

AGMAZINE

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JULY, 1953

A Message from AGMA's New President

I am indeed happy that my colleagues have seen fit to elect me as President of AGMA. I wish to express my thanks and appreciation for the honor which they have bestowed upon me. I have been a member of



AGMA since 1939 and have been an officer and on the Board of Governors for many years. I have taken a lively interest in the affairs of AGMA which, of course, means a deep interest in those things which affect my colleagues in the pursuit of their chosen professions. I intend now to take an

even more active part in the daily business and routine of AGMA and try to function in close contact and cooperation with all its members. I shall try to learn and understand the many and varied problems that confront our union and how they affect each section of the membership of AGMA.

Having been a performer in practically all the branches of the entertainment industry, I believe that I have a working familiarity with the problems that confront us today. I shall devote a great deal of time and energy in cooperation with the AGMA membership and its staff to reach the best solutions possible under the circumstances. We all know that there are many inequities in our field and that it is our purpose and aim, as well as my job, to eliminate them as quickly as possible. I will not promise great results but I will promise that I shall do everything in my power to achieve the aims and purposes for which the American Guild of Musical Artists was formed.

With the willing cooperation of AGMA members and of the staff, I feel and know that there are many things that can be accomplished. With your united support and with the help of God, we shall succeed.

JOHN BROWNLEE

AGMA's Newly Elected Board Members



Maria Avellis
(New York)



Arthur Backgren
(New York)



Janet Collins
(New York)



Eugene Conley
(New York)



Marion Giddens
(New York)



Frank Hobi
(New York)



Byron Janis
(New York)



Charles Kuestner
(New York)



Charles Kullman
(New York)



Tilda Morse
(New York)

Regret
Picture
Not Available
At Press Time



Blanche Thebom
(New York)



Wynema Fox
(Philadelphia)



Honor McCulken
(Philadelphia)



Eunice Alberts
(Boston)



Anne Kubiak
(Pittsburgh)



Gladys LaBedz
(Chicago)



Henry Reese
(Los Angeles)

COMPLETE ELECTION RESULTS

AGMA's nation-wide secret balloting has been completed, the votes have been counted and AGMA now has a new President, has re-elected its national officers and elected 18 members of its Board of Governors. All AGMA members who had been classified to Active Membership and who were up to date in dues payments were eligible to vote.

Following is a complete report of the election:

Approximately 1,500 ballots were mailed out and of these, a total of 557 ballots were cast. Of these, 535 ballots were valid. The 22 invalid ballots were not counted for these reasons:

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Delinquent | 4 |
| Late | 1 |
| Unsigned Envelopes | 17 |

Heaviest voting was in New York, with 359 ballots; Los Angeles followed with 51; Philadelphia cast 36; San Francisco and Chicago 25 each; New Orleans 14; Boston 14; Pittsburgh 11.

Here are the tallies:

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| JOHN BROWNLEE | 439 |
| Frank Finn | 87 |
| 2 Write-Ins | 2 |

1ST VICE-PRESIDENT

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| JASCHA HEIFETZ | 496 |
| 8 Write-Ins | 10 |

2ND VICE-PRESIDENT

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| LEOPOLD SACHSE | 464 |
| 12 Write-Ins | 15 |

3RD VICE-PRESIDENT

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| BETTY STONE | 390 |
| 14 Write-Ins | 85 |

4TH VICE-PRESIDENT

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| ASTRID VARNAY | 498 |
| 4 Write-Ins | 4 |

5TH VICE-PRESIDENT

| | |
|-------------|-----|
| JAMES PEASE | 479 |
| 7 Write-Ins | 8 |

RECORDING SECRETARY

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| ELIZABETH HOEPEL | 494 |
| 1 Write-In | 1 |

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

NEW YORK

(Singers—3)

| | |
|-----------------|-----|
| CHARLES KULLMAN | 190 |
| BLANCHE THEBOM | 189 |
| EUGENE CONLEY | 181 |
| Thelma Votipka | 158 |
| Emile Renan | 133 |
| Frank Valentino | 106 |
| 5 Write-Ins | 5 |

(Instrumentalist—1)

| | |
|-------------|-----|
| BYRON JANIS | 266 |
| 1 Write-In | 1 |

(Choristers—4)

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| ARTHUR BACKGREN | 217 |
| MARIA AVELLIS | 195 |
| MARION GIDDENS | 193 |
| CHARLES KUESTNER | 192 |
| Tom Pyle | 125 |
| Sam Sternberg | 112 |
| DeLloyd Tibbs | 94 |
| 15 Write-Ins | 25 |

(Dancers—4)

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| JANET COLLINS | 284 |
| TILDA MORSE | 263 |
| FRANK HOBI | 254 |
| JAMES SMITH | 240 |
| 1 Write-In | 4 |

