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# Henri Temianka Correspondence; (lees)

Benjamin Lees

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## Henri Temianka Correspondence; (lees)

### **Keywords**

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Benjamin Lees  
Koskelantie 33 B/23  
Helsinki, Finland

October 9, 1956

Dear Mr. Temianka:

We are, indeed, old friends though I have not had the pleasure of meeting you personally. I lived in Los Angeles for many years and heard you on many a concert, always admiring your excellent musicianship and general musical taste. But Los Angeles is a large, and sometimes impersonal city, as you know. Therefore I not only failed to meet you, but very many other artists as well. A sad commentary, you will agree, on my lack of initiative.

Only in Europe have I met the people from Los Angeles and New York! What a strange turn of events. Nevertheless it's true, for I have discovered artists who lived in my vicinity for ten years without my knowing of their existence!

However, I cannot tell you what deep, personal satisfaction I experienced when you and the Paganini took my quartet for performance. In hearing your recording of the Town Hall premiere I was absolutely astounded by the excellence and obvious sincerity of the performance. It was as perfect as I could have wished it, and I felt that no composer could ask for anything more. It is not every day that a composer has the Paganini Quartet accept, and then work so faithfully on his music.

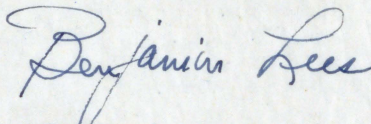
Therefore I want to thank you personally for all you have done and to tell you how grateful I am for all your efforts in bringing this work before the public. I am certain that your recording of this quartet is superb, and only hope that it will meet with artistic, as well as financial success. You now know me through my music, and I, you through your interpretive artistry. It is my wish that we will meet personally one day.

I am enclosing a biographical sketch, as well as an analysis of the quartet. Some of the analysis includes a little material from Henry Cowell's review of the Quartet in the April 1956 Musical Quarterly. The rest is mine. Please cut and slice it as you see fit, but do let me know that it has arrived.

Helsinki abounds in music. Perhaps all of you could come here at some future date, for as an American quartet you would have a guaranteed full house and a highly appreciative musical audience. It's almost the only city in Europe where Americans are really welcomed, admired and respected.

With my very best wishes to you for all manner of success, and my thanks for everything,

Yours faithfully,



Benjamin Lees

P.S. In the analysis of the Quartet, all underlined words mean that those words will be in Italics on the jacket liner. Also check my spelling of pizzicato!

P.P.S. Am so terribly proud that you call it "our" quartet. Thank you.