

The original documents are located in Box 21, folder “Medal of Freedom - Fiedler, Arthur” of the John Marsh Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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October 4, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: DAVE GERGEN
FROM: JACK MARSH

Dave, I recommend that we go ahead with the suggestion that a Medal of Freedom be presented to Arthur Fiedler.

Please keep me advised as to what transpires in this area.

Many thanks.

cb



SEP 30 1976

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 30, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: JACK MARSH
FROM: DAVE GERGEN

I just received the attached suggestion that a Medal of Freedom be presented to Arthur Fiedler. He is an interesting candidate; while we have generally agreed that the President should not overdo the medals prior to the election, this one is special. They would like a presentation before the election to be shown on national television after the election in a show already scheduled.

What is your feeling on this?

Many thanks.

cc: Bill Nicholson



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YORK ENTERPRISES, INC.

JACK SOBEL
PRESIDENT

September 21, 1976

President Gerald R. Ford
c/o Mr. David R. Gergen
Special Assistant to The President
White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Mr. President:

The purpose of this letter is to request and to recommend that our Nation's most-treasured, highest civilian commendation, THE PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM, be awarded to a Bostonian-born American, Dr. Arthur Fiedler, on the evening of October 24, 1976, in New York City. On that date, which is United Nations Day, octogenarian Arthur Fiedler, a much-heralded international legend in the World of Music, will be conducting 'In Concert' The Boston Pops Orchestra with Lena Horne appearing as principal Guest Soloist at the famed Carnegie Hall. This Performance before a specially invited audience will be videotaped by our Company and edited into a one-hour Television Special for broadcast in primetime throughout the United States during the week of Dr. Fiedler's 82nd Birthday which occurs on December 17.

In my humble opinion the lives of multi-millions of Americans and many more millions in foreign lands have been enriched in their enjoyment of 'good popular music performed by symphonic and philharmonic orchestras' all because Dr. Arthur Fiedler had the vision and the perseverance to expand the classic symphonic sound to the appreciation level of the common man. Today thousands of symphony orchestras throughout the world include Pops Concerts in their regular season performances as a result of Arthur Fiedler achieving his goal.

On July 4, 1929, Arthur Fiedler made music history when he created the first Boston "Pops" Esplanade Concert on the banks of the Charles



September 21, 1976

River. Appropriately, the first musical selection performed that evening was our National Anthem, "The Star Spangled Banner".

Throughout the forty-seven years since that historic occasion, Arthur Fiedler has conducted Pops Concerts with hundreds of symphony and philharmonic orchestra throughout the world. Single-handedly, the genius of this American Citizen's contribution to music appreciation by young and old alike, has earned him an altogether fitting and permanent place in the annals of music history.

As an eminent American ambassador of music, Arthur Fiedler has created a unique marriage of classical-popular sounds resulting in musical pleasures to more than two generations of people regardless of their language or cultural differences. For almost half a century, this brilliant Maestro has personified the most exemplary qualities in his chosen profession of which we, as Americans, can be justly proud. What better occasion than United Nations Day on Sunday, October 24, for us to pause and to honor this distinguished fellow Citizen in the twilight of his years by bestowing the highest civilian Award our Country has to give.

Miss Judy Muhlberg, Assistant to Mr. David Gergen at the White House, indicated to my associate, Mrs. Jolyn Rudelson, during a telephone conversation on Friday, September 10, that you desire a brief biographical sketch of Dr. Arthur Fiedler as well as an outline of the Television Special Tribute we plan to tape on October 24. The biography and related pertinent material as well as the Outline are enclosed with this letter.

I apologize for the fact that this request is being made on very short notice but only now have we been able to resolve the logistical problems to put together the booking schedules of Dr. Fiedler, The Boston Pops, Lena Horne and several other celebrities to be available for this event on the precise date we needed at the very busy Carnegie Hall. With all due respect, it just seems most appropriate that this Tribute be given to 81 years old Arthur Fiedler while he is doing the one thing he loves best: Conducting the Boston Pops on the stage of the (also 81 years old) world-renowned Carnegie Hall in front of 2800 specially invited appreciative and enthusiastic admirers. How fortunate we are that all of these elements could be put together on United Nations Day when America's thoughts stop to remember our melting pot heritage which ties us to the Peoples of the World.

If after appropriate consideration you choose to bestow this Award upon Arthur Fiedler at Carnegie Hall, York Enterprises stands ready to extend complete cooperation to your Staff in all efforts to maximize total media coverage of this momentous occasion on an immediate-release basis.