PHILADELPHIA

(Choristers—1)

| | |
|---------------------|----|
| WYNEMA McKINLEY FOX | 35 |
| 1 Write-In | 1 |

(Dancers—1)

| | |
|----------------|----|
| HONOR McCULKEN | 31 |
| 1 Write-In | 1 |

BOSTON

(Soloist—1)

| | |
|----------------|----|
| EUNICE ALBERTS | 14 |
|----------------|----|

PITTSBURGH

(Chorister—1)

| | |
|------------|----|
| ANN KUBIAK | 11 |
|------------|----|

CHICAGO

| | |
|----------------|----|
| GLADYS LA BEDZ | 21 |
| 2 Write-Ins | 2 |

LOS ANGELES

(Soloist—1)

| | |
|-------------|----|
| HENRY REESE | 42 |
| 4 Write-Ins | 6 |

AGMA's members have made their voices heard in the democratic process of majority selection of those who are to represent them. AGMAZINE speaks for the entire membership in congratulating the new President, our national officers and members of our Board of Governors.

AGMAZINE

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SANDRA MUNSELL, *Editor*

VOLUME VI No. 1

JULY, 1953

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LEOPOLD SACHSE
2nd Vice-President
BETTY STONE
3rd Vice-President
ASTRID VARNAY
4th Vice-President
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Counsel

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Howell Bill Proposes Federal Arts Support

AGMA has publicly announced its support of the Bill, introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman Charles R. Howell of New Jersey, which calls for the establishment of a Federal Arts Program and assistance through this program to Federal, state, local authorities and other cultural organizations in developing and maintaining a Federal Arts Program.

The Bill (H.R. 5397) has been referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor of which Congressman Samuel K. McConnell, Jr. is Chairman. In a letter written June 18th to Congressman McConnell, National Executive Secretary Faine said, "On behalf of the American Guild of Musical Artists, whose membership covers the field of opera, ballet, dance and the concert in the United States, we urge that prompt hearings be held on H.R. 5397. AGMA believes that these proposals should receive careful and favorable consideration by your Committee so that the U. S. Government may be in a position to give the utmost support to the cultural and musical development of our country.

"When such hearings are held, we respectfully request an opportunity to be heard and to submit our views on this legislation."

Congressman Howell has stated that he believes that a Federal Arts Program should have its focal point in the nation's Capital—as all other countries do—and at the same time stimulate a

nation-wide arts movement at the grass roots without dominating or controlling it. Ways to do this are provided in his Bill which calls for, among other things, assistance to Federal, State, County and local authorities, colleges and universities, and other cultural organizations in the development and maintenance of programs in the fine arts. The Bill looks toward the eventual establishment of a Department of Education and Fine Arts with Cabinet rank.

Congressman Howell makes the point, too, that the Federal Government is not thus far authorized to spend any significant amount of money to support a counter-offensive against Soviet Russia's propaganda against the United States in the field of cultural affairs. Private funds alone, he points out, made it possible to send abroad such outstanding cultural ambassadors as "Porgy and Bess," the Boston Symphony, the New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, the Ballet Theatre and other groups but private citizens cannot be expected to foot all bills for a program of such vital concern to all of us.

Congressman Howell is emphatic in his feeling that financial support of the arts by the Government, although a relatively new idea for America, must begin with acceptance of the idea as a matter of national policy. He says:

"Congress has done little in developing a national policy on fine arts in our country mainly because the leaders in the cultural field have themselves made little or no effort to formulate

sound and constructive proposals at the national level for consideration by the Congress.

"In this connection it is important to recognize that business, farmers, doctors, labor and other major segments of our people have strong national organizations with representatives hard at work hammering out national policies in regard to their problems. The Congress is most successful at legislating when there is substantial agreement among all our people on any particular problem. Unfortunately the fine arts have never had such national leadership. Such leadership as has developed in this field has operated at the municipal and county levels."

In the New York Times of April 5, Howard Taubman praised the Howell Bill and called for organization of the leaders in the arts from all over the country in support of it. Mr. Taubman made the point that the musical and theatrical unions are set up on a country-wide basis and might spearhead the movement.

In announcing AGMA's support, National Executive Secretary Faine stated, "The United States, already the leader of the world in technology and scientific developments, has, with proper encouragement and assistance, the potentialities to become the leader in the cultural and fine arts as well." AGMA will seek an opportunity to testify when the hearings on this Bill are held and will lend its support to the accomplishment of its passage.

AGMA-Managers Basic Agreement

The present Basic Agreement with Concert Managers, negotiated five years ago, is now up for renewal. During the past several months, a questionnaire was sent to all performers in the concert field, with the result that considerable data has been obtained from artists and has been used as the basis of a number of proposals which have been incorporated in the draft of the AGMA-MANAGERS BASIC AGREEMENT to be submitted to the managers. In addition, many other proposals which originated with the Board of Govern-

ors and with AGMA executives have been included in the draft.

