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January 1956

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1 January 1958



Festival d'Athènes. - OEDIPE ROI de Stravinsky au Théâtre d'Hérode Atticus d'Athènes.

Le programme musical comportait des concerts symphoniques et des représentations d'opéras. Sept concerts symphoniques ont eu lieu en tout, dont cinq ont été donnés par l'Orchestre National d'Athènes et les deux derniers par l'Orchestre Philharmonique de New-York sous la direction de Dimitri Mitropoulos. Les cinq concerts de l'Orchestre National furent dirigés par les trois chefs d'orchestre grecs : Oeconomidis, Vavayannis et Paridis et par deux étrangers : le roumain Ionel Perlea et l'italien Franco Capuana. Leurs programmes comprenaient des œuvres connues du répertoire classique : symphonies de Mozart (Jupiter), Beethoven (l'Héroïque), Brahms (n° 1 et 2), Mendelssohn (n° 5 « La Réformation »), Schumann (n° 2), Tchaïkovsky (n° 4) et Sibelius (n° 2). Il y avait également des œuvres symphoniques de Debussy (Nocturnes), R. Strauss (« Till Eulenspiegel » et « Mort et Transfiguration »), Moussorgski-Ravel (« Tableaux d'une Exposition »), Wagner, Weber, etc...

Il est regrettable que trois œuvres grecques seulement — remarquables il est vrai — aient été comprises dans le programme : P. Petridis: Sacrifice byzantin (Vavayannis), M. Calomiris: Symphonie de l'héroïsme (Oeconomidis) et N. Skalkota: Quatre danses grecques

(Mitropoulos). Ont été données en première audition en Grèce : la dixième symphonie de Sostakovitch, merveilleusement interprétée par Mitropoulos, Oedipus Rex, opéra-oratorio de Stravinsky, et « trois monologues de Médée » d'Ernst Krenek, sous la direction de Capuana.

Digne d'une mention toute particulière fut la participation à ces concerts de la remarquable artiste grecque, Mme Hélène Nicolaidi qui chanta avec accompagnement d'orchestre — son chant se révéla d'une gracieuse musicalité — trois arias : tirées de l'Alceste de Gluck, de la « Clemenza di Tito » de Mozart et de l'« Orphée » de Haydn, et celle de l'artiste américaine Eleanor Steber du Metropolitan Opera de New-York qui interpréta de manière exquise la belle scène dramatique et l'aria « Ah ! Perfidio » de Beethoven.

Les deux concerts de l'Orchestre Philharmonique de New-York constituèrent l'apogée artistique du Festival d'Athènes. La longue absence de Grèce (depuis 1938) de Dimitri Mitropoulos avait créé à son égard, dans le public athénien, une émouvante atmosphère d'impatience et sa présence, à la tête de l'Orchestre américain, fut l'occasion d'exceptionnelles manifestations d'affection et d'un enthous-

From JAN 8, 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

MUSIC

The Philharmonic

By PAUL HENRY LANG

CARNEGIE HALL

Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; soloist, Michael Rabin, violinist. The program: Symphony in B-flat major, Op. 29, Chausson; Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance, Op. 23-A (first performance); Barber Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 14, Brahms.

Last night's concert found the Philharmonic in grand form. Beautiful and vigorous sound poured into the big hall in seemingly unlimited supply, but the soft passages were equally sonorous, as they should be—a pianissimo, too, must have body. Mr. Mitropoulos was at his best and led his men with precision and gusto. Unfortunately, much of this laudable effort was wasted on a thoroughly insignificant work: Chausson's Symphony in B-flat.

It is some years since I have heard this work and, honestly, at times I looked around to see whether any one is leaving. Chausson generously shares his score with so many musical friends and acquaintances that no room is left in it for himself. As a consequence neither individuality nor a musical personality emerged from the music.

This symphony is a potpourri of clichés from Wagner, Liszt, Franck, the Russians, and heaven knows what else. I would never guess it to be the work of a Frenchman except for the occasional "salon" tone. But there was not much chance for exhibiting this delightful Gallic trait because the work was dominated by the brasses which gave it a sauerkrautish flavor that was difficult to savor.

Mr. Mitropoulos presented this anachronistic relic in a wonderfully eloquent performance, though the brasses suffered from a touch of apocalypsis.

