



# Washington

WASHINGTON · UNIVERSITY · IN · ST · LOUIS

Department of Music

18 April 1991

Prof. Jeffrey Kurtzman  
Chairman  
Department of Music

Dear Jeff,

Our review of the Department Chairman is now complete, and a written report has been sent to the Dean. We are required by the regulations to provide you with a 'summary evaluation', but it seems more humane to give you a copy of the report itself, so I am enclosing it herewith.

The main message that emerged is 'Bravo!' for a great job well done, and you will see that we all want you to continue. The section of the report which might be construed as negative is greatly overshadowed by our collective positive feelings and will probably cause you no surprise. We have to respect the confidentiality of individual comments, but I would be happy to discuss with you anything here if you wish.

I repeat: Bravo!

Hugh Macdonald

COPY

18 April 1991

Dean Martin H. Israel  
Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Box 1094

Dear Dean,

Chairman of the Department of Music

The Department of Music's new regulations (page 13, section VII/A) provide for the creation of a three-member panel to review the performance of the chairman and to recommend on appointment and reappointment. We are accordingly submitting our report to you, following a written poll in which all thirteen full-time members of faculty were asked whether or not he or she wished to renominate the existing chair. Members were also asked to give reasons for their choice. This report is based on comments submitted by our full-time colleagues.

We are happy to report that the Department voted unanimously in favor of the renomination of Jeffrey Kurtzman as chairman. Everyone is agreed that he has done and is doing a magnificent job on our behalf. Particular admiration has been expressed for his remarkable performance in raising the level of achievement and expectation in the Department from the poor state to which it had declined, and for establishing a high profile and high standing for the Department in the University, in the St Louis community, and in the academic world at large. He brings extraordinary energy, enthusiasm and dedication to the job, works like a horse, and displays remarkable zeal for every aspect of his responsibilities. He is approachable, visible (notably at concerts), and - in most instances - flexible. He has been warmly commended by colleagues for his long-term leadership, for his support for individual projects and career plans, for his close interaction with the university administration, and for his identification with the needs and problems of the Department. The office staff, an essential element in the smooth running of a Department, work efficiently and happily under his command, and have made known their satisfaction and admiration to us.

There is probably no such thing as a perfect chairman, so there are criticisms from some members of the faculty to report as well. These have been voiced more insistently in the last two years; the drawing-up of our procedural rules was in part a response to the feeling that members

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of the Department were not sufficiently consulted about major decisions and that some of the burdens could be shared, and an improved sense of common purpose is already evident. The conduct of searches illustrated Jeff's tendency to imagine a consensus in support of his own goals which did not exist, and his inclination to guard rather than share authority has caused certain colleagues to see his attitude to the Department as somewhat proprietary and paternal. He is seen by some, perhaps falsely, to be representing 'them' against 'us', a perception which can be as damaging as the truth in some cases. One comment thought that he is inclined to avoid difficult issues rather than bring them out into the open for general discussion. Some sections of our faculty believe he favors the work and company of another section; but since the reverse perception is also reported, this may simply be the naturally nervous response of any department which divides into smaller groups, in our case musicology, theory/composition, and performance.

Without any doubt the faculty is happy with Jeff's leadership and would be entirely so if they were assured that they would be consulted on all important policy matters, on major expenditure, on searches, and so on, and that regular faculty meetings would provide a forum for discussion and the exchange of information and ideas. Everyone is both impressed by his achievement and profoundly grateful for the energetic way in which he discharges his duties. It is also fair to say that a rather more open style of management would probably have prevented the misunderstandings that have surfaced in the last two years; this desirable state of affairs is already more evident than before, so we are hopeful that the Department of Music will in due course be able to boast that its understanding of harmony is second to none.

Christine Armistead  
Roland Jordan  
Hugh Macdonald