



PROGRAMMA

A Newsletter for Graduates of the General Program of Liberal Studies

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The View from 318

It seemed to many that Academic 1977-78 came to an appropriate conclusion with the somber, at times petulant, at times imploring, tones of William Buckley's commencement address. That address, or parts of it, reached many media, and need no repetition here. But we have had much to be somber about over the past year.

Yet we have had much to rejoice over, also. Walter Nicgorski was awarded a Lilly Foundation Faculty Open Fellowship for 1978-79, and will spend the year reading and researching on the history of liberal education and human values - a topic dear to the hearts of many here. May his work help endear us to them! Katherine Tillman was promoted to Associate Professor and given tenure - one of very few women to be thus honored by the University. Ed Cronin continued to flood the pages of The Wake Newsletter and other periodicals with choice Joyce. Linda Ferguson brought to a small but select audience a fine program on "Theme and Variation." We were delighted by a visit and conversation with the Provost of Columbia University, Theodore de Bary, and his charming wife. Dr. de Bary spoke to us on China, Confucius, and liberal education. And Thomas King Simpson, a tutor at St. John's, Santa Fe, spent some time with us, leading discussions on Marx and science, and speaking on Francis Bacon and the scientific revolution.

Yet it was a somber, and strenuous, year. In early February one of our Seniors, Michael Lyons, died, and the Senior Class - and the faculty - never recovered from that tragedy. Again, two of our faculty members left us at the end of the year. Tim Lenoir will spend a year in Germany on a NSF Grant, but will not be returning to us. And Mark Jordan, after his "Freshman Year" with us, will be teaching at the University of Dallas in the Fall.

As a consequence of Walt Nicgorski's leave of absence and the two departures noted, we shall be welcoming three new instructors into the Program in the Fall. Steven Crockett, who will be working with Phil Sloan in the science component of the Program, comes to us after graduate work at the University of Chicago and several years as a tutor at St. John's, Annapolis. Reverend Gerard Carroll,

of the diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois, Ireland, comes to us after work at "The Gregorian" in Rome, Goldsmith's College of the University of London, Trinity College, Dublin, and The Ecole des Hautes Etudes, Paris. He will be working with Bill Frerking in the theological component of the Program. James Weiss, from the University of Chicago and the Institut für Europäische Geschichte, Mainz, will also join us in the Fall, to work in several areas.

Otto Bird is, from all reports, alive and well and raising grapes in Southern Indiana. Brother Edmund Hunt, C.S.C., is, from all reports, alive and well and teaching at St. Edward's College, Austin, Texas. The rest of us are pretty much alive and fairly well, raising consciousness, scruples, hackles, and eyebrows as usual right here in the heart of suburban South Bend.



John Lyon
Chairman

PROGRAMMA (the Greek word meaning "public notice") is published toward the end of each academic semester by the General Program of Liberal Studies for its graduates.

Faculty Editor: Katherine Tillman

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IN MEMORIAM

The Reverend David Burrell, C.S.C. {G.P. '54} offered the Ascension Thursday Memorial Mass for deceased faculty, students, and alumni of the General Program of Liberal Studies. A dinner followed at the University Club, with grace before the meal offered by Professor William Frerking, who prayed that all of us would someday celebrate together with those whom we remembered this day:

Michael Lyons {'78}, February, 1978
Willis Nutting, Associate Professor, December, 1975
Ivo Thomas, Professor, February, 1976
Dennis Clark {'73}, October, 1974
Chester Wynne, July, 1955
Fred C. Miller {'54}, 1954
Father Thomas Brennan, C.S.C., {Sr.}, Associate Professor, May, 1972

In his after dinner remarks, Professor John Lyon noted the beginning of this new commemorative tradition in the General Program. He reflected upon the nature of the "contract" that is ours as members of the General Program community. It is the kind of contract, he said, like that described by Edmund Burke--a contract which embraces people of past, present and future generations. Professor Edward Cronin, organizer of the event, then made some remarks, saying that the reason why this tradition had not been established earlier was that he had not yet been old enough. After one reaches the age of sixty, he said, a memorial Mass becomes an especially attractive tradition to establish. Representing both General Program students and faculty, Professor Michael Crowe {G.P. '58} offered grace after dinner by giving thanks for the faculty, who give of themselves to the students, and thanks for the students, who continue to stimulate the faculty. He also announced the May 2 planting {just north and west of O'Shaughnessy Hall} of a Ginkgo tree contributed by General Program alumni in memory of Willis Nutting.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thank you for your continued, generous support of Programma. In this section, we let you know where your old friends are and what they are up to these days. Let us hear from more of you! Any messages to your classmates or teachers?

