

*Evening Meetings*

May 31, 1939

Memorandum

To: Bill Troy

From: Otto Luening

Re: Music Division Evening Meetings

Stefan Hirsch told me there had been some discussion in the Evening Meetings Committee about the size and the administration of the fund set aside for music this last year, and I thought I might tell you briefly what the policy has been in the past and why.

Musical performers are much more expensive than anything in the lecture field. The prices, for instance, for people like Josef Hoffman, Zimbalist, Marian Anderson, etc., go as high as \$2500 per performance. It is possible to get unknown people in some cases for as low as \$100. That is about the minimum for single performers. Quartets, trios, and small ensembles can hardly be engaged for less than \$200 or \$300 no matter how "unknown" they are.

In the past years the Evening Meetings Committee has said that any outside music should be at least on par with our own faculty concerts; this, after we had tried to introduce unknown and inexpensive young artists. These young artists had a rather bad time here on occasion. In the first place, the attendance was not too good, and in the second place the reception was not too good. We decided during the past two years that no music would be programmed without the approval of the entire Music Division, and in analyzing the costs found that we would have to pay about \$300 to \$400 for each outside event. In addition, to the outside soloists we paid from the evening meetings budget certain costs for senior music programs for which we hired the Albany Orchestra at a very low rate.

The last Evening Meetings Committee suggested that for the evening programs we should plan approximately two outside events, two student music evenings, and two faculty concerts each semester. This is exclusive of our senior music. In practice, however, it is generally worked out this way: the 6 events were planned and scheduled, then early in each semester there was a rush call for an extra musical event or two to serve as entertainment for the community, so that often the 6 events became 8.

It seems to me that the budget allotment for music depends on how many outside evening events the Committee thinks are feasible. They should be estimated at about \$350 each. If you plan on some smaller divisional afternoon meetings, we would probably have to allot \$100 to \$150, for each one of these.



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Our senior music generally costs us about \$150.

There is another point which might be of interest to your Committee, and that is in the past each member of the music faculty used to give one recital each year. Because of the crowded calendar, this has been cut down recently. However, at the request of the Intellectual Recreation Committee, Julian DeGray was asked to give his nine Sunday evening recitals. And it might be that the music faculty could be used more for performances in the community in this way. They should be told, however, along time ahead so that they won't have too much work in preparing their programs.

Arrangements for outside artists were made through me primarily because I know very many of them and also understand the managerial racket, and so have been able to get considerable fee reductions. I am not sure whether Julian DeGray would be interested in doing this, or whether this could be done just as well through Dorrie Hendrick's office. I quote some of the arrangements which we have been able to make in the past: Don Cossack Chorus, \$1200 regular fee, performed for us for \$300; Fovia Frijah, quoted at \$500, came for \$300; Roth Quartet, quoted at \$400, came for \$200; Yaddo Chamber Orchestra, a group of 22 players, came for \$180. This was arranged mostly through my personal connections and through arranging the dates so that they could take in Bennington while en route to larger cities.