The Monsanto Textiles Company will be the majority Sponsor of the Special when it is telecast in mid-December.



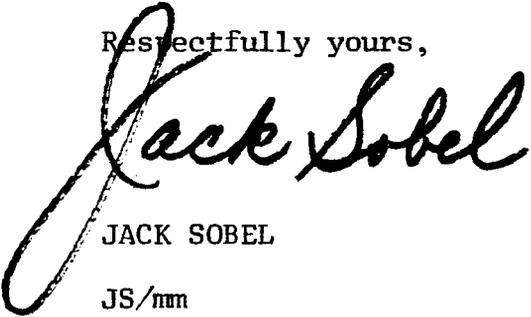
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With all due respect of your busy schedule and the time required for you to seriously consider this request, we shall not presume that our own feelings towards Dr. Fiedler will necessarily prevail. Therefore, we will proceed with our alternate production plans pending your decision.

Should you desire additional information, Members of your Staff may contact either Mrs. Rudelson (10960 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite #1800, Los Angeles, California 90024) at 213-478-2541 or me. I want to do everything possible to have available for your perusal the appropriate answers they require and to this end, I am prepared to fly to Washington for personal meetings if this will help.

I sincerely hope that you will share and that you will agree with our enthusiasm for this recommendation.

Respectfully yours,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack Sobel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

JACK SOBEL

JS/mm

Encl.



THE ESPLANADE CONCERTS - A BRIEF HISTORY

Arthur Fiedler conducted the first of the Esplanade concerts in 1929, after having spent several years in the planning and promotion of this now famous series. The concerts are held nightly over a two-week season in the Hatch Memorial Shell on the Charles River Embankment, at the foot of Beacon Hill. The Orchestra consists of members of the Boston Symphony. Harry Ellis Dickson is Assistant Conductor, and the season generally begins at the conclusion of the Pops concerts. Free to the public, the series ranks as one of the most popular of the area's summertime attractions. The atmosphere is festive and decidedly informal. Many of the concert-goers bring blankets and picnic suppers to enhance the comforts of the grass-floored 'auditorium,' and a few listen from the vantage point of yachts anchored in the nearby Charles River lagoon. Audiences of 20,000 are not unusual. The series includes special daytime concerts for children, and in recent years it has been followed by a short series of neighborhood 'Summerthing' concerts, in cooperation with the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs.

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- 1911 Makes concert debut as violinist in Berlin at age seventeen.
- 1915 Returns to Boston and at age twenty becomes Boston Symphony violinist under Karl Muck.
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ARTHUR FIEDLER (Continued)

- 1941 Volunteers for U. S. Coast Guard Temporary Reserve.
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- 1974 Honoring Arthur Fiedler on his eightieth birthday the Governor of Massachusetts declares December 17 'Arthur Fiedler Day' in the Commonwealth.

ARTHUR FIEDLER (Continued)

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- Mus. D. , Music and Arts Institute, San Francisco, 1963
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- Mus. D. , Southeastern Massachusetts Technological Institute,
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- D. Fine Arts, Northeastern University, 1966
- Mus. D. , Merrimack College, 1969
- Mus. D. , University of Massachusetts, 1970
- Mus. D. , Tufts, 1971
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- Doctor of Humanities, Glassboro State College, 1973
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N. C.
- 1960: Joseph E. Conner Award, from Phi Alpha Tau Fraternity,
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- 1964: Golden Lyre Award for Classical Music from the Ameri-
can Institute of High Fidelity, New York
- 1965: Arthur Fiedler Music Library established in Tel Aviv by
Israel Histadrut
- 1965: Awarded the first Boston Medal ever to be conferred, on
the occasion of the dedication of the War Memorial Audi-
torium, Prudential Center
- 1966: Appointed a Fellow of the Boston University Libraries
- 1971: Golden Door Award
- 1974: Rodgers and Hammerstein Award for 1974

ARTHUR FIEDLER (Continued)

YOUTH CONCERTS:

- 1933: Originated series of morning concerts for children under the name of "Morning Varieties"
- 1938: Established the Children's Esplanade Concerts, one morning per week during the Esplanade Season

STAGE PRODUCTIONS:

- 1934: Conducted a revival of deKoven's operetta "Robin Hood" with his Sinfonietta and the cast of the Boston Light Opera Company
- 1935: Conducted a Symphony Hall performance of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," with actors, ballet, and Mendelssohn's score
- 1938: Conducted the world premiere of Walter Piston's ballet, "The Incredible Flutist," with Boston Pops Orchestra, in Symphony Hall, and recorded it
- 1961: Conducted Strauss' "Die Fledermaus" with The Boston Opera Group
- 1964-74: Conducted Tchaikovsky's ballet "The Nutcracker" with the Boston Ballet Company