The spirited playing continued in the next number, Samuel Barber's new version of a score originally written for Martha Brahm, "Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance," again demonstrated that Mr. Barber is a consummate virtuoso of the modern orchestra. His sonorities are so nicely calculated that when in one of the soft passages one of

the cellists in advertently dropped his mute, the slight metallic click actually disturbed the equilibrium. It is perhaps an easy refuge for the critic to say that somewhat disconnected nature of the beginning of "Medea" must be owing to the fact that originally it was a choreographic work. I rather think that unfamiliarity with the thematic material caused this momentary uneasiness on my part which soon disappeared. The dance itself is really exciting and Mr. Mitropoulos whipped it up to a diabolical pitch. The piece was very cordially received and the composer responded with several bows.

After the intermission the excellent playing became memory. Mr. Rabin, a very young violinist, mistook Brahms for Glazunov and played the former's concerto with plenty of Slavic schmalz. This young man plays well, but he will have to reduce his sugar intake before tackling Brahms. Mr. Mitropoulos seconded the soloist with a heavy and noisy orchestral accompaniment. His Brahms, too, sounded more like Tchaikovsky than Brahms.

By the way, this was the fourth performance of the Brahms concerto heard this season. The season is not yet half over and there is a good chance of surpassing last year's record of six. How about a little variety, Messrs. Fiddlers?

TIMES
New York, N.Y.
JAN 2 1956

OISTRAKH HEARD HERE

Soloist With the Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall Concert

David Oistrakh was the violin soloist at the Philharmonic-Symphony concert at Carnegie Hall yesterday afternoon. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted.

For the third time in four days, Mr. Oistrakh was enthusiastically applauded in the new Shostakovich Violin Concerto, Mozart's A major Violin Concerto (K.219) was repeated from the previous week.

The afternoon concluded with Saint-Saens' last symphonic poem, "The Youth of Hercules," which depicts the hero's resistance to the bacchanalian temptations of nymphs and his choice of virtue and strife.

Mr. Mitropoulos put his heart into it. But this orgy is naive in comparison with the Bacchanal, with which Wagnerian nymphs had tempted poor Tannhauser in Paris almost twenty years earlier. And the triumph of Hercules' virtue is tarnished tinsel. E. D.

TIMES
New York, N.Y.
JAN 6 1956

Violinist Is Soloist in the Dvorak Concerto

PHILHARMONIC-SYMPHONY SOCIETY. Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor; Nathan Milstein, violinist. At Carnegie Hall, "Lieutenant Kije" Suite, Op. 34, Prokofiev; Violin Concerto, Op. 47, Dvorak; Symphony No. 2, Schumann.

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

THE New York Philharmonic-Symphony subscribers cannot complain about a dearth of solo violinists. For four successive weeks now there has been one every Thursday and Friday, and others are booked for the coming fortnight. The patrons will be forgetting what a piano sounds like.

Not that there could be any complaint about last night's violin soloist at Carnegie Hall. The guest was Nathan Milstein, who is one of the world's great fiddlers. He did not have a top concerto to play, but in his performance of Dvorak's A minor Concerto there was distinction at every point. It is evident that Mr. Milstein has a fondness for this concerto. He has played it before, and he brings to it just the right blend of virtuosity and rhapsodic warmth. Under his guidance the work becomes an agreeable experience.

For a violinist with Mr. Milstein's technique there are no problems in this concerto. He does not condescend to it, and he does not seek to build it up into something it is not. He does not let his rich singing tone become too powerful for the simple, modest material in the piece, and yet he keeps it silken and glowing. His phrasing is broad and lyrical, and his rhythms have an irresistible elasticity.

At the end of the performance there was a tremendous burst of applause intermingled with shouts of "Bravo." When that happens for this Dvorak



Nathan Milstein

concerto, it is clear that the soloist has done his work with special eloquence.

Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted the orchestra in a lively supporting performance. They began the evening with Prokofiev's "Lieutenant Kije" Suite, a trivial though good-humored score, which was played with bounce.

Schumann's Second Symphony ended the program, one of the conductor's least adventurous, on a safe romantic note.

POST-DISPATCH

St. Louis, Mo.

JAN 1 - 1956

Concerts on Radio, TV

After an absence of several weeks, Dimitri Mitropoulos returns as conductor of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony in its program on KMOX at 8:30 tonight. As a guest, Russian violinist David Oistrakh in his first American broadcast



will play Shostakovich's "Violin Concerto in A Minor," which the composer dedicated to Oistrakh.