DAN KINDLER, '75
Computer Programmer
Columbus, Ohio

FRANCIS J. DREIR, '67
Graduate Student, Dept. of Anthropology
Northwestern University, Chicago

DAVID R. (CORKY) CASTEGNARO, '71
Law Student, De Paul Law School
Chicago, Illinois

CHARLES A. LEADER, '73
Indianapolis, Indiana

DIANE (MCDONNELL) LAPELLE, '74
BILL LAPELLE, '75
Chicago, Illinois

MARTY SCHAFFER, '77
Communications Office
United States Navy

JOAN (GAMBEE) MAHALE, '76½
Graduate Student, Univ. of Pennsylvania
Clementon, New Jersey

CHRISTOPHER BERGIN, '77
Law Student, Loyola University
Chicago, Illinois

MARK DULWORTH, '77
"restrained hedonist"
Houston, Texas

WILLIAM F. GALLAGAN, III, '76
M.B.A. Student, Rutgers University
Cranford, New Jersey

"I wrote because I saw Mike Pownall's name. How are you, Pownie? I also enjoyed the articles by Dr. Cronin and Dr. Crowe."

MIKE SMYTH, '71½
Stock Broker, San Francisco, CA.

"I want to recommend two of the most remarkable books I have read since leaving N.D. and G.P.: Hermann Broch's The Sleepwalkers and Thomas Mann's Dr. Faustus, for those interested in exploring the relationship between national culture, ethical values and individual action, with particular focus on the rise of the German National Socialism."

JERRY MURPHY, '60
Public Policy Consultant with
the Energy Research Group and
the Massachusetts Legislature
Boston, Massachusetts

"I would love to meet with the alumni of the General Program in a fashion which would resemble that in which we came to know each other at Notre Dame...I would suggest that you consider coming out here to the Benedictine Monastery at Snowmass... The monastery is beautiful and has a large guest house."

Anyone interested?

PETE PETERSON, '75
Colorado Springs, Colorado

"The unlived life is not worth examining.... Is anyone interested in a group trip on the Trans Siberian R.R. to the 1980 Olympics?"

PETER RODDY, '76 and a little '74
Fly fisherman, peripatetic, sometimes logger, halibut fisherman
Petersburg, Alaska

The Muse comes home to roost, or the

Present State of Music in the General Program

Before I came to the General Program, I had spent my entire academic life in a specialized professional school -- a conservatory of music. Nearly all my thoughts -- my serious ones, anyway -- pertained to musical matters, and virtually all my friends and associates were musicians. I valued those thoughts and those friends but I suspected that other intellectual adventures might bear investigation as well. I also suspected that a larger world of ideas existed outside my area of specialization, and I wished to determine how my own area of learning related to that larger world. These suspicions prompted me two years ago to apply for the position which I now hold. I was rapidly introduced into that larger world of ideas I had expected to find. But my special task here was to develop a music component which would be congruent with the department's guiding principles. At the same time I wished to maintain the integrity of that field of endeavor, music, which had been, and still is, central to my own existence. And, as a faculty member, I hoped to be regarded as more than a representative of a pleasant extra-curricular activity. The following reflections are offered on the occasion of completing my fourth semester at Notre Dame. I would have titled this piece "The View from 185," but my office has no view.

Linda C. Ferguson

* * * * *

To understand the direction the music course has taken in the past two years, it is useful to determine how it is distinctive to the General Program, how it differs from other curricular offerings. It is not a music history course, although we continually look to the past for our substance. It is not a music theory course, although we take time for enough rudimentary theory to employ some basic techniques of musical analysis. It is not a practical music training course, although we may, on occasion, try singing some examples together. (We do introduce the elements of notation for those who have not encountered these symbols before.) We focus, instead, on the development of thoughtful, active listening. But neither is it a "music appreciation" course in the usual sense, where the students assume a passive role while the professor functions as a combination disc-jockey-and-sports-caster. The musical experience is a triangle. Each of the three angles corresponds to one of the three classes of persons concerned with music, defined by Boethius in the 6th century as the composers, the performers, and the judges (i.e., thoughtful listeners). Each of the three classes is essential to the event and each can partake of it directly. We endeavor to develop the class of "judges" -- active, reasoning participants,

who inquire into music's nature, functions, and meanings.

