PETER BARTÓK

My work with Robert Mann started in the 1950s in connection with my small venture into phonograph record making. We planned a recording of my father's Solo Violin Sonata and *Contrasts* for Violin, Clarinet and Piano, with Robert Mann on both works. There was plenty of time before the recording after the decision to make it, and Robert Mann used it to practice the pieces and work out minuscule details.

Only at the actual recording session I learned that, during this time, Robert Mann went somewhere by airplane. It so happened that the person seated next to him was another violinist, and the two discussed professional matters, including the planned recording of the Bartók Sonata. The other violinist happened to be Yehudi Menuhin, and he told Robert Mann that the last movement of the sonata has a section written in quarter tones, but only a half-tone version was printed. He sent afterwards a copy of the quarter-tone manuscript to Robert Mann, who was then able to record that version of the last movement.

The full story was that my father wrote only the quarter tones first, but provided a half-tone alternative for those who may have found the quarter tones difficult. The work was printed only after my father died, and Yehudi Menuhin, for whom the work was written and who prepared it for publication, chose to print only the half-tone version. Thus, as a result of the chance meeting on an airplane, Robert Mann was the first to record the work as it was originally conceived. He continued to make more records for my label: the two Violin-Piano Sonatas, a cycle of *Tales*, his own compositions for violin, piano and voice, that of Lucy Mann. On one occasion Robert Mann participated in a recording project as a conductor: he stepped in, on short notice, to conduct the Bartók First Piano Concerto, with excellent results.

In planning to perform a composition, Robert Mann's meticulous preparation brought out details that defy the technique of music notation. In a sense a Bartók sonata becomes a Bartók-Mann work; hearing it with such nuances becomes an unforgettable experience.

I am grateful to have had the good fortune to record this music in such wonderful performances. All in all, my life would have been much different had I not known and worked with Robert Mann.

