

March 22, 1968

Prof. John McCollum
University of Michigan
School of Music

Dear John:

In reply to your note regarding the tape of Miss Shelia Jackson, I am sorry about that tape, we knew it was an older tape, but we were not aware that the recorder which we used to tape the selections was defective until we received your note. So, you in effect helped us out on two accounts. (smile).

I have since had her re-tape the selections on a new tape and (I hope, a better tape recorder. At least it played-back on two other tape recorders before we sent it to you). This young lady has studied with me for the past four years, and I have found her to be very diligent, musical, talented and highly intelligent. She is finishing her work here on the music education curriculum, and as such would be deficient where certain graduate school requirements there are concerned. You should know that we have just within the past two years initiated a Bachelor of Applied music in voice, so it came too late for her. I do believe that given the advanced training and exposure to such an environment as exists at the U. of M., Miss Jackson might well develop into a first class artist. I recommend her to the graduate program in voice in Michigan without reservation.

At the same time, I want to call your personal attention, if I may, to the application of a young Negro baritone, nineteen years of age, by the name of Johnnie Williams. He is a native of North Carolina and came here to Virginia State College two weeks ago to audition to study with me next year. This young man has a remarkably well developed instrument for his age, and has already called a good deal of positive attention to himself as a singer. He won the regional auditions for the National Association of Teachers of Singing Contest last fall, as a student in the North Carolina School of Arts, he won an audition early last year which enabled him to journey to Torino, Italy for the past summer to study, and has performed with several symphony orchestras in the area as a soloist, including the North Carolina Symphony. He has an uncle here at Virginia State on the History faculty who has given me a good deal of information on him otherwise. I have since had a detailed talk with his parents as well as his uncle and aunt. He is a very impressive singer and personality and has expressed a desire to come to Michigan as a Freshman to work with me. He has already written to Mr. Worman and I have talked by phone with Dean Wallace about him. The parents are of very meagre means, but are willing to do all they can to help him as much as possible. He is in the college section now of the North Carolina School of The Arts and is a student of Norman Farrow who has exposed him to a good deal of the better literature (some of it to his detriment, in my opinion). They have him on a relatively generous scholarship arrangement, without which his parents could not afford to have him there. Well, all of that is to say I would very much like to have him considered for whatever scholarship aid that might be available. He is prepared to come with me to Ann Arbor for a personal interview/audition as is Miss Jackson, if you wished to have

either or both of them do so. Just let me know. I plan to be in Ann Arbor around April 8,9 mainly to wrap up (hopefully) my house hunting. If you are free at that time, I would like to drop in to say hello to you, and if you wished let you hear and see these young people.

Heard from your wife when I called that you were doing some performing out on the West Coast. Beautiful! Did you get yourself a nice tan? But then from what your wife tells me of the weather in Ann Arbor you could well have gotten it there. I am sure all went artistically well as usual.

See you in April.

Sincerely,

Willis Patterson