Modern Composition

There is so much I would like to relate in the experience of creating music, but it too difficult to put into words. However Here are a few factors that influence a composer's life.

1. His listening experiences
2. a creative urge
3. his musical participation 4. his education and self search- 5. experimenting.

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All- in all art the most logical approach is to study the old masters and then to reac out for a new reinterpration. In studying the old masters the greatest value is received sensing the depth of their expression and t heighth of spiritual empathy.

In studying the new music we tend to identify ourselves with this style or that style. As a student we often lionize a certai composer or a certain style and later awaken to the fact that we are following other's creative ideas instead of our own. Then we light out in another direction, grasping out in the darkness for some ideal.

It takes years of search and research to find oneself. In all art it is paramount that we be true to ourselves if we are to express a personal message, for all art is communication of idea toward ideal.

All effort reaches out toward perfection We each miss it by degrees, We seek the perfect melodic line, the perfect harmonic color, the perfect orchestral combination and the perfect performance , but it is all relative. All these factors take place in space and time. Within the meter is the proportion of the phrase - within the phrase is the shape of the tone line that rises to the drama of the sentence.

The continuity of interval rhythms and dynamics speak the message of sound.

The motifs are like the characters in a play that must take on the mood and act the plot.

Whether the modern composer follows the contrapuntalists, the romantics, the neo-classisists, or the expressionists the vital question is-Does the music say something of import and does it have greatness of conception?

I am not going into the various paths followed by modern composers any further than to say that some have become fascinated with the intrigue of contrapuntal devices, some have been carried away by the sweetness of romanticism, and some have been chilled ~~the~~ by the technique of dissonance. Perhaps they say something, but it is in a language we do not understand.

I hope the quartet we are about to play will be understandable to everyone. It is not pretentious. It commences as early dawn with a primitive melody. There is a good deal of the primitive feeling throughout and a gay country dance well through the first movement. The second movement has various moods, again the primitive. The third is a short country dance, the fourth a rapid restless movement depicting modern life in America.