

1948 CANDIDATES IN MUSIC COMPOSITION

AS RANKED BY MR. NORMAND LOCKWOOD

The contest, in my estimation, unquestionably boils down to Anderson, Miss Eubanks and Kay. I would wish you to know that I am very well acquainted both with Miss Eubanks and Kay and that I have known a good deal about Anderson, having observed him as a student while I was on the Oberlin faculty. If I felt I knew one of these three contestants well, and neither of the others, I would almost offer to withdraw as a judge. But inasmuch as this is not the case, and since I have certainly no biased feelings for or against any one of these worthy people, I have allowed my knowledge of them to enter into my reactions, as I believe that my understanding of these people may aid you in selecting the winner.

Let me take up Mr. Anderson's case, as I see it. While his project of a community school in behalf of Antioch College appears important to me in the terms expressed so admirably in Mr. W. B. Alexander's letter, I would distinctly dismiss Anderson's project in composition. It is not that Roosevelt's D-Day Prayer isn't a worthy text; it is only that Anderson is simply not equipped nor sufficiently experienced as a composer to warrant your Foundation's giving him a grant on this basis. The fact that Anderson states his plan to get "coaching and instruction for setting music to the Roosevelt Prayer" shows a naivete which would cause me to mistrust his position as a composer. Were he wishing to spend at least one year in the study of composition under, indeed, as astute a senior composer as William Schumann, that would be another matter entirely. But I have studied his submitted manuscripts carefully, and they reveal chiefly a conspicuous absence of not only real creative talent but of craftsmanship. Therefore, if your Board chooses to offer Anderson a

scholarship on the basis of the Antioch project, that is a matter for the Board to decide. But let me urge the Board again not to be deceived into regarding Anderson as a composer of any stature whatsoever commensurate with, for example, Miss Eubanks and Kay.

Now let me discuss the Eubanks-Kay situation. In seeing their submitted manuscripts one is dealing in both cases with concrete evidence of true creative ability; that is to say, evidence of true gift and real craftsmanship. Although I have each of their interests deeply at heart, I cast my vote for Miss Eubanks. Her work - notably the "Ode to Faith" - shows a full-blooded fervor, a spirit of musical exploration and discovery that may often be sensed in young composers' works, but which all too rarely achieves its end in terms of musical realization. Kay's submitted works (all except the "Song of Jeremiah") show features that I have observed in other works of his, and which disturb me because, in spite of his craftsmanly achievement which is superior to Miss Eubank's, they show a lack of outstanding talent. Now if it were a situation where Kay had perhaps not had the opportunities of study, of encouragement and of recognition which he fully deserves, I might very conceivably recommend your selecting him over Miss Eubanks. But as Miss Eubanks has not had Kay's advantages nearly to the same extent, I feel that what to me is a superior talent in Miss Eubanks should be recognized as such, and the possessor of her gift and promise given the advantage and the distinction that the Rosenwald scholarship represents.

To refer to the other competitors, it is evident to me upon examination of their submitted music and, in every case, by their expressed "Plan of Work" as well as by the statement of their references, that their development is immature as compared with Miss Eubanks and Mr. Kay in composition, and with Mr. Anderson in the field of music education.