MY TURN

November 2, 1998 Robert W. Dorsey

"My turn" is a word pair that we have all used at one time or another. "My turn to tell a story" pleads the eager, bright-eyed child during a family pow-wow. "My turn to cut the grass, I suppose" says the recalcitrant youth, acknowledging that his brother had done the chore the previous week. "My turn to deal" growls the losing poker player. "My turn with that thing" exclaims the bemused wife, grabbing the TV remote clicker from her husband. My turn to come with a paper.

A most memorable story from Sports Illustrated is "My Turn at Bat" by Ted Williams and a ghost long forgotten. That thesis on the science of hitting a small, fast moving sphere, written about 30 years ago, was sprinkled with reminiscences and apologies for "Ted the Kid's" flamboyant and frequently profane life. He even stated regrets for calling Truman, Taft and others "gutless politicians" when he was called back to Marine air service during The Korean War. A vivid scene in the article was his description of jumping out of his crashed-landed jet and smashing his flight helmet on the ground in the same outrage aimed earlier at Boston sports writers and dugout water coolers. This is not a sports story. My current interest in sports is similar to Ted Williams' present ability to hit those small, first moving spheres – rather limited.

This particular "My Turn" stems from a series once employed as fundraisers by radio station WGUC, whereby, for a financial contribution, the donor could compose and present a radio program on a subject of choice with appropriate accompanying music – a small scale ego trip really. After a series of changes in station management and format, the "My Turn" opportunities no longer exist. Presumably some of the outcomes were not considered professional or "slick" enough for the various iterations of station management. I found the "My Turns" to be refreshing alternatives to the standard patter too frequently interrupting my real

reason for listening to WGUC, the music – while acknowledging being amused by some episodes of "Car Talk" and certain editions of "All Things Considered." In the latter, once again the most interesting program segments are those featuring ordinary people talking about local issues ranging from education to coping with floods.

But, my most transparent reason for enjoying "My Turn" is because I authored and delivered one called "Architecture and Music," which the station was kind enough to air twice, eight years ago.

The basic notion of that script and this paper is that all the arts are connected – by philosophy, process and terminology. There is classical art, literature, music and architecture – and words like romantic, baroque, modern and post-modern relate to many human endeavors. Composers and designers work through studies and sketches toward detailed formats called scores or blueprints. (Blueprint is an archaic term, but one still carrying vernacular meaning.) The artists' works are not complete until the music is performed or the building is built. Composers are analogous to architects, orchestra conductors to project managers, musicians to craftsmen. Many dedicated performers are required for a successful work of art.

This game of "architecture and music" is simply relating particular building to particular pieces of music, through any comparison chosen – objective or subjective. Anyone can play because you can make up your own rules as you proceed – rather like politics. Some may even wish to play "politics and music," with pieces ranging from "Happy Days are Here Again" to "Night on Bald Mountain" to describe the rise and fall of most political careers. "Law and music" might also be fun. A case in common pleas court could be like a string trio, representing three high strung performers, two attorneys and a judge. A case before the Supreme Court would be repeated crescendos – with lots of double basses and timpani.

My radio script contained the following building-to-music relationships. (By the way, I have a tape of

that broadcast should anyone be remotely interested.) They are arranged generally in chronological order by building dates:

1. The Roebling Bridge (1858-1865) was the lead-off batter, with some musings about whether it was really architecture. After strong affirmation on that point, the magnificent span was related to "The Great Gate at Kiev," from Modest Moussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition," later orchestrated by Ravel. Moussorgsky was depicting in music the paintings of his friend, architect Victor Hartman, who had conceived the Great Gate, which was never built. The Roebling has two great portals linking two great states, and was a cultural boundary between North and south at the time of construction.

