DAVID FULMER

Robert Mann has been, and will always remain, one of my ultimate musical heroes. I've had the great privilege of studying with Mr. Mann at The Juilliard School, and the great honor of performing beside him on many occasions, none of which I will ever forget. I first learned of Mr. Mann while a young teenager, anxiously grabbing at any piece of the massive recording legacy of his quartet. Nearly a decade later, my studies with him began, and I realized that I was being instructed not only by one of the greatest violinists of our musical history, but also by a composer, musicologist, historian, and theorist; he is a singularly unique portal of musical knowledge.

In December of 2006, Mr. Mann invited me to perform with him in a quartet for recitals in New York City, and Washington D.C. For an encore to these concerts, Mr. Mann chose to prepare the Cavatina from Beethoven's massive B-flat Major String Quartet, op. 130. Even before playing the very first G in the opening bar, I thought, mistakenly so, that I had some idea of the musical elements contained within this masterpiece. I had been educated by three recordings that the Juilliard Quartet made, and I was confident that I at least knew where the notes were to align. Fortunately for me, we only made it to the first opening G on the first attempt. Numerous rehearsals later, and a lifetime's worth of instruction, the quartet had prepared this special movement. It was a complex puzzle that had to be put together literally piece by piece, note by note. Every note, every articulation, and every dynamic had a significant meaning. By the evening of the performance I remember looking at the music, laden with pencil markings (of which there were over ten colors), highlighter marker, and pasted inserts of the score, and realized that it was an entirely different structure than the one I had seen weeks earlier. Illuminated were the structural identities of this work, and how they functioned within the form. The slurs meant something different to my eyes and my ears. While I was thrilled to have learned to play what was on the page of music, I was elated to have learned how to play that which was not notated by the composer.

Just last year I was helping the Mann family with a project that was later to be determined impossible. It entailed combing through, and cataloging, all of Mr. Mann's "papers," which included his musical library, his own compositions (dating back to 1935), lectures, teaching logs, books, letters, records, and over 60 years' worth of concert programs. Days, weeks, and months later, we realized that what we achieved was merely the simple task of moving things from one side of the room to another. I remember with such fondness the hopeless looks from both Bobby and Lucy when we'd finish another day of sifting through all of these materials. We would have had better luck finding a needle in a field of haystacks. While the attempt may not have been fully realized, I had the tremendous pleasure of spending a considerable amount of time with them both. It was a biographical pursuit in reality; I had the opportunity to study his music (both his compositions and his sheet music), and had at my disposal this entire room full of living history. I remember one handful of papers in particular; it consisted of a rare facsimile score of Brahms, a photograph of the Juilliard String Quartet with President Carter, and then on top laid an original manuscript of Elliott Carter, a gift in honor of Mr. Mann's 80th birthday.

As a mentor, violinist, composer, and friend, the effect of Robert Mann will always project through my musical activities. My love and eternal gratitude to him and his family,