FILM APPEARANCES:

- 1958: Took part in the film "Windjammer," conducting a large segment of the Boston Pops Orchestra in Grieg's Piano Concerto, featuring as soloist Sven Erik Liebek, a crewman of the Norwegian square-rigged training ship "Christian Radich"

RADIO APPEARANCES:

Arthur Fiedler has been heard by a greater audience than any other conductor. In addition to regular broadcasts from the Symphony Hall stage in Boston, via local Boston stations and also NBC and ABC coast-to-coast networks, he has made radio appearances in virtually every state of the nation, including "Voice of Firestone" in New York and the "Standard Hour" broadcasts in San Francisco. He has also broadcast from London, Oslo, Ankara, Tokyo, and Buenos Aires. The Boston Pops Concerts are taped in Symphony Hall and broadcast throughout the U. S. and Canada, and overseas by the Voice of America.



ARTHUR FIEDLER (Continued)

TELEVISION APPEARANCES:

WBZ-TV, Boston: eight programs sponsored by Boston
Globe, 1961-62

WGN-TV, Chicago: concerts with members of Chicago
Symphony, 1957-62

BBC-TV, London: with Philharmonia Orchestra, 1961

ABC-TV, New York: Music for a Spring Night, single program,
1960
Music for the Young, three programs, 1962
Voice of Firestone, eight programs, 1962-
63

CBS-TV, New York: Tribute to Richard Rodgers, on "The Ed
Sullivan Show," 1962

Tokyo Broadcasting System, television program, 1962: with
Yomiuri Nippon Orchestra, 1965

BBC-TV, London: with Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, 1966

CBS-TV, National: "Red Skelton Show," appeared as conductor
of Pops and in skit with Skelton

NET-TV: 13 weekly television shows with star per-
formers over 180 stations

MEMBERSHIPS:

Boston Society of Recorded Music (President for two years)

Harvard Musical Association

Honorary Member, Eire Society of Boston

Honorary Member, American Guild of Organists

Chairman, Music Advisory Panel, U. S. Advisory Committee on
Cultural Information, U. S. I. A. - term now completed

Honorary Life Member, Local No. 6, American Federation of
Musicians, San Francisco

Honorary Life Member, Local No. 9, American Federation of
Musicians, Boston

FAMILY:

Wife: former Ellen Bottomley. Married 1942

Children: Johanna, born 1945; Deborah, 1947; Peter, 1952

ARTHUR FIEDLER

Biography

Arthur Fiedler was born in Boston on December 17, 1894, into a family which provided a rich background of European musical culture. His father, Austrian-born Emanuel Fiedler, was a first violinist with the Boston Symphony, and his mother, young Fiedler's first piano teacher, was a gifted amateur musician. 'I was brought up in the European manner,' Mr. Fiedler has said. 'As a young boy, I practiced the violin and piano, and studied French and German. I didn't like music more than any other kid. Practice and lessons were drudgery.' From that rather unpromising beginning, Mr. Fiedler rose to become a person who has made an indelible mark on the musical history of Boston and on the musical taste of millions of people throughout the world. He is without doubt Boston's best known and best loved citizen.

Mr. Fiedler was a pupil at the Prince Grammar School and at Boston Latin School until his father retired from the Orchestra and the family returned to its native Austria. In Vienna and later in Berlin, he worked in the publishing business before entering the Royal Academy in Berlin as a student of violin, piano and conducting. At the outbreak of World War I, he returned to Boston, and in 1915, at the age of twenty, joined the Boston Symphony as a violinist under Karl Muck. Nine years later, his ambition to conduct led him to form the Boston Sinfonietta, a chamber orchestra composed of members of the Boston Symphony. At the same time he continued as a member of the Orchestra, playing the violin, viola, piano, celesta and organ as well as percussion instruments. For several years he had spearheaded a campaign for the underwriting of a series of free outdoor concerts, and in 1929 his efforts resulted in the launching of the Esplanade Concerts on the east bank of the Charles River. The twenty-fifth anniversary of these concerts was celebrated with the dedication of the 'Arthur Fiedler Bridge' over what is now Storrow Drive.