While offering an introduction to the intelligible dimension of music, we avoid the heavily speculative orientation which dominates the music component at St. John's. We do not ignore the intellectual kinship between music and philosophy, but we strive for a suitable balance between sensus and ratio, between audible and inaudible music (i.e., between the practical and the theoretical). To consider music in an active and serious way is to simultaneously engage senses, intellect, and imagination. What pursuit could be more humane? My harpsichord bears the traditional motto, "musica ars omnes exsuperat artes." If this seemingly chauvinistic claim can be justified, it is in this respect: music appeals to the human being as an integrated whole.

My particular dilemma in the General Program has been attempting to deal with music as an integral and liberal study, while maintaining its value apart from external reference. This dilemma has developed subsidiary quandaries as the music tutorial has taken shape. We explore a wide range of concerns and approaches, but it seems that most of them derive from three essential questions:

- 1) What is music? That is, what is its nature?
- 2) What is it for? That is, what does it have to do with other forms of human endeavor?
- 3) What, if anything, does it mean? What kinds of meanings can we reasonably ascribe to music?

Each of the sounds in our environment exhibits the four physical properties which potentially comprise the grammar of a musical tone: pitch, or frequency; intensity, or amplitude; duration; and timbre (i.e. characteristic quality, or tone color). Some of these sounds are combined and arranged into structures--they rely upon a sort of rhetoric and logic--and we know these organized structures as music. In much of that which we designate as music, however, the nature of these structures is obscure. The grammar, rhetoric, and logic of the constructs are often not apparent, and the rational basis of musical sounds and combination, that basis in numerical proportions and balances, seems incongruent with what our sense of hearing experiences. It becomes difficult to reconcile sonic events with that idea of music as it is conceived, nurtured, and practiced in the traditional framework of the seven liberal arts. Traditionally the liberal arts are the arts of symbol making and symbol using. What has this tradition to do with practical music? Is music metaphoric? What values can music carry, given the conditions of contemporary life?

An oft-cited passage in Plato's Republic (Book III) declares that the study of music is essential to the attainment of a worthy morality. Plato views art as imitation of the real, with music as the most celebrated and potent of imitations (Laws, Bk. II, 669-70). In Timaeus, he expounds a theory of universal creation based on a pattern of numerical ratios. (This theory is extended into a specifically musical application by Boethius, since Plato's universal proportions coincide with those ratios which result in musical consonances). This teleological function of music, and the appeal of numbers (and their audible manifestations) are evident in the writings of St. Augustine. He, like Plato, views audible music as earthly

imitation of universal rhythms and harmonies. And, as Plato justifies the existence of music as a model for mortals in living a harmonious and judicious life (Timaeus, 47), Augustine writes, "For the rational and well-ordered concord of diverse sounds in harmonious variety suggests the compact unity of a well-ordered City" (City of God, Bk XVII, Ch. XIV, Vol. 2).

Boethius incorporates the discipline of music, along with arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy, in the four-fold path to wisdom, the quadrivium, which considers the essences of absolute and relative multitude and magnitude. Boethius' treatise, De Musica, which described music as mathematical in structure and moral in value, was largely responsible for shaping musical education, theory, and aesthetics for centuries following its formulation. For a thousand years music proceeded as a liberal art, integrally related to the other arts, the mastery of which led ultimately to the study of philosophy and theology.

But what has this tradition to do with the sonic environment in which we live? What has this tradition to do with that complex of sounds, variously soothing, exhilarating, puzzling, frightening, arousing, and annoying, which provides not only the soundtrack for our life stories, but also a fabric which clothes our senses and spirits, and into which texture we may find parts of ourselves interwoven? What have the musical views of Plato, Augustine, and Boethius to do with contemporary composers such as John Cage, who strives to destroy the barriers between life and art? He writes,

"New music: new listening. Not an attempt to understand something that is being said, for, if something were being said, the sounds would be given the shapes of words. Just an attention to the activity of sounds....(our purpose) is an affirmation of life--not an attempt to bring order out of chaos nor to suggest improvements in creation, but simply a way of waking up to the very life we're living, which is so excellent once one gets one's mind and one's desires out of its way and lets it act of its own accord." (from Silence).