POST
NEW YORK CITY

JAN 6 1956

WORDS and MUSIC

By Harriett Johnson

Milstein Plays Dvorak Concerto

Nathan Milstein's suave elegance and exemplary control last night in his performance of the Dvorak Concerto with the Philharmonic-Symphony in Carnegie Hall were obvious assets to the melodic beauty of the work.

The violinist's patrician style combined with his sensuous tone and technical mastery made the most of the Czechoslovakian composer's folk-like melodies, which he has developed with such rhapsodic effectiveness.

Dimitri Mitropoulos on the podium, conducting with score, blended the orchestra skillfully into the fabric of Milstein's musical tapestry in the long and extended concerto. Milstein's playing gives particular pleasure because it is like the words of someone who has reflected a long time over what he says and then speaks his mind with a detachment which at the same time is alive and vital.

Mitropoulos also used the score for the entertaining and imaginative suite, "Lieutenant Kije," from the motion picture of the same name, by Prokofiev, which opened the program. It appears, judging from recent appearances, that the Greek maestro gets more satisfying results from his ensemble when he does not manifest the extreme tension which is his norm. The orchestra was improved in tone quality; there was less bombast of sound and the result had a relaxation which enhanced the music.

The "Lieutenant Kije" Suite stems from 1933 when Prokofiev wrote incidental music for the film made in Leningrad. The story induces much humor in the music and it is amusingly scored, featuring an off-stage cornet. Mitropoulos and ensemble performed the piece with a subtle understatement of sound and sense of color that were engaging. Schumann's Second Symphony completed the program.

JAN 6 - 1956

WORLD-TELEGRAM
New York, N.Y.

MUSIC

Milstein, Philharmonic Stage Double-Play

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

A high level of virtuosity prevailed all through the program of the Philharmonic-Symphony in Carnegie Hall last night.

There was Nathan Milstein to give us a brilliant account of Dvorak's A Minor Violin Concerto—a concerto, like all others, tailor-made for his princely style.

There was Dimitri Mitropoulos, applying his ample gifts of searching interpretation and intensity to Prokofiev, Dvorak and Schumann (Second Symphony).

And there was the Philharmonic itself, glorying in its own multiple personality as a unit and in its diversity of individual talent.

Tone-Painter. Mr. Milstein, who recently completed a quarter of a century before the American public, was his masterly self as technician, poet and tone-painter last night. This is a warm-blooded concerto—this well-designed score of Dvorak's—a fusion, in Irving Kolodin's words, of

"classic discipline and folk impulse" readily appealing.

Mr. Milstein's tone wove through the surging fabric in lordly fashion, ever at ease, ever confident and richly expressive through all moods.

It may be that this is Mr. Milstein's best season to date. Certainly his art has broadened and deepened over the years. And one looks ahead to still more.

Superb Support.

Mr. Mitropoulos gave the violinist a superb accompaniment. The balance was perfect and so were the dynamics, and the affection for Dvorak was shared by all.

I don't recall a crisper or more spontaneous reading of Prokofiev's "Lieutenant Kije" suite than that played last night. It had the ease and illusion of a self-made wonder.

There is much sly wit and delicate spoofing in this score, but a folksy humanity too, amiable and endearing. All this Mr. Mitropoulos brought out beautifully.

From JAN 9 1956

HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Foss' 'The Song of Songs' Is Given by Philharmonic

By Francis D. Perkins

Lukas Foss' "The Song of Songs" was one of the three contemporary works played by the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra under Dimitri Mitropoulos' direction yesterday afternoon in Carnegie Hall. Ellabelle Davis was the soprano soloist in this Biblical solo cantata, which she had introduced to us with the Boston Symphony under Serge Koussevitzky in March, 1947. Reheard, it impressed as well intentioned and sometimes expressive music, but not as one of the most individual and salient scores of this talented German-born American composer.

Mr. Foss' setting of the texts from the "Song of Solomon" seemed vocally grateful; the orchestration complemented the vocal line without covering it, but yet, at least in this performance, it was not sufficiently in the foreground of the general music picture.