2. Taft Museum was represented by Brahms' "Trio in B, Opus 8," as played by Artur Rubinstein, Henryk Szeryng and Pierre Fournier. Wow, what a Trio! Incidentally, my record box for that set of trios by Brahms and Schumann, a gift from my wife, bears Rubinstein's personal autograph. The architecture-music relationship includes the fact that Brahms "remodeled" the trio several times from a youthful to a mature work, and the musical colorations are evocative of the moods of the museum including the Duncanson murals in the original foyer. The designer of the Taft is lost to antiquity, but it was probably a skilled carpenter, following a pattern book, perhaps with sketches by Benjamin Latrobe and James Hoban, when creating a home for Martin Baum, in 1836.

3. Music Hall was presented through Carl Orff's "Carmina Burana" inspired by an epic rendition of that earthy work by the May Festival Chorus about twelve years ago – among my dozen best experiences in that venerable hall. The building was built originally for choral music and carries a fundamental earthiness, from the fired earth which makes up most of the structure, to the character of the workers who built it in 1873, tobacco chewing masons who used the earthiest of language -– like Carmina Burana.

4. City Hall, like Music Hall, designed by Samuel Hannaford, Cincinnati's most famous architect over time, was represented by Beethoven's Third Symphony. City Hall is an heroic building – and any program aired in Cincinnati needs a little Beethoven. At this juncture I should state that, for the sake of radio time, only selected excerpts were played of each musical treat, after a brief introduction of the idea behind the building-to-music relationship. Also, it's appropriate to cite the assistance of Gary Barton, an able broadcaster, one of the few people still at WGUC from the days of "My Turn." Together we described the genesis of the program, an architectural guide book authored by George Roth, myself and others, and published by the Architectural Foundation of Cincinnati and The Greater Cincinnati Bicentennial Commission.

5. The Union Central Tower at Fourth and Vine was related to George Gershwin's "Concertino in F" because both works employed traditional idioms in bold new forms. The tower was designed by Cass Gilbert in association with Woodward and Garber, the latter the late literarian Woodie Garber's father, and the former his namesake.

6. Union Terminal was linked to Prokofiev's First Symphony, "The Classical," partly because both works were conceived about the same time, 1920s, and both are modern classics. Prokofiev builds on recurring themes suggesting the successive uses of the building as train station, retail mall, and Museum Center. The building, designed by the Swiss modernist, Paul Cret, with Fellheimer and Wagner, is now a classical statement of Art Deco or Art Moderne (some debate on this), and Winold Reis' murals on display there and at the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky International Airport (say that ten times fast) display a musical quality subject to many interpretations – but the color and wit of Prokofiev seem to fit. An after-thought – the new Children's Museum at the Museum Center could be augmented by the lively strains of Prokofiev, both

his "Classical Symphony" and the later "Peter and the Wolf."

7. The University of Cincinnati's McMicken Hall was related to Jeremiah Clarke's "Trumpet Voluntary," because both have been triumphant, processional-like qualities – and both have Georgian roots. McMicken was designed by Joseph Lyle, my one-time mentor, at the office of Harry Hake. Joe's gruff exterior belied his deft touch with Georgian Revival architecture. And, I can't resist saying that in spite of all the new "signatures" on UC's campus, McMicken remains the centerpiece and has stood the test of time better than most later buildings.

8. Fountain square looks like Edgar Elgar's Cockaigne Suite sounds. His subtitle "In London Town" may seem a stretch – comparing Cincinnati to the old empirial center – but both are river cities given to gray weather, so that when the sun sparkles and the flags are flapping in the breeze, with the halyards and blocks slapping the flag poles, one can hear the melodies of Cockaigne. The designers of Fountain Square were RTKL in conjunction with Betts Carey Wright. Incidentally, the R in RTKL is the late Archibald Rogers who tried his hand as a novelist but with less lasting success than architect Thomas Hardy. But Rogers had more built works than did Hardy.

9. Bicentennial Commons was expressed by Aaron Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man." The ideas are similar, the elevation of ordinary people, ideas, activity and things. At Bicentennial Commons, everyone is equal and everyone can enjoy a fanfare. The design was by Paul Frieberg and Glaser Associates. Of course, "Fanfare" was commissioned by the Cincinnati Orchestra.

