ARA GUZELIMIAN

Dear Bobby,

I am honored to be part of the chorus saluting you on this festive occasion at Manhattan School of Music and to have an opportunity to thank you for all that you have given to musical life for so many glorious decades. You have enriched the lives of generations of young musicians, shaped the work of so many gifted young quartets, and made music lovers around the world eternally grateful for your countless concerts and recordings.

I know, because I am one of those people who has benefited endlessly from your probing musical insight and generosity of spirit. Among my most precious formative memories is a performance with you leading the Juilliard String Quartet of Beethoven's Grosse Fuge. Although the concert took place in Los Angeles several decades ago, the memory is as vivid as if it took place yesterday. Here was one of the most formidable works ever conceived, in a performance of blazing energy, intensity, and focus. I had (and still have) an image of you and the Quartet seeming poised to spin off into a different orbit, rearranging atoms into a new musical sphere by the end of the piece.

Like everyone else who has ever met or heard you, I became your grateful student that night, learning something new and wonderful every time I heard you and the Juilliard Quartet. How doubly fortunate I feel to have added the wonderful gift of your friendship in more recent times.

Your restless, searching musical sensibility and uncompromising idealism have been a central part of the Juilliard School since you joined the faculty in 1946. How lucky we are! It's nearly impossible to chronicle your extraordinary contributions to this school's life and history in a single brief letter.

Long may you flourish!

With much affection and admiration,