The orchestration revealed craftsmanship, but a rather limited range of color, and the work as a whole missed some

of the emotional intensity of the text, despite some well wrought subtleties of expressive shading. The music was not overtly derivative, but was handicapped by a lack of profile in its ideas.

Interpretation Sympathetic

There was also a certain lack of positiveness in Miss Davis' sympathetic interpretation. Her voice was constantly appealing, clear and ruffled; vocal color was employed in accord with the requirements of the music. Often, however, there was a suggestion of carelessness in this well produced singing.

An effective performance of Vaughan Williams' Fourth Symphony, which the orchestra had played earlier this winter, followed the intermission, and the concert closed with the four Greek Dances by the late, gifted Nicholas Skalkottas, which Mr. Mitropoulos had introduced to New York last season. The opening item was Saint-Saens' "Phaeton." It was lucidly played, but with a prudence that hardly responded with the mythological Phaeton's rashness.

TIMES
New York, N.Y.

JAN 9 1956

SOPRANO IS SOLOIST WITH PHILHARMONIC

Ellabelle Davis, soprano, gave a performance of much distinction yesterday afternoon with Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic-Symphony at Carnegie Hall. She was soloist in Lukas Foss' cantata, "Song of Songs."

Although Mr. Foss writes for the human voice more courteously than other contemporary composers one could name, he has set the interpreter a number of difficult tasks in his cantata.

Miss Davis, however, performed this and other taxing passages with apparent ease. The soprano was in good voice yesterday and Mr. Foss' cantata proved to be a splendid display-piece, well suited to her vocal powers.

The program opened with Saint-Saens' symphonic poem, "Phaeton," and closed with the four "Greek Dances" by Niko Skalkottas.

From JAN 6 1956
JOURNAL-AMERICAN
New York, N. Y.

Philharmonic-Symphony:

'Lt. Kije' Suite Still Is Fresh

By MILES KASTENDIECK

DIMITRI MITROPOULOS began the Philharmonic-Symphony concert in Carnegie Hall last night in an unconventional manner. He opened with Prokofiev's "Lieutenant Kije" suite, an ingeniously concocted musical biography as fresh and different as it was when first heard about 20 years ago.

This droll and "daring" score is as neat a piece of musical invention as incidental music for a film can be. Prokofiev's orchestration creates its peculiar fascination.

This could have stood more finesse and a lighter touch in performance than it received last night. Though a strange introduction to this particular program, it was decidedly worth hearing again.

Dvorak Concerto

After this contemporary work, the program worked backward a half century to Dvorak's Violin Concerto in A minor, Opus 53. The music has lost its lustre in the interval, but it nevertheless falls easily on the ear.

Though it just misses complete acceptance as a concerto, the performance of it by Nathan Milstein proved most acceptable. He lavished all his fiddling skill and temperament to make it yield all the music it could. Without

him it would have sounded much more old-fashioned and even dull. He earned the audience's "bravos" for some distinctive playing.

The virtuoso element of Mitropoulos' conducting that characterized the first half of the concert tinged the performance of Schumann's Second Symphony, though he tempered the playing judiciously. It had a persuasive quality indicative of more romanticism in the conductor's nature than he usually shows.

Perhaps if he curtailed his practice of bringing phrases up short, the music would flow more readily. The orchestra did not sound at its best in much of the concert.

'Man' Remains

"Man With the Gun," starring Robert Mitchum and Jan Sterling, is in its third week at Loew's State Theatre.

From JAN 7 1956

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE
MONITOR
Boston, Mass.

Shostakovich Concert 'Don Pasquale'

By Miles Kastendieck
New York

Two important premieres have highlighted the season: the first U.S. performance of Shostakovich's Violin Concerto by David Oistrakh with the Philharmonic-Symphony conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos; and the double bill at the Metropolitan consisting of Solov's new ballet, "Soirée," and a new production of Donizetti's "Don Pasquale" with Thomas Schippers making his debut as a conductor at the Metropolitan.

The Shostakovich Concerto sounds especially tailored for Mr. Oistrakh to whom it is dedicated. The violin dominates all four movements. Under the circumstances the soloist is playing almost continuously throughout its 35 minutes. The orchestra accompanies rather than collaborates in at least two of the movements. There is ample opportunity for virtuosity, yet Shostakovich has balanced this nicely with lyric content.