In 1930, Mr. Fiedler was appointed the eighteenth conductor of the Boston Pops concerts, and under his direction the Orchestra has made more recordings than any other in the world. One recording alone, Jalousie, a forgotten composition of Jacob Gade, has sold more than one million copies. Fifteen years ago, RCA honored Mr. Fiedler with a plaque commemorating both his thirtieth anniversary with the Esplanade Concerts and the sale of his two millionth album. Today, the total sales of Pops albums, singles, tapes and cassettes are not far from fifty million.

ARTHUR FIEDLER - Biography (Continued)

In addition to his Boston Pops activities, Mr. Fiedler has been closely associated with the San Francisco Pops Orchestra during the past twenty-two summers. He has conducted a long list of American orchestras, including the Boston Symphony, as well as orchestras in South America, Europe, Africa and Australia. His most recent tour abroad took place last February when he led a series of concerts by major Australian orchestras.

YORK
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45 WEST 45TH STREET
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10036
TEL: (212) 757-2173

OCT 6 1976

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 5, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR:

BOB HARTMANN
PHIL BUCHEN
JIM CANNON
~~RUSS ROURKE~~
JIM REICHLEY
MIKE DUVAL
JERRY JONES
FOSTER CHANOCK

FROM:

DAVE GERGEN *DR*

SUBJECT:

Medal of Freedom for
Arthur Fiedler

I recently received the attached suggestion that a Medal of Freedom be presented to Arthur Fiedler. He is an interesting candidate; while we have generally agreed that the President should not overdo the medals prior to the election, this one is special. They would like a presentation before the election to be shown on national television after the election in a show already scheduled.

Jack Marsh recommends that we go with the idea. I would like to take a quick survey of your reaction and would appreciate your comments returned to Judy Muhlberg (2312) as soon as possible.

Approve ✓

Disapprove _____

Many thanks.

to D. Gergen 10/6/76



YORK ENTERPRISES, INC.

JACK SOBEL
PRESIDENT

September 21, 1976

President Gerald R. Ford
c/o Mr. David R. Gergen
Special Assistant to The President
White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Mr. President:

The purpose of this letter is to request and to recommend that our Nation's most-treasured, highest civilian commendation, THE PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM, be awarded to a Bostonian-born American, Dr. Arthur Fiedler, on the evening of October 24, 1976, in New York City. On that date, which is United Nations Day, octogenarian Arthur Fiedler, a much-heralded international legend in the World of Music, will be conducting 'In Concert' The Boston Pops Orchestra with Lena Horne appearing as principal Guest Soloist at the famed Carnegie Hall. This Performance before a specially invited audience will be videotaped by our Company and edited into a one-hour Television Special for broadcast in primetime throughout the United States during the week of Dr. Fiedler's 82nd Birthday which occurs on December 17.

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River. Appropriately, the first musical selection performed that evening was our National Anthem, "The Star Spangled Banner".

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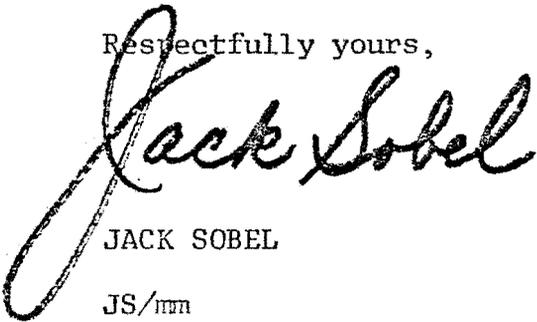
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JACK SOBEL

JS/mtm

Encl.

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- 1938: Established the Children's Esplanade Concerts, one morning per week during the Esplanade Season

STAGE PRODUCTIONS:

- 1934: Conducted a revival of deKoven's operetta "Robin Hood" with his Sinfonietta and the cast of the Boston Light Opera Company
- 1935: Conducted a Symphony Hall performance of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," with actors, ballet, and Mendelssohn's score
- 1938: Conducted the world premiere of Walter Piston's ballet, "The Incredible Flutist," with Boston Pops Orchestra, in Symphony Hall, and recorded it
- 1961: Conducted Strauss' "Die Fledermaus" with The Boston Opera Group
- 1964-74: Conducted Tchaikovsky's ballet "The Nutcracker" with the Boston Ballet Company

FILM APPEARANCES:

- 1958: Took part in the film "Windjammer," conducting a large segment of the Boston Pops Orchestra in Grieg's Piano Concerto, featuring as soloist Sven Erik Liebek, a crewman of the Norwegian square-rigged training ship "Christian Radich"

RADIO APPEARANCES:

Arthur Fiedler has been heard by a greater audience than any other conductor. In addition to regular broadcasts from the Symphony Hall stage in Boston, via local Boston stations and also NBC and ABC coast-to-coast networks, he has made radio appearances in virtually every state of the nation, including "Voice of Firestone" in New York and the "Standard Hour" broadcasts in San Francisco. He has also broadcast from London, Oslo, Ankara, Tokyo, and Buenos Aires. The Boston Pops Concerts are taped in Symphony Hall and broadcast throughout the U. S. and Canada, and overseas by the Voice of America.

