

# Modern Music Loses a Round

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Recent letters addressed to the Sunday Tribune Open Forum, commenting on Henry Kramer's letter on modern music (Feb. 26) are of a number and length as to make impossible their publication in full. Excerpts from them, below, show a score of five against and one for modern music.)

Carl Doerner, stationer, St. Cloud, Minn.: "Any member of the Minneapolis Symphony is capable of listening to a new composition and knowing whether it is good music or not. So much of what I have had to listen to is not music. It should not be necessary to try it out on the public to learn whether it is good or not. When we buy a ticket for a Minneapolis Symphony performance we surely do not wish for more dissonance."

Vincent Carpenter, Wayzata, composer and assistant professor of music, Macalester college: "Friday night's symphony concerts come at the end of a day and week of hard work in the business world for much of the audience. These people go to Northrop auditorium for a time of meditation, of spiritual refreshment, to hear a great orchestra and a gifted young conductor perform the masterworks of music literature. They don't come to hear the tentative fumbings of a flock of frustrated experimentalists."

"There is a time and place for everything. Let's reserve Friday nights at least for the greatest. If there is any talent among the moderns, it will have its time, perhaps, 25 or 50 years from now."

Laura Jane Musser, Little Falls, Minn., music patron: "There is apparent (today) a desire to exploit a given system of tonality for the sake of the system itself, the end result being a sort of 'commercial advertising' for the originator of the system, whether it is musically sound or not. Creatively speaking, many compositions found in today's artistic fields lack soul or meaning or purpose. The term 'originality' has come to imply either a flagrant disregard of basic fundamentals or a desperate attempt to be

different in an age of too much conformity.

"Conductors who claim that modern music should be heard are right if their choice of works is governed by sound musical judgment and good taste, but wrong if they think that anything, because it is new or different, should be heard, whether it passes good judgment or not."

Curt Beckman, SLA freshman, University of Minnesota: "Presentation of this (modern) music is not the fault of the orchestra but of the audience for standing for it. People seem to think it's fashion-

able to 'appreciate' modern music. It doesn't seem to matter whether it's good or not. In Minneapolis, where we have only one concert per week, it seems unfair to the majority of the people to subject them to so much of the dissonance that modern music is comprised of."

Joseph P. Vogel, Minneapolis: "It is my opinion that little great music has been composed in the mid-20th century equal to that of the classical period. The reason is that our predecessors created with their minds, their hearts, their hands, and without rules

or teachings."

Lothar Klein, Minneapolis composer: "If our orchestras are going to continue functioning as living, inquiring and developing organisms, concerts of the type Mr. Kramer laments are needed, lest the American orchestra, which for financial reasons plays 95 per cent the same music each season, atrophies. Every art is the result of reaction to an age, and even if an art seems mechanistic and unemotional, let us not forget that because of its very source, it is nevertheless human. Let us not blame the artist for an age he never made."

"Today's composer does not seek a musical Utopia, but only the opportunity to realize his thoughts. Let us respect and grant him this basic human right."

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