Productions Company

LeRoy, Mervyn Productions

Loew, David L., Productions, Inc.

Major Pictures Corp.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corp.

Monogram Productions, Inc.

Paramount Pictures, Inc.

Principal Productions, Inc.

R.K.O.-Radio Pictures, Inc.

Reed, Luther, Inc.

Reed, Roland Productions

Republic Productions, Inc.

Roach, Hal, Studios, Inc.

Schulberg, B. P., Pictures, Inc.

Selznick International

Pictures, Inc.

Standard Pictures Corp.

Twentieth Century Fox

Film Corp.

Universal Pictures Co., Inc.

Victory Pictures Corp.

Wadsworth, Mason

Wanger, Walter, Productions, Inc.

Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc.

West Coast Service Studios, Inc.

Wilding Picture Prod., Inc.

Zeidman, Bennie F.,

Productions, Ltd.

AGMA members are requested to consult the office if they are offered employment in any studio not on this list.

## RICHARD BONELLI

*(Continued from Page 10)*

consistent and unselfish activity on behalf of his colleagues and his profession.

If musical artists in the near future reap the benefits of their organization in higher compensation, better conditions and an extension and expansion of musical activity throughout the country it will be largely because of the energetic and sincere activity of Richard Bonelli and the other leaders with whom he worked in building AGMA.

## QUESTIONS and ANSWERS About AGMA

THE booklet "Questions and Answers About AGMA" is now ready and by this time all members will have received a copy. You are urged to read it thoroughly and familiarize yourself with all of the principal points of information about the Guild—its aims and policies, its dues and its activities—so that you may be prepared to answer any questions from artists who may wish to join.

The need for new members is now greater than ever and every AGMA member should make it a point to enroll as many of his friends as are still on the outside.

AGMA can begin to function effectively only as soon as the entire field is organized—the sooner it is organized the sooner you will begin to receive the benefits of your Guild.

Write to the office for additional copies of "Questions and Answers" and distribute them to your friends. Send a list of the names and addresses of prospective members to the office and a copy of the booklet will be mailed to them under your name.

NON-MEMBERS—Write to the AGMA office, 576 Fifth Avenue, for an application blank and a copy of the question and answer booklet.

### NON-MEMBERS: MAIL THIS COUPON

American Guild of Musical Artists, Inc.

576 Fifth Avenue, New York City

Gentlemen:

Please send me an application blank and a copy of the booklet "Questions and Answers About AGMA."

Name.....

Address.....

Branch of Profession.....

## MUSICAL ARTIST LOOKS AT TELEVISION

(Continued from Page 7)

sure, the musician knows that the eye often distracts the ear, so he frequently closes his eyes when listening to music. But the average layman, whose ears are not so well trained, seeks to gain visual as well as aural impressions.

The television screen will make it possible to satisfy, after a fashion, the layman's desire to see what he hears. It will make it possible to satisfy his curiosity as to the appearance of an artist. These gratifications, however, may prove more disappointing than is anticipated.

As the cinema has proved, screen-reproduced movement must be considered in terms of the screen. Movement which appears entirely natural on a stage becomes grotesque within the comparatively small frame of the two-dimensional motion picture screen. Now, a musician cannot very well reduce his scale of motion when playing an instrument or singing. One may wonder just how attractive he will appear on the tiny television screen.

Furthermore, in a musical performance, action is to a large degree static. The singer or instrumentalist is rooted in one place for lengths of time varying from fifteen minutes to three-quarters of an hour. To an initiate, what he is doing may prove moderately interesting. To a layman, his movements eventually become boring. The violinist repetitiously pushes his bow up and down the strings; the pianist raises

and lowers his fingers and hands; the singer opens and shuts his mouth.

The motion picture director, when faced with action which is essentially foreign to his medium, and static, or monotonous to the eye, tries to overcome the handicaps by the use of varying camera shots and angles. The television producer will hardly dare to follow suit, and attempt to lend visual variety to a Beethoven sonata by like methods.

At the moment, television is, of course, in a very elementary stage of development. Before it can set up as a rival to existing forms of entertainment, screens will have to be enlarged, visibility improved, "cameras" developed to a point where they are less dependent upon brilliant lighting, and so forth and so on. Since we live in an age of technical miracles, one may expect that such shortcomings will be overcome.

Nevertheless, even with television perfected, it would appear safe to predict that the limitations inherent in the screen medium itself will prevent television from causing the musical artist grave concern. Music is a tonal art. If the radio, which is a tonal medium, has not harmed the musical artist, television, which simply adds a screen to the radio, should not greatly injure him.

Motion pictures, the stage, certain kinds of radio broadcasts may some day have to pay toll to the prospective newcomer. Music should be able to continue without serious disarrangement or the necessity for consequent readjustment.

## 37K THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

(Continued from Page 6)

he does not know why the music sounds as it does at one precise moment because he does not know that at that moment the child is crying "Father, father!" All this is equally true of the songs of Wolf, Strauss, Brahms, Debussy, etc., etc., etc. The audience which does not understand the language of the song cannot understand its music because the two are each other's cause and effect. The music without the words—and that means each note without its respective word—is distortion.

What, then, is to be done about it for the American listener? Obviously it is impracticable for him to learn half a dozen languages well enough to understand them when they are sung. The solution seems to be translation.

Admittedly translation entails the destruction of some part of the original effect. By the same token that complete ignorance of the language of the text makes real appreciation of the song impossible—because each note of the music is bound indelibly to each word of the poem—any translation which, through inability to match English for German word for word, jumbles the syllables of the line, will result likewise in a certain amount of distortion. But, on the

other hand, utter incomprehension means the destruction of the entire effect.

The translations we have had so far are, without question, pretty bad for the most part. This is only because no one who is really talented enough to undertake the translation of a Goethe-Schubert song has ever been encouraged to do it—all translation has, so far, been hack work. Owing to the attitude prevalent among those pretenders who frequent concert halls and opera houses, which dictates that it is more fashionable to listen to German which one does not understand than to enjoy English which one does, no first rate craftsman has found it worth his while to undertake the job, or, if any has done so his work has not been given a hearing.

Translation will lose some of the original but it will not necessarily lose much. The differences in languages are not as fundamental as that, and, to make it easier, most great poetry is very simple language.

What is needed, then, is some little child (and I am very young) to say, during a long passage of dialogue in "Salome" or "Parsifal" or during a recital of Brahms' "lieder"—"But what is it about?" Then all of the other people in the audience will be forced to admit that they don't know and someone will throw the king a towel.