Or, to pursue another set of problems, can we reconcile the old cliché of "music as the universal language" with Eduard Hanslick's distinction between music and language: "...while sound in speech is but a sign, that is a means for the purpose of expressing something quite distinct from its medium, sound in music is the end, that is, the ultimate and absolute object in view" (from The Beautiful in Music)? Or, can we mediate between serial composer Ernst Krenek's assertions that "...music has turned away from its rhetorical past..., [that] the affinity of music and speech is abandoned" (from "The Extents and Limits of Serial Techniques") and Leonard Bernstein's "Chomsky Connection," the view that musical progression can be understood in the terms of transformational grammar?

Contradictions abound, even in basic definitions. Plato identifies the elements of music as words, harmony and rhythm. From his emphasis on primacy

of words, it follows that the best music is that which best imitates the form and sense of the word. Hanslick declares, "the essence of music is sound and motion," and that "music speaks not only by means of sounds, it speaks nothing but sound." The refrain, "But is it music?" is voiced following Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Stravinsky's Le Sacre du Printemps, and Crumb's Ancient Voices of Children. Conflicting ideals of what defines the beautiful do constant battle under the rubrics, "classic" and "romantic."

So, in what guise does the Muse currently reside in our department? In the first semester we attempt to define music's essence. We investigate why it merits serious consideration in a liberal arts curriculum and how it has been viewed as integral to humanness in our tradition. To carry on this investigation, we read selections from the ancients, the early Christian fathers, and medieval thinkers. In the second semester we consider closely a few specific musical works from the last three centuries, works which our tradition tells us are great. We continue to inquire, "What is it for?" and "What does it mean?" Lest it be concluded that we deal only in philosophical abstractions, I must emphasize that we do investigate music as it is practiced. Attendance at several concerts is required, and we occasionally arrange special events such as trips to hear the Chicago Symphony.

The inquiries described herein merit the attention of thoughtful citizens of the world. That world is permeated with sounds, some organized, some chaotic. If we are to live well in this sonic environment, we must try to discover and analyze the natures of these sounds and sound complexes to discern whether they convey meaning, and to evaluate them in intellectual, ethical, and aesthetic terms. Through this process we stand to gain. We shall be better equipped to understand the contemporary soundscape and to order our priorities regarding its component parts. And we shall be better equipped to withstand the rigors of contemporary life.

L.C.F.

As part of our continual evaluation and re-evaluation of the General Program of Liberal Studies, we ask that you take a few moments to answer the following questions. Please send your completed questionnaire to the General Program of Liberal Studies, 318 O'Shaughnessy Hall, Notre Dame, In. 46556. Thank you.

1. My present field of work is:
2. I would rate my level of satisfaction in my work as:
3. I would describe my political outlook as:
4. Religiously I would describe myself as: .
5. I would ascribe my answers to questions 3 and 4 primarily to:
 - a. My family upbringing
 - b. My General Program education
 - c. My experiences after graduation
 - d. My socioeconomic status
 - e. Other (specify)
6. If I had it to over again, I would:
 - a. Major in General Program
 - b. Not major in General ProgramTell us why.
7. During the average year since I have graduated from college or law school or graduate school, I have read:
 - a. 0-5 books per year
 - b. 5-15 books per year
 - c. 15-30 books per year
 - d. 30-60 books per year
 - e. More than 60 books per year.
8. I am:
 - a. married
 - b. separated or divorced
 - c. single
9. If I had to pick one, I would select the following field as the most needing greater emphasis in the General Program:
 - a. History
 - b. Literature
 - c. Philosophy
 - d. Science and math
 - e. Social science (econ., psych., soc.)
 - f. Theology
 - g. Other (specify)

10. If I had to pick one, I would select the following as the skill or art or discipline which most needs greater emphasis in General Program:

- a. Art of discussion
- b. Art of thinking
- c. Art of writing
- d. Other (specify)

11. My senior essay was for me:

- a. A very valuable experience
- b. A valuable experience
- c. A rather valueless experience
- d. A waste of time
- e. Other (specify)

I would like my old friends and teachers to know where I am and what I am doing these days.

Name _____

Class _____

Present Occupation _____

City _____

I would like to contribute the enclosed amount _____

to help with the publication of PROGRAMMA.

Comments: _____