Of the four movements the opening nocturne is the most elusive in its introspective mood. A rhythmic scherzo challenges the violinist's technical resources. The passacaglia probes deepest and leaves a strong impression of substance. The final "Burlesque" generates unusual excitement through sheer wizardry. A cadenza bridging the third and fourth movements again challenges the violinist's mastery as a fiddler. That the Concerto is an important work became firmly established at its premiere. Indeed, it grows on acquaintance.

Masterly Performance

In performing Mozart's Concerto No. 5, K.219, the Brahms and the Tchaikovsky violin concertos, in a memorable evening devoted to the Pension Fund of the Philharmonic-Symphony, Mr. Oistrakh exhibited a standard of performance as prodigious in technical mastery as it was magnificent in interpretative insight. Though there were some reservations about his Mozart, there was none about the Brahms, while the Tchaikovsky acquired a new quality through his vital and penetrating concept of it. It would be difficult to name another violinist who could have played these three works with more delineation of their respective styles, or with greater artistry.

Mr. Mitropoulos conducted on both occasions, collaborating especially well in the Shostakovich and the Brahms. The night of the Shostakovich premiere he dared to make the program outstandingly contemporary by including Vaughan Williams' Fourth Symphony. He and the orchestra gave a magnificent account of this disturbingly powerful score, making the listener fully appreciative of the composer's greatness and leaving him wondering why more of Vaughan Williams is not played.

JAN 9 - 1956

WORLD-TELEGRAM
New York, N. Y.

MUSIC

2 Negroes Score Vocal Triumphs

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Two fine examples of the wealth of Negro talent now available for America's opera and concert circuits were heard yesterday in Carnegie and Town Halls—both young, both sopranos, both very good.

The earlier of the two charmers was Ellabelle Davis, who appeared on the Philharmonic bill as soloist in Lukas Foss' striking Biblical cantata, "The Song of Songs."

The other was Charlotte Holloman, one of several artists taking part in the third concert of this season's Town Hall series by George Koutzen's Knickerbocker Chamber Players.

Miss Davis, who was a dressmaker till a music-minded client "discovered" her and arranged for her training, has moved far since her debut a few years ago.

The voice was warm and smooth yesterday, excellently applied in all its lavish color, to the sensuous melodic line devised by Mr. Foss for his haunting treatment of the verses.

Perfect Teamwork.

Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted a typically vital reading, so that the teamwork of composer, soloist, conductor and orchestra was just about perfect.

San Diego, Calif.
Tribune
(Cir. 104,579)

CURTAIN
CALL

Bruno Ussher Views
Music-Drama Scene

"TOSCA" BROADCAST: If tone can compensate for the absence of the actual stage picture, then Saturday's ABC Metropolitan Opera broadcast accomplished this. It was easy to follow this conjuring "Tosca" performance in its dramatic and lyric evocations as they ran their wide range of love and hate, of comedy, and splendor. The Puccini score had intimacy and power.

