

State Of The Arts

Industry Should Resume Its Leading Role In Music

By Hubert Meeker



The sounds of music in industry, which used to be heard loud and clear, have diminished to a still, small voice.

This is the report of Ada Clyde Gallagher, Dayton pianist and music teacher, and active leader in the Dayton Music club.

The club is hosting the Ohio Federation of Music clubs' state convention here beginning today and ending Saturday. Theme of the convention is "Tapping Our Own Resources" and Mrs. Gallagher believes vehemently that industry is a source that needs tapping.

She will moderate a luncheon panel 11 a.m. tomorrow at the Van Cleve hotel on "Music In Industry."

"I sent 40 questionnaires to industries in Ohio," said Mrs. Gallagher yesterday, "and what I found out was that a great many used to sponsor large musical programs. They maintained choruses and instrumental ensembles, they put on variety shows and concerts. But most of this is gone."

The Dayton Power & Light company used to stage operas, the Bell Telephone company

maintained three choruses in this area—in Dayton, Springfield and Bellefontaine — and the Frigidaire division used to organize big variety shows.

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OF THE few musical activities that are carried on today, most are for the children of employees rather than the employees themselves—such as the Inland Children's chorus which gave its annual concert at Memorial hall Tuesday, and the summer student band sponsored by the National Cash Register.

"We blame it on industry, but I don't feel it is industry's fault that these musical activities have faded away," says Mrs. Gallagher. "They are willing to organize these things, but the people are no longer interested. Many companies maintain musical organizations in their European plants — even symphony orchestras—because the people want it. But here in the U.S. most employees prefer bowling and baseball leagues and that's what they get."

Mrs. Gallagher feels the change of interests can be traced back to the individual families. Although music education is at an all-time high, most families no longer enter-

tain themselves by singing or playing instruments, so the facility for these things has been lost.

"I ask my students if they have music at home, and very few of them do," Mrs. Gallagher adds. "The parents send Johnny to his music lesson and look at his grades, and that's the end of it."

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HOWEVER, she believes that many Americans are beginning to feel the spiritual vacuum that results from the ready-made entertainment from television and other sources, and that the time will come when the joy of making music together will become a major part of American culture.

"I still think industry can do something for music in the community," Mrs. Gallagher asserts. "Right now they may buy some Philharmonic tickets, which is fine, but it is only a drop in the bucket."

"If there are no longer large numbers of interested employees to make up choruses and orchestras," she continues, "then I think they should do something for the talented individual."

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HER SUGGESTION is that

industry in each community should set up a well endowed and flexible scholarship program to meet the needs of the musically talented. Perhaps an advanced student is ready for special study with a teacher in Chicago or New York, or ready for a public recital, or a musical director needs a summer of special study.

Such scholarships would make it easier for good musicians to pursue their careers in Dayton, would help to hold good musicians here and enrich the community.

Another hint Mrs. Gallagher has for industry is that many well-trained musicians, unable to make a living at music, are taking jobs in industry "and are being buried there." She feels such persons should be recognized by their employers and given special considerations so they can continue to develop their musical gifts and participate more fully in community musical activities.

"I feel that many industries are truly interested in making contributions to the cultural environment of the community," Mrs. Gallagher concludes. "But they are not sure on how to go about it, they need advice and help."



YOUNG SINGERS of the 100-voice Inland Children's chorus are directed by Joseph P. Gieger in their annual Memorial hall concert for Inland families and friends. The chorus is one of the few industrial-sponsored musical organizations left. (Staff Photo by Ed Johnsey)