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Is there a Future for Women in Music?

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http://www.komponistinnen.de/komponistinnen/fleischer/fleischer_literatur_text.htm

I want to congratulate all the women composers whose music I have heard all during this festival – wonderful music! Logically this means that there is a future for women in music. The only fact that disturbs is the unequal conditions in the daily life obligations of women compared to men. In spite of all the mechanical modernizations to make it easier for a women in the kitchen, laundry, etc., still her function in family life is prominent.

We live in a modern world in which the struggle for equal opportunities for women has succeeded in many ways, but still a family deserves the prominent function of a mother and a wife. Not to forget the huge experience of giving birth, a primary function of the woman-with all its fantastic aspects and horrible risks at once and the same time.

I can remember more than once men that came to me after the performance of „Lamentation“ (text by E. Lasker-Schüler set by me to music for women`s voices, two harps and percussion), expressing to me honestly their impressions after the concert: „a man composer could not such a lament. This music comes right out of the heart and the womb of a woman.“ So there is still something wonderful and deep in the psychological image of a woman which distinguishes her from a man, and enables her to create in a manner that man cannot reach psychologically for himself...what a superiority!

Surely a women composer should again and again push herself to find time for composing every day, week, month, year – she should organize her time allowing enough for composing according to her needs. Do not hesitate to take this task on yourselves!

As a mother of a small son I cannot forget how he was lying, four years old, in the lobby of a hotel in Cairo when we arrived and our booking in that hotel was not kept for us because of „Aida“ renewed premiere in the pyramids. I was running in the streets to get a new place before going to the pyramids. Then again he was sleeping beneath my chair in Merkin Concert Hall, NYC, during a concert of my chamber works. I never was afraid. The instinct of a mother ruled side by side with the mission of a composer.

We should all be encouraged by the fact that the world renowned musicologist, Professor Bathia Churgin, is including women composers in her lectures on the History of Western Music. You are all welcome to send her scores and recordings of your major works.

I want to mention here as well that women conductors function highly and intensively in the field of choral conducting and children and youth choruses. I have a dream that the „Women in Music Congress“ in the year 2000 will take place in Israel and will feature many new compositions. The people in Israel will know about my thrilling experience in Alaska. I will publish articles about musicALASKAwomen: two for professional magazines and one for our daily newspaper.

I myself am deeply encouraged and amazed after having just read many love letters that Johannes Brahms wrote to Clara Wieck-Schumann. The profile of Clara should serve us as a symbol of the unbelievable achievements of a talented performer, composer and mother. I have also noticed she is very highly regarded and admired in Germany nowadays by intellectual men and women.