From time to time, during the course of the negotiations, members will be advised of the progress being made and the issues which have arisen.

As in all major negotiations, AGMA's strength lies in the unity and support of its members. In the past we have made great strides and achieved notable gains. We are confident that with the backing of our members, AGMA will continue the record of progress and achievement which has made our history a proud one.

WEDDING BELLS

Rita Nasser, AGMA's Financial Secretary, made Robert Sohnen a mighty happy man by becoming Mrs. Robert Sohnen on June 7th. The couple were married in Brooklyn, New York and the bride will sign "Rita Nasser Sohnen" on all documents from now on. The Board of Governors, the staff and all AGMA wish the new couple a long and happy life together. (As for Bob—his bride won't be able to use the prerogative of all new Mrs. . . . the "You mean I've over-drawn at the bank *again!* But, dear, you *know* I've no head for figures!" kind of thing!)

Backstage Noises

Well . . . !

There it was in print—the first column of AGMA's clearing-house of anecdotes and gossip about happenings in the concert, operatic and ballet field. I must confess to a proud Papa" feeling! I was also a little puzzled to receive contributions from non-AGMAns. Remember, you'll be credited with your story when it appears in AGMAzine. So send your favorite anecdote along to me, in care of AGMAzine!



Here goes . . . !

John White ponders on the implications of this: "Joseph Rosenstock, General Director of the New York City Opera Company, applying to Bing and Bing for an apartment was rejected: no musicians wanted." Now suppose, just suppose, that there were a Rosenstock and Rosenstock to whom a certain Rudolph Bing might one day apply for HIS apartment. Why, it could mean WAR!

* * *

Leopold Sachse, staging "Rosenkavalier" at the City Center, was singing more of the 'Marschallin's' lines. After a while the coach, William Tarrasch, humorously rebuked him with "My dear young LADY, but you don't know your part!" The ever-resourceful Sachse drew himself up and, turning baleful eyes on Tarrasch, said, "What do you expect? I haven't sung the role in twenty years!"

* * *

William L. Stein recounts the truer-than-life story of the bumpkin attending

his first concert. The Wagnerian soprano was lusty, the conductor unusually animated. The bumpkin's eyes and ears fought for priority. Turning to his neighbor, he whispered "Pardon me, but can you tell me why the man keeps jabbing the lady with the stick?"

"Sh," replied the other, "He's not jabbing her, he's conducting her."

"Oh?" The bumpkin thought this over. "Then why is she yelling?"

* * *

Joseph Lippman's touching fable COULD have happened: At a pupil's recital, a nervous tenor was making his busy teacher's life miserable. His constant wails of fear about the high C which would confront him at the end of "Che Gelida Manina" proved too much for his teacher. The exasperated man turned on his student with "What are you worrying about? The high C? Long before the high C you'll be hissed off the stage!"

* * *

And then there's the eminent instrumentalist who said he was so interested in sculpture that he thought he'd have a BUST made of his famous hands!

* * *

That's all for now. Hope the next column will see YOUR name in print as a contributor.

Emile Renan

NEW NUMBERS

AGMA's new telephone number in New York City is COLUMBUS 5-3687.

The telephone number for AGMA's Los Angeles office has been changed to HOLLYWOOD 2-2334.

Dance—Tax Free

As a result of persistent effort on the part of AGMA and COLUMBIA ARTISTS MANAGEMENT, the office of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue has ruled that ballet and dance performances may be included within the term "concerts" under section 1701(c) of the Internal Revenue Code. Accordingly, such performances which are included in a concert series qualify for exemption from the admissions tax imposed by this section of the Code.

Performers are perhaps familiar with the fact that in past years, concerts of singers and instrumentalists and even opera groups, when presented by civic and community membership associations, were exempt from Federal admissions tax. But no such exemption was extended to dance concerts.

Columbia Artists Management and AGMA acted jointly to seek a softening of this rule. AGMA's National Executive Secretary spent a day in Washington, D. C. with Columbia's representative, arguing this matter before the Internal Revenue Department.

On June 3 of this year, their efforts bore fruit in the ruling of the Internal Revenue Department exempting dance presentations under non-profit auspices from the payment of admissions tax.

DECEASED

AGMA reports with regret the passing of the eminent American violinist, Albert Spalding. One of the pioneers in the founding of AGMA (he held card Number 6), Mr. Spalding took an honorable withdrawal from AGMA in 1944 and subsequently retired from the concert stage. AGMA extends to his family and host of friends its sincere sympathies.

AMERICAN GUILD OF MUSICAL ARTISTS

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