TELEVISION APPEARANCES:

WBZ-TV, Boston: eight programs sponsored by Boston
Globe, 1961-62

WGN-TV, Chicago: concerts with members of Chicago
Symphony, 1957-62

BBC-TV, London: with Philharmonia Orchestra, 1961

ABC-TV, New York: Music for a Spring Night, single program,
1960
Music for the Young, three programs, 1962
Voice of Firestone, eight programs, 1962-
63

CBS-TV, New York: Tribute to Richard Rodgers, on "The Ed
Sullivan Show," 1962

Tokyo Broadcasting System, television program, 1962: with
Yomiuri Nippon Orchestra, 1965

BBC-TV, London: with Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, 1966

CBS-TV, National: "Red Skelton Show," appeared as conductor
of Pops and in skit with Skelton

NET-TV: 13 weekly television shows with star per-
formers over 180 stations

MEMBERSHIPS:

Boston Society of Recorded Music (President for two years)

Harvard Musical Association

Honorary Member, Eire Society of Boston

Honorary Member, American Guild of Organists

Chairman, Music Advisory Panel, U. S. Advisory Committee on
Cultural Information, U. S. I. A. - term now completed

Honorary Life Member, Local No. 6, American Federation of
Musicians, San Francisco

Honorary Life Member, Local No. 9, American Federation of
Musicians, Boston

FAMILY:

Wife: former Ellen Bottomley. Married 1942

Children: Johanna, born 1945; Deborah, 1947; Peter, 1952

ARTHUR FIEDLER

Biography

Arthur Fiedler was born in Boston on December 17, 1894, into a family which provided a rich background of European musical culture. His father, Austrian-born Emanuel Fiedler, was a first violinist with the Boston Symphony, and his mother, young Fiedler's first piano teacher, was a gifted amateur musician. 'I was brought up in the European manner,' Mr. Fiedler has said. 'As a young boy, I practiced the violin and piano, and studied French and German. I didn't like music more than any other kid. Practice and lessons were drudgery.' From that rather unpromising beginning, Mr. Fiedler rose to become a person who has made an indelible mark on the musical history of Boston and on the musical taste of millions of people throughout the world. He is without doubt Boston's best known and best loved citizen.

Mr. Fiedler was a pupil at the Prince Grammar School and at Boston Latin School until his father retired from the Orchestra and the family returned to its native Austria. In Vienna and later in Berlin, he worked in the publishing business before entering the Royal Academy in Berlin as a student of violin, piano and conducting. At the outbreak of World War I, he returned to Boston, and in 1915, at the age of twenty, joined the Boston Symphony as a violinist under Karl Muck. Nine years later, his ambition to conduct led him to form the Boston Sinfonietta, a chamber orchestra composed of members of the Boston Symphony. At the same time he continued as a member of the Orchestra, playing the violin, viola, piano, celesta and organ as well as percussion instruments. For several years he had spearheaded a campaign for the underwriting of a series of free outdoor concerts, and in 1929 his efforts resulted in the launching of the Esplanade Concerts on the east bank of the Charles River. The twenty-fifth anniversary of these concerts was celebrated with the dedication of the 'Arthur Fiedler Bridge' over what is now Storrow Drive.

In 1930, Mr. Fiedler was appointed the eighteenth conductor of the Boston Pops concerts, and under his direction the Orchestra has made more recordings than any other in the world. One recording alone, Jalousie, a forgotten composition of Jacob Gade, has sold more than one million copies. Fifteen years ago, RCA honored Mr. Fiedler with a plaque commemorating both his thirtieth anniversary with the Esplanade Concerts and the sale of his two millionth album. Today, the total sales of Pops albums, singles, tapes and cassettes are not far from fifty million.

ARTHUR FIEDLER - Biography (Continued)

In addition to his Boston Pops activities, Mr. Fiedler has been closely associated with the San Francisco Pops Orchestra during the past twenty-two summers. He has conducted a long list of American orchestras, including the Boston Symphony, as well as orchestras in South America, Europe, Africa and Australia. His most recent tour abroad took place last February when he led a series of concerts by major Australian orchestras.