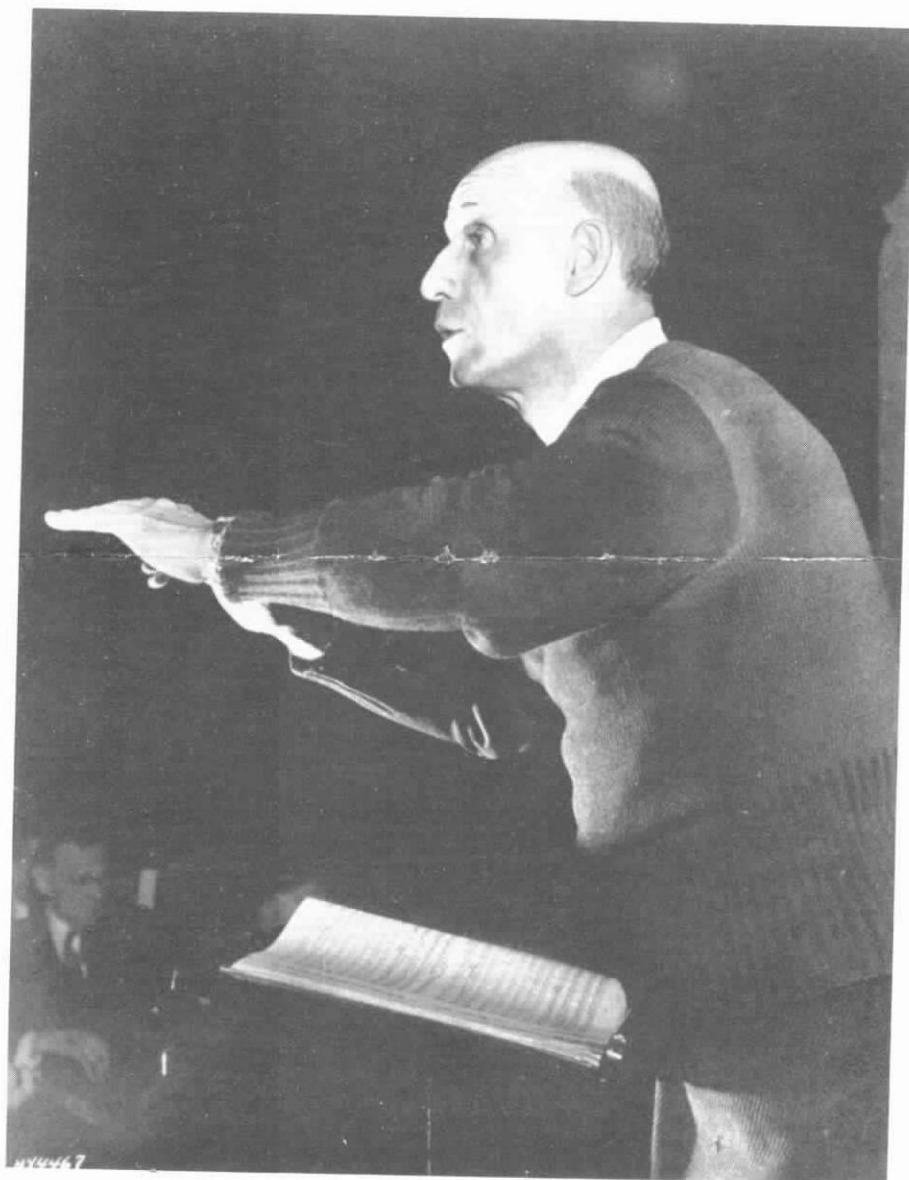
"Tosca" is as expressive as a conductor makes it. Here was an unhurriedly vivid declamation and all the more potent for this restraint. Conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos unleashed passions with subtly pulsing intensities. The director of the New York Philharmonic, who is sometimes given to fast concert tempos, allowed emotional growth its full time.

Emotional architecture in "Tosca", however, depends on the singers. Its real climax comes in the latter part of Act 2 with the heroine's song of pity, "Vissi d'arte." Everything following adds suspense, but never rises beyond this aria.

Renata Tebaldi's "Vissi d'arte" gloriously full-filled that climatic function, beautifully and eloquently.

Miss Tebaldi indeed possesses the vocal assets and interpretive surge for the pivotal character in a superbly dramatic libretto. The role is a great solo part, but opera is ensemble art. Even a singer with the personality of Miss Tebaldi needs that evocative support to be believable, which must come and did come from fellow principals.

If Richard Tucker comes to mind first, it is because the tenor role is richer in solos than that of baritone Leonard Warren. Tucker sang with glowing strength, becoming a lover and patriot. Warren's Scarpia had rich beauty of voice and suggested suavity, passion and ruthlessness. A surprisingly fine voice was heard also from Fernando Corena as the sacrilegious in the first act. Puccini employs a chorus only twice, but it added to general excellencies of this dis-tant, yet so distinctive "Tosca."



DIMITRI MITROPOULOS

siasme sans bornes pour le chef d'orchestre grec. Le fait est que Mitropoulos donna quelques interprétations qu'on peut considérer comme uniques : celles surtout de la 5^e Symphonie de Mendelssohn, de la 10^e de Sostakovitch, des danses grecques de Skalkota et de l'Ouverture de Freischütz de Weber. Cette dernière fut un véritable chef-d'œuvre.

Les opéras présentés furent « Orphée et Eurydice » de Gluck et « Idoménée » de Mozart, choisis tous deux pour leur sujet d'inspiration grecque. Le chef-d'œuvre de Gluck, animé tout entier par l'esprit hellénique, trouva dans l'antique théâtre un décor idéal. Il fut dirigé par M. Oeconomidis et interprété par trois artistes exceptionnelles : l'américaine Rise Stevens — remarquable Orphée — la grecque Anna Tassopoulou de l'Opéra de Dusseldorf — une Eurydice noble et raffinée — et Vilma Georgiou — un charmant Éros.

