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Letter,1967 January 1, from Jester J. Hairston to Eva Jessye

Jester J. Hairston

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New Years Day

1967

My Darling;

Happy New Year to you from Marge and me. I am amazed at your standing, still taking those "one mile" stands in stride. But I wish you all the success possible in your work and that you remain in perfect health also. Good health is so necessary for good work in our field.

Yes, I agree with you, Lore, that both King Vidar and Virgil Thompson did you a disservice in not mentioning you in their autobiographies. It certainly would not have taken anything away from their own artistic contributions. You can reach Burnell at 125 1/2 N. West Lake, Los Angeles, Tel. DU 50698. She and all the former "Hall Johnson" shorters who stayed here on the coast are coming to my house this coming Friday night for a party. It will be the first time I've had them all here at once and we're looking forward to a good time, telling lies and eating.

My work begins in full after next week. I have had 13 weeks off from concerts and I am most grateful, because I have so many new songs to learn for the coming season. On most of my clinics I am not confined to spirituals. I include old 17th. Century motets in Latin, and Russian Church music as

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1967
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as well as modern choral pieces. You know, the kind of things that have little or no melodies. Then I always include a few with number and go from there into my spirituals for the finale. Enclosed is a sample of the kind of things I do. Of course, some schools do not want to do anything except spirituals, and that doesn't make me angry one bit; because a whole concert means about 12 songs. And if they buy 17 of my songs (sometimes the children are soo strong) then I ask me to come and interpret them I am very happy.

I thank you so much for doing my "Christmas Gift". It is now being published. Did you hear Andy Williams do my "Mary's Boy Child" at times on his TV show? I have 16 different recordings on it as of this year. If I can get some spare time I shall try to compose some more numbers this spring or summer. Please take care of your sweet self and keep writing me. You are not only my greatest love, but also my main inspiration. And you have been for almost 40 years. I love you. Marge sends her best wishes also. She is so much better now and we are most grateful to God.

Fairfax