Well, that prologue being past, what may we examine this evening. Sorry that I cannot play the music with each upcoming comparison. I shall trust that most of you know the works and can hear the music in your heads as I describe the compositions. But

please refrain from one of my bad habits – hearing music when I should be listening to discussion.

Let's start with these beloved quarters, our boys' clubhouse. Though tempted to cite some boyish melody, I shall become a bit more serious – just a bit – and once again refer to Johannes Brahms, this time his "Academic Festival Overture." That work comes close to the themes of this body – some moderately serious academics mixed with good camaraderie. Wouldn't Johannes have made a wonderful literarian – talk about clubability! He could perhaps read papers about literature and music, or philosophy and music – or about what really transpired in those Hamburg establishments. Robert Kaltoff, in his budget this past spring, questions whether Brahms really played in brothels. Johaness could clarify in jovial post-paper discussions while surely matching any of us in quaffing the pilsener. And indeed, Brahms could have been a Literary Club member except for the consequence of place. Having lived until 1897, he could have been with our predecessors for 48 wonderful years.

The "Academic Festival Overture" was written as his thesis and thanks upon receipt of an honorary doctorate at Breslau University in 1879. Never having attended college, Brahms was reportedly both honored and amused. He initially sent his thanks with a postcard, but then was informed that a special piece of music was the expectation. Universities – then as now – rarely give anything away without expecting something in return. Brahms' quick study was a recapitulation of some early sketches, original themes, and songfest excerpts. The music is best remembered for those references to popular students' songs, including "We Have Built a Stately House," introduced by a brass choir; "The Father of the Nation," commenced by violins over plucked cellos; "What's Coming From a High," a freshman hazing song, introduced by the bassoon; and, as a grand finale, "Gaudeamus Igitur," – "Let us Therefore Rejoice." All of these songs were popular with students, and were readily adapted to their late night boisterous singing bouts – and adapted by Brahms with some intent to tease the stuffy administrators.

Of particular interest was "We Have Built a Stately House," an anthem for German unification. Police control of the 36 separate states outlawed its rendition in most of them, which only made it all the more tempting to the students. Only when Otto Von Bismarck successfully led the joining of the German Empire did the song become legal. Bismarck was a hero to Brahms because they both were very Teutonic and dedicated to the advancement of German culture. "We Have Built" continued to be outlawed in Vienna and when the "Academic Festival Overture" was first scheduled there, a two-week hassle occurred with the police who feared a student demonstration.

Brahms' support for a federal Germany can be stretched to make another analogy to this building, which is considered to be Federal Style architecture, at least in its original design. The guide to Architecture and Construction in Cincinnati says that it was built in 1820 as the home of John Newsome, governor of the Northwest Territory. The house became headquarters of the Literary Club in 1920, and was subsequently remodeled to today's ambience, including Greek Revival motifs by Alfred Elsner, architect and club member, who was cited in John Diehl's paper last week for his placement in the library of the Veritas window from Harvard's Appleton Chapel. Walter Langsam has indicated interest in giving a paper on the history of Literary Club headquarters, as part of next year's sesquicentennial celebration.

A most spirited rendition of the "Academic Festival Overture" was given by the UC orchestra in the mid-1970's in the Armory Fieldhouse when literarian Henry Winkler was installed as Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, a prelude to his becoming UC President.

Next door to our club is the Phelps apartment building, designed by Woodward and Garber and built in 1925. In the guide to Architecture and Construction, the Phelps is described as a vertical manor house, because of the eclectic use of idioms from a variety of English architecture applied to what was quite a tall building for Cincinnati in 1925. The Phelps could fit comfortably in certain sections of London – those

allowing buildings of this height. Thus it is easy to relate it to Ralph Vaughan Williams' Second Symphony, "The London." That music is quite eclectic, borrowing a number of themes from various English folk sources and mixing them with his own ideas, past and current. The Second Symphony does bear occasional resemblance in style and verve to Elgar's Cockaigne Suite. It portrays London as a mixture of excitement, intellect, joys and sorrows.