Le choix d'Idoménée — créé pour la première fois — fut moins heureux, à cause des faiblesses scéniques de l'œuvre et aussi parce qu'il convenait mal au décor de théâtre antique. La représentation fut cependant très soignée et l'œuvre ne sortit pas diminuée de la direction de Perlea. Il est juste de mentionner Steber en Ilia, l'artiste grecque Kerestedji en Électre, le ténor américain David Lloyd en Idamante, l'excellent baryton Engolpophoulos en Idoménée ainsi que Paschalis en Arvakis et Choidas en Poséidon.

Dans le cadre des manifestations scéniques, on représenta « Oédipe Rex » de Stravinski avec Lloyd, un excellent Oédipe, et Lucie Heva en Jocaste, et « les trois monologues de Médée » de Krenek avec, comme soliste, la cantatrice Blanche Thebom du Metropolitan Opera

de New-York pour qui l'œuvre fut écrite et dont l'interprétation témoigna d'une grande compréhension.

Il faut particulièrement souligner combien la collaboration du chœur du Théâtre Lyrique National, sous la direction de M. Vourtsi contribua au succès des représentations lyriques. Les œuvres furent mises en scène très adroitement, mais avec pas mal de libertés, par M. Yannopoulos. Les metteurs en scène Clonis, Anemoyannis et Nomikos ainsi que Mme Loukia, chorégraphe, contribuèrent au plus haut point au succès du Festival.

Pour résumer, nous pouvons dire que, malgré certaines faiblesses que nous avons constatées, ce premier Festival international d'Athènes fit le plus grand honneur à la Grèce. Nous sommes certains que, l'expérience aidant, il ne tardera pas à atteindre, dans l'avenir, une perfection artistique qui n'aura rien à envier aux manifestations analogues des autres pays.

Solon MICHAÉLIDÈS

LE X^e CONGRÈS INTERNATIONAL D'ÉTUDES BYZANTINES A ISTANBUL

Le X^e Congrès international d'Études byzantines s'est tenu à Istanbul, du 15 au 21 septembre dernier. Le gouvernement turc avait sollicité en 1953 le privilège d'organiser cette manifestation dans l'ancienne capitale de l'empire byzantin. Le président de la République turque et le président du Conseil acceptèrent de patronner cette manifestation internationale. Le Congrès se tint dans les bâtiments de la nouvelle Faculté des Lettres. Il fut inauguré par le ministre de l'Éducation nationale.

Österreichische

MUSIK

Zeitschrift



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GEGRÜNDET VON DR. PETER LAFITE †

11. JAHRGANG

OKTOBER 1956

HEFT 10

Dimitri Mitropoulos

BEKENNTNISSE EINES DIRIGENTEN

Der weltberühmte Dirigent Dimitri Mitropoulos wird in Zukunft eine engere Bindung mit der Wiener Staatsoper eingehen. Dadurch gewinnen seine Gedanken, die nichts an Originalität zu wünschen übrig lassen, besondere Aktualität. Der Dirigent ist im übrigen bereit, auf Entgegnungen einzutreten. Wir werden uns freuen, einer sich daraus ergebenden Diskussion Raum zu geben.

Bevor ich in diesem Sommer in Salzburg mein Debut feierte, hatte ich noch niemals Gelegenheit, eine Mozart-Oper zu dirigieren. Zum erstenmal in meinem Leben erschloß sich für mich die Offenbarung des Mozartschen Genies.

Ich bin ein Mensch, dem ein natürlich religiöses Gefühl zu eigen ist. Für mich steht die Existenz Gottes, des Schöpfers, außer jedem Zweifel. Trotzdem denke ich viel darüber nach, und ich habe immer eine Antwort, ein Argument gesucht, wenn ich mit Nichtgläubigen und Atheisten diskutierte. Ich glaube jetzt, einen solchen Beweis gefunden zu haben: die göttliche Erscheinung Mozarts!

Aber alles Göttliche bedarf einer kontrastierenden Kraft: des Satanischen. Ich habe lange darüber nachgedacht und fand es in der Gestalt Richard Wagners. So also ist das Gute in Mozart und das Übel in Wagner personifiziert. Das heißt nