

Letter by Natalie Curtis to Ferruccio Busoni (Far Rockaway/N.Y., 19 July 1915)

Wave Crest
Far Rockaway,N.Y.
Monday

Dear Master,

I am

obliged to come in to N.Y. tomorrow, Tuesday, for the funeral of my friend Miss Schurz. Would it interest you to see some of my records of African music, recently made?- I hav[e] been studying with a young African, fresh from the Portuguese possessions in East Africa, who has once been to this country a few months (he was sent by some missionaries as he is exceptionally intelligent & they believed that on his return to Africa, he could greatly aid in the uplift of his people, if he could first take a course of study in this country) I have therefore been recording some of the native African music, – very, very interesting rhythmically, & quite untouched by the influence of the white race, as my informant (whose nice name is Kamba Sinango– –Leopard Blue-Monkey–) is from pagan Africa and has taught me songs that which people have never heart.

Far Rockaway,N.Y.

I will bring them to show you, if this would interest you.– The Saint-Saëns Concerto, whose Afri can rhythms lent such character to the slow-movement, is based on music from North Africa, is it not? – Perhaps he too might like to all this music from the East coast of Africa. – At any rate, I'll tele- phone your dear wife some time tomorrow & if you are too busy, you must just say so frankly, for I understand that your work is the all-important thing & must not be interrupted: [...]

and I, and Africa, and the American Indians are here for the whole summer & there will be plenty of time for later meetings if you are too busy now. –

with hearty

greetings to all your

family, your faithful

friend N. Curtis