The London Symphony was completed in 1914 and later dedicated to George Butterworth, a composer friend killed on the Somme in 1916. The symphony catapulted Vaughn Williams to the forefront of British composers, along with Elgar, then in the twilight of his career. As with architectural designs, this composition was altered and tinkered with. One can imagine the Messrs. Woodward and Garber tinkering with many sketches of the Phelps in overall composition and details. Williams accepted advice from Sir Arnold Bax and Albert Coates and experimented with the composition up to 1920. Enlightened architects accept advice from each other to improve their designs.

Williams' opening movement, lento-allegro risoluto, relates to the entering experience of the Phelps. A quiet but spacious theme suggests Lytle Park and Fourth Street. Then there are pauses in each phrase, as a visitor, with all senses open, might hesitate to enjoy in succession the balustraded terrace, polished brass entrance, snug foyer and comfortable lobby. The opening of a piece of music and the early visual cues from a piece of architecture have much in common. They should arouse the senses and make the listener/visitor eager to enjoy more of the composition – what delights lie ahead?

Although not having the current adulation of Brahms or Elgar, Vaughn Williams had similarities to both in his use of folk and religious themes. He was as avid about British culture as Brahms was German.

Williams, every inch the Londoner, was born in the Cotswolds and those roots soften the drive of "The London," which, with sound pictures express the moods of the great capital – just as it could suggest the

varying moods of the Phelps and environs, particularly Lytle Park. Picture it in spring blooms, summer sun, autumn color and winter white. A well designed building should look good in all seasons and in various light, and the detailed figure on the Phelps, such as the floral and grape carving around the entrance, allows distinctive shadows in full light, and visual stimulation at any time of day or year. The high balconies and iron grilles, rarely noticed by passersby, add to the music. Although neither the Phelps nor "The London," would be on most lists of great works, they are good solid products of artist/craftsmen who cared passionately about their endeavors.

Just to the east of the Phelps is a cluster of apartments with the uninspiring name, 550 East Fourth Street, developed by Western and Southern Life Insurance Co. soon after the lid was placed on the I-71 tunnel. In fact, the east half of the units are right over the tunnel. It's as though steady flows of cars and semis are passing through one's basement. An intricate foundation design minimizes the vibration transfer. This complex, actually one intricately shaped building conceived to look like two or three buildings, was designed by Gavin Gray of the Hake Office in 1970. He was faced with a problem which many architects have wrestled with, designing a modern building sensitive to the context of nearby traditional buildings. In addition to Lytle Park and the Phelps, the site has prominent exposure to the bulky R.L. Polk Building (formally the Pugh Building), and to the intersection of Fifth, Pike and Columbia Parkway, hardly a condition arousing sensitivity. The later additions of Procter and Gamble's World Headquarters and that curious nearby street fountain, add to the challenge of appreciating the 550 complex.

Despite all the potential detractions, the building remains successful as attested in part by 100% occupancy since the completion of construction. Its visual success is achieved through a deft blend of modern and traditional elements. It is at home in its surroundings and is maturing well. The brick work deserves special attention. It illustrates the poetry of masonry. Millenia old, masonry has allowed man to

shape memorable works such as The Pyramids, the Great Wall, and literally billions of homes. Masonry is a universal building material which remains popular largely because of the abilities of designers and craftspersons to shape it poetically and musically into so many forms. The architect is composer; the masonry is musician. Look at how, in the 550, traditional, warm-hued bricks frame openings, subtly state changes in height, and articulate the chamfered roof lines, all softening a modern building to relate comfortably to traditional surroundings.

