



North American AstroPhysical Observatory (NAAPO)



Cosmic Search: Issue 3 (Volume 1 Number 3; Summer 1979) [These letters in the magazine were found on page 9]

Letters

By: Editors

I would like to express congratulations on developing a journal that I feel is of the first magnitude.

Each Planetarian throughout the world who is a member of the International Planetarium Society should be given the opportunity to subscribe to your fine journal.

Sincerely,
James A. Hooks, President
International Planetarium Society

Dear President Hooks:

Thank you very much and we hope you will continue to rate every issue
FIRST MAGNITUDE.

COSMIC SEARCH



Speaking as a person with no scientific training, but with great curiosity about the universe and what lies out there, I find your magazine enthralling.

Elise Jerram
Monterey, California



How wonderful it was to receive your first issue! It seems to me such a magazine is essential to bridging the gap between research and the public. Congratulations and best wishes for a successful venture!

Jeremy Palmer
Venice, California



I want to congratulate you on the fine quality of the premier issue of **COSMIC SEARCH**. I never before read any magazine from cover to cover. I not only did so with **COSMIC SEARCH** but did it twice. I will be looking forward to many more interesting articles in future issues of **COSMIC SEARCH**.

Jerrold B. Winther
Kenosha, Wisconsin



I was really looking forward to the first issue of your magazine and I was not let down as I enjoyed it very much. In fact I read every word in it before I put it down.

Richard Main
Anderson, California



Thank you for your fine article, "ABCs of SETI", in the March issue of **COSMIC SEARCH**. The section on broadband and narrowband signals was excellently done and was long overdue in the astronomy periodicals.

Albert W. Lotze, Jr.
San Francisco, California



Thank you for the first issue of **COSMIC SEARCH**. It is wonderful to see it actually come off the press as you said it would, rather than six months late as most new magazines do.

After having read the entire issue I can say that you have put together a fine journal, with a very good Editorial Board. It was a pleasure to read and long overdue.

Kim DeVaughn
Sunnyvale, California



Bach or Beethoven?

May I comment on the small item in the March issue:
"If extraterrestrials ever happen on the Voyager records, we may likely receive a three word message,

SEND MORE BACH."

Although Genius to some extent transcends its milieu, a genius such as Bach, is a human being and his works must be a product of his time and culture. Unavoidably, the music of Bach is an early expression, though a most exalted one, of the Age of Reason in northwestern Europe. In his celebrated television series on (Western European) 'Civilisation,' Sir Kenneth Clark introduced a program from a library furnished in the style of that period.* (*In "Civilisation: A Personal View," by Kenneth Clark, Harper & Row, N.Y., 1969, page 202.) As he moved towards the doorway he described the Age of Reason as one whose patterns of thought were symmetrical, consistent and enclosed and if the music of Bach were accessible to an alien being these concepts would be transmitted. To beings that have a galaxy to play in, and I use the word play deliberately, the music of Bach would seem tediously provincial, although one hesitates to use this description for works such as the Sanctus of the B-minor Mass. Sir Kenneth Clark left the eighteenth century and its Age of (Sweet?) Reason behind by crossing the threshold onto a flight of steps that led down to an ever-rolling ocean, and under a night sky, presumably studded with unseen stars, continued "We must . . . go to confront the infinite." Of course the background music of this presentation could only be the titanic strains of a Beethoven symphony, 'the sound of European man once more reaching for something beyond his grasp.'

If a production of the sonic arts of northwestern Europe were to strike a familiar chord in a culture that faces the challenges of interstellar space, I feel sure that it would be an opus of Beethoven. The music of Bach, sublime though it is, is an expression of a people who had gained an illusion of mastery over their environment, while we, two centuries afterwards, know that this mastery does not extend to a universe so awesomely unhuman. Only now do our arts have access to an awareness that could be common to other beings who know the vastness of interstellar space.

David G. Stephenson
University of Saskatchewan



Correction

The SEnTinel item in the March 1979 **COSMIC SEARCH** about the National

Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) interferometer is incorrect to the extent that it implied that the Navy had taken over the interferometer.

Hein Hvatum, Associate Director of NRAO, writes: "The Associated Universities, Inc., is still operating NRAO in Green Bank, West Virginia, with all its telescopes and facilities, including the 2700 meter three-element interferometer. However, the Navy is presently funding the interferometer operation for one year in order to test the feasibility of using a radio telescope interferometer for the time service."



"The invariable mark of wisdom is to see the miraculous in the common." **Ralph Waldo Emerson**



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Designed by Jerry Ehman.

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