

Gross: A-2

THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON
AKRON 4, OHIO

April 9, 1945

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Is there anything I could say, do or write to get you to help me pay tribute to a truly benevolent American musician?

We, as Americans, take so many benevolences for granted. We pay occasional lip service to our vast cultural heritage but so seldom do we actually make a concentrated effort to recognize those who nurture and perpetuate this legacy.

Dr. Fabien Sevitzky, Music Director and Conductor of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, is completing twenty years of American orchestral conducting by his appearance as Conductor of the Philadelphia Chamber String Sinfonietta, Sunday, April 15, in Philadelphia. IN EVERY CONCERT HE HAS CONDUCTED THESE PAST TWENTY YEARS, HE HAS INCLUDED AT LEAST ONE COMPOSITION OF AN AMERICAN COMPOSER. No other conductor in all musical history has a record for such devotion to an ideal. This ideal has been to give every competent American composer a chance to be heard. Do you think we should let these twenty years of service go unrecognized?

My earnest plea is that you employ the publicity channels at your disposal to invest the American public with this expression of loyalty to American musical creativity. His objectives have many times been unappreciated and even misconstrued. Will you take it upon yourself to see that he is rendered a national vote of thanks?

I am not a publicist or promoter--I am merely an academician who, being associated with Dr. Sevitzky in the National Composers Clinic, has learned of his tremendous effort to establish the American composer as an artistic citizen of the world.

Will you take the time to grant this request? May I hear from you?

Yours respectfully,

Bethuel Gross
E. N.

Bethuel Gross
Head of the Department of Music

ejh