Francis Poulenc was faced with a similar dilemma when composing his "Concerto for Two Pianos" in 1932. He was buffeted on all sides by opposing influences, the continuing power for the German composers to the east, the French musical tradition running from Chabriet to Saint-Saens, the cultivated London-born sponsor of the concerto, Princess Edmond de Polignac – and the modern movement in all things French. This was shortly after the highly successful Exposition des Arts Decoritifs, which launched the art deco movement. He successfully maneuvered through this minefield to produce a work similar in character to the 550 East Fourth Street Building. There is a reference to the past – to Mosart, whom Poulenc adored – to the present, emerging movie music, and to the composer's own skills as a gifted, poetic pianist. The result is a work at times sensitive, sometimes bombastic – and a good fit in anyone's collection of musical styles. As the 550 turns its less humane parking garage to busy Fifth Street, Poulenc used some discordant segments to frame and enhance the lighter, more melodious passages, those analogous to seeing the 550 complex from Lytle Park. The Labeque sisters will perform the Poulenc with the Cincinnati later this season.

The aforementioned Princess de Polignac was a fascinating woman. Originally Winnaretta Singer, a Londoner, she married French, moved to Paris – and Venice, and lavished the sewing machine wealth on composers, including Debussy, Falla, Stravinsky, Faure, Revel and Poulenc.

The R.L. Polk Building is a quintessential example of facadism – which modernist students revile.

However, facadism abounds in the great cities of Europe, where it is understood that the street facade of a building is adorned while the sides are hidden by party walls or narrow alleys. The problem with the Polk building, of course, is that the sides are exposed and visible due to proximity to the Fifth Street Viaduct on one side and the open space around the Taft Museum on the other.

Coming from the east along Columbia Parkway into Downtown Cincinnati, one sees the Polk Building as a utilitarian landmark with industrial windows, fire escapes and a checkerboard pattern of synthetic stucco, called EIFS or exterior insulation finish system, a very thin polymerized compound over a layer of rigid insulation. This coating is relatively recent and improves the energy integrity of the building and perhaps the appearance, but does further emphasize the abrupt change from decorative front facade to the plain sides. At least it was a valiant attempt to improve the most visual elevations of the building.

All that said, let's focus on the facade of interest, the west elevation which helps anchor the northeast corner of Lytle Park, and which was the obvious interest of architects Louis Dittoe and Benjamin Wisenall in 1905, when designing the headquarters and production facilities for the A.H. Pugh Printing Company. The composition is manneristic, that is, "in the manner of" classical and Renaissance designs, particularly the application of idioms which gained widespread use during those historic periods. The strongly articulated arches, heavy rustication, and cornices at both the second floor line and roof line are in the manner of Italian Renaissance. The greatest mannerist of all was Palladio – or Palladio – no one is quite sure how he pronounced it in 1500.

Andrea Palladio was the first signature architect. In fact, his lasting signature is the arched opening flanked by columns and rectangular elements, an excellent local example being the Albee arch now applied – a mannerism – onto the south side of the Cincinnati Convention Center. Palladio is one up on today's signature architects on two counts, there is a heroic statue of him in Vinceza, adjacent to his

collonaded loggia, itself applied to an earlier basilica, both of which look superb 450 years later, and he has had at least one piece of music composed in his honor – more on that in a minute.

Let's clarify mannerism, since it too has been sometimes a term of derision, akin to eclecticism, or to just plain copying. Indeed Palladio copied, but he copied the best and did his homework. Practicing in the mid-Renaissance and following such giants as Bruneleshi, Leonardo da Vinci and the titan, Michaelangelo, he had strong shoulders to stand on, which he did – but he also went back to the sources and carefully measured Greek and Roman ruins and relics, to renew understanding of classical scale, proportion and ornamentation. His abundant information was applied to his own practice, and led to books and a school of architecture – acolytes learning at the master's knee, as with Frank Lloyd Wright four centuries later.

Palladio as educator influenced Inigo Jones, who mentored Christopher Wren, who was admired by Thomas Jefferson, who helped spawn Georgian architecture in America; so it might be argued that half a millennium of mannerism, i.e., eclecticism, spanned from Palladio's books and school to today's pseudo-Georgian subdivision houses.

Now to the music. We were talking about the facade of the Polk building before going off on that long tangent about mannerism. A piece of string music that airs occasionally on WGUC and which became the theme for deBeer's Diamonds is relevant to this building because it is called – Palladio. By the present day English composer, Carl Jerkins, it represents facadism. While being an engaging stream of sound, it stays on the surface of musical intellect and does not probe the depths of possibilities the way Michaelangelo would probe a sculpture or building, or the way Beethoven would seek the soul of a piece of music.

