

## Ham-Fisted or Just Musically Illiterate?

By Stan Cronwall

We all know that the “artists” who are hired to be stamp designers aren’t necessarily the brightest blubs on the tree witness the clown act that used a photo of the Statue of Liberty outside a casino in Las Vegas instead of a photo of the real thing on U.S. stamps Scott 4486, 4488 and 4490 issued in 2011.

Maybe you have forgotten about or never knew that the Lenin torch bearers in post war East Germany (perhaps better known as the DDR or Deutsche Demokratische Republik) had their own set of incompetents on the payroll.

Check this out.

This stamp, on the right, from a set of two was issued July 20, 1956 to mark the centenary of the death of composer Robert Shumann. The stamp with Shumann’s portrait is Scott 296.

The only problem is that the sheet music used in stamp above is actually work by another composer, Franz Schubert. True, both last names begin with capital letter “S”, but what a goof.



Scott 296



Scott 304

This minor “error” (or it might have been “major”) was corrected by a second set of two stamps issued October 8, 1956. Here is Scott 304 from that set, shown on the left.

This time, they got it right.

You might think that there is a price differential between these because of the “error.” Well there is.

But not what you might think. In the 2017 Scott Catalog, the one with the wrong composer’s work is shown to have a value of \$ 1.25 Mint and 25¢ Used.

The later corrected issue is shown to be \$ 2.75 Mint and 40¢ Used.

If your collection includes one or both stamps or the complete sets, you won’t be selling them to help pay off your mortgage or child’s student IFistedoans. At best they are just another philatelic oddity.

**Stan Cronwall** is a member and his collecting interests include Germany: Third Reich 1933-45 and the areas it occupied (stamps covers & cards). He also collects U.S. World War II Patriotic Covers and Cards; Civil War Patriotic Covers (both U.S. and CSA); U.S. Naval Covers; DDR stamps; and, Post WW II Soviet Zone Hitler Head Obliteration stamps, covers & cards.