Let's clarify once again. I enjoy listening to Jenkin's Palladio and enjoy examining the western elevation of the Polk building, but if I am looking for depth, I'll pursue other works.

So, let's pursue other works. If you draw a diagonal from the Polk Building through the Lincoln sculpture, you arrive at Guilford School. This building is a true treasure. I believe that it was designed by the successors to Samuel Hannaford, but have not confirmed that. We'll examine Guilford, but let's stay in the park for a while.

Lytle Park itself offers many opportunities for musical allusions. Is it architecture? – of course. A simple, functional definition is that architecture consists of buildings and the spaces between. Sometimes the spaces are more delightful than the buildings. Lytle Park certainly is a delight. It was raped in the name of progress thirty-five years ago for I-71, but happily was restored to previous ambience. The park and assortment of buildings around it create one of Cincinnati's really civilized areas and its first public space. It was once a peach orchard. But what should we cite musically? – the tunnel, the old Bottoms area, the Marine Corps memorial, the Lincoln statue or the trees, flowers and grass? The latter might suggest the "Lark Ascendings," but I've never seen a lark in this park and we've already honored Vaughn Williams. Percy Grainger's "A Country Garden" doesn't quite fit this urban scene either. Mozart's bassoon concerto might set the tone for the exhibit on the Bottoms, well worth examining by day – historic photos of the area and actors in its dramas. The Marine Corps Hymn could fit the southern corner of Lytle. Aaron Copland's "A Lincoln Portrait" is almost too obvious for the western plaza. But let's stop and consider that prospect for a moment. The "Portrait" was one of a series of Copland's sensuous works about America. A New York City native, he developed a passion for the history and mythology of this expansive country and produced a fascinating American style by employing the diversity that marks this country. He blended European musical origins with regional themes into music at first dismissed as too simplistic by critics, but which has gained wide audiences who love lilting melody overlaying serious composition. (Who cares about critics anyway – except, of course, when they are us.) From "Rodeo," "Appalachian Spring," "Billy the Kid," and "The Red Pony," to "Our Town" and "Quiet City," Copland showed a genius for capturing the

evocative qualities of time and place in sublime music. Each of his works has a sense of humanity that can be enjoyed on a variety of levels by diverse listeners.

His "Lincoln Portrait" is obviously a work of admiration for a man, his ideas, ideals and noble works. The epic words by Lincoln and Carl Sandburg are woven through descriptive theme music. Copland wrote "Lincoln" in 1942, under commission by Andrew Kostelanetz, who premiered the work with the Cincinnati Orchestra. George Gray Barnard produced the Lytle Park sculpture in 1915. Whereas Copland unabashedly glorified Lincoln, Gray shows us a very human, not very handsome, man, embued with melancholy, introspection, and self-doubt.

The one live performance of "A Lincoln Portrait" that I enjoyed was at the opening of Riverbend Music Center in 1985. The Narrator was Neil Armstrong, who, in his own midwestern tones, captured the spirit quite well.

But back to the park itself, let's make this an assignment. What piece of music best captures the spirit of the whole of Lytle Park? Submittals will be accepted at any time.

Now to the Guilford School Building, currently offices and wellness center for Western and Southern Life Insurance Company. This highly expressive Italianate building, built on the site of the old Fort Washington, deserves highly expressive Italian music. How about Alessandro Marcello's Oboe Concerto? The building and concerto are romantic, decorative, sort of baroque, and subject to many interpretations. The building itself has been adapted from academic to corporate usage. Marcello's concerto was adapted for trumpet – and for harpsichord by no less than J.S. Bach. But more fitting are the compositional qualities of the two works. The carefully structured opening of the concerto suggests the strong base of the building; the ornamental slow movement captures the overall architectural statement – both overflow with romantic expression – and Marcello's finalé expresses the lavish details on the cornices and loggias. Both building and music are luscious eclectic concoctions. But, there is

also an air of sadness in the concerto, which might match the sad fate of Cincinnati public education. When Guilford was alive with youthful exuberance, Cincinnati had one of the best systems in the country - and afforded inspiring buildings. Ah well, another topic for another time.

A sensitive conversion designed by Michael Shuster has left the visually exciting texture unchanged – the boys and girls entrances are still identifiable - and has added the exterior lighting which really dramatizes the building by night. Marcello was a Venetian and contemporary of Vivaldi. One might picture Guilford on the Grand Canal.

The University Club blends Victorian and Italianate idioms with French Second Empire massing elements, the latter most evident in the dormers and roof. You probably know the derivation of the Mansard roof. Francois Mansart, seventeenth century Parisian architect, responded to the real estate tax code by design innovations. The code called for taxing buildings based on the number of stories up to the cornice line. Thus any stories above the cornice, that is, enclosed by the roof, would not be taxed. Some buildings in Paris have three stories above the cornice and two stories below. Later the code was amended, but the Mansard roof had gained widespread appeal and has been replicated on many nineteenth and twentieth century buildings – and became associated with the Second Empire.

The University Club, originally built as a residence for William Howard Taft in 1880, has been remodeled on the inside several times, twice under this author's guidance, but has remained largely unchanged on the exterior, and remains a very positive contributor to the urbane character of East Fourth Street.

Musically I shall combine the University Club with three neighbors on Broadway, the Academy of Medicine, 318 Broadway, and the District Two Police Station. These create a harmonious urban landscape easily related to a particularly harmonious piece of music, Beethoven's Triple Concerto.

The quartet of buildings is not adequately appreciated among Cincinnati's streetscapes, and Beethoven's Triple Concerto is underappreciated because it is infrequently performed. It requires three excellent soloists with a good orchestra, and such assemblage is rarely afforded in today's high cost environment. There are commendable recordings. Mine combines David Oistrakh, Mstislav Rostopovich, Sviatoslav Richter, and the Berlin Philharmonic under Herbert Von Karajan. This is a superb piece of music, with many subtleties – in contrast to several of Ludwig's symphonies, which a British wag described as kegs of nails being knocked over. The kegs in the Triple Concerto are of smooth vintage wine. Each time I hear the piece, I hum the melodies for days, savoring the flavors.

I suggest the following metaphors. The University Club is the piano, the Academy of Medicine the cello, 318 Broadway the violin, and the police station is the orchestra. The University Club with its moderately decorative qualities – and a piano nobile, A Renaissance term for the raised main floor over a utilitarian lower level – guides and sets the direction of the performance. The Academy of Medicine, with its reserved, understated exterior, like the cello, provides a smooth continuum. It introduces themes that are elaborated by the piano and violin. The smaller and exquisite 318 Broadway, like a violin, enhances themes, with both strength and delicate detailing. The polished wood doors have a violin quality about them.

The police station anchors the group of buildings, as the orchestra anchors the performance. The station is strong, traditional (what is more traditional than a symphony orchestra?) and establishes protocol. The pair of Ionic columns could be symbolic of the conductor standing in full glory before the orchestra.

The last building to be examined is the older portion of the Western and Southern complex, that which faces Fourth Street and which is directly across from the University Club. It now carries the name Columbus Life Insurance Company and features a brass sailing ship projecting a curbed staff over the sidewalk. While presumably representing one of Christopher's

caravels, the ship conjures up a couple of other metaphors, one being the birth of the insurance industry at Lloyd's Coffee House in London in 1688, where ship owners pooled funds to cover losses by individual investors, as described in John Campbell's paper on Lloyd's three years ago.

The other symbol is the ship of life, popular in Denmark to remind all humans that life is a voyage, with a launch, a blend of smooth cruises and storm tossed fury, and finally arrival at safe port for eternal rest. I prefer that symbolism as I shall explain later.

The building is very formal, a product of the Beaux Arts tradition, a composition of Ionic columns, a Renaissance dual entrance and overstated total composition. In this regard the building is too powerful for its site. It seems crowded, its strong shoulders straining against the physical limits. The building deserves to be seen from at least 50 yards. It should be viewed like a painting, first from enough distance to comprehend its context, as a painting is viewed in its gallery; then from a closer distance where the building or painting can be viewed as its own particular composition; and finally up close to enjoy the details, the brushwork or the jointery.

The character of this building suggests a memorial as in a memorial auditorium, memorial museum – or a mausoleum. This latter reference connects to the Danish ship of life metaphor, and offers the opportunity to introduce Benjamins Britten's War Requiem. Britten wrote his Requiem after World War II around the poems of Wilfert Owens who was a victim of World War I. Britten was a conscientious objector but felt duty bound to memorialize wars' victims and horrors. It is a profound political statement. The German soldiers are not enemies to be hated but co-victims of horrific miscarriages of human endeavor. It is a haunting piece, rather like that building on a chill foggy night.

I've heard the War Requiem twice, first by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Wolfgang Sawallisch, as guest of my history professor son and his architect

wife. I was deeply moved, both by Owen's poetry and Britten's music. I gained a new appreciation of the depth of Britten. Three years ago, Robert Shaw conducted the May Festival Chorus and Orchestra in the work on the same program as "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," Paul Hindemith's music around Walt Whitman's lines, another memorable Music Hall evening. A remarkable combination – German born Hindemith and Brooklyn born Whitman honoring Kentucky born Lincoln.

Analyzing "War Requiem" as I did paintings and buildings, we can first view Britten's work from a distance of four decades. It stands out in its context as a strong anti-war statement at a time when many began seeing the futility of armed conflicts – a sentiment unfortunately lost among all the violent disputes to follow. The musical composition itself is formal in overall development as is the related building, but with lyrical passages that can speak to the rhythms of the Ionic columns and decorative idioms - and both have apparent strengths in the details. Owen's lines and Britten's music are as superbly crafted as the limestone masonry of the Columbus Life Building.

The brief reference to when "Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" may serve to bring us back to the Barnard's Lincoln statue in Lytle Park, right opposite the beginning point of tonight's brief tour. We didn't range far - but have illustrated the visual and auditory delights right here in our neighborhood. My hope, if you are still alert, is that you might look on these and other buildings in a slightly different way. Enjoy the visions of many talented people and hear the music emanating from these doorways, cornices, and columns. Remember the assignment – what music does Lytle Park bring to your imaginations?

One more thought on Lincoln – I would prefer to move the statue off the axis leading to the Taft Museum, placing it closer to our clubhouse and rotating it so that he is facing south – much symbolism there, and the sunlight would better illuminate his dramatic countenance. So, his back would be to our clubhouse –

no matter. The Lincoln Portrait, like all the arts, should be enjoyed from many viewpoints.

OM MANI PADME HUM

November 9, 1998 — William C. Vocke, Jr.

> "Throughout the inhabited world, in all times and under every circumstance, the myths of man have flourished; and they have been the living inspiration of whatever else may have appeared out of the activities of the human body and mind." Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces. (1949, 3)

We were beginning an adventure, at least as defined by a high school senior from a small Ohio farm town. Bruce had his dad's old Porche 911. Red and undercoat gray, seats of leather and bare floor panels, the body and interior still needed to be restored. But, the engineer was hot and smooth, and the radio loud and bawdy.

A popular song from years back regularly finds its way today into my subconscious. It began "Oh what a night, late September 1963, what a very special time for me, I remember what a night. Oh what a night, and I didn't even know her name, but it was never going to be the same, sweet surrender what a night."

Today, Bruce would be called a nerd, skinny, unathletic, buck toothed, craggy faced. He later became a flower child, touring India on a motorcycle after two years in the Peace Corps, carrying drugs to pay his way. In 1998, he is a computer hot shot and division manager in North Carolina with a fine family.

Bruce was the smartest person in our class of 101. He never studied or brought home a book, so my grades were better, but we all were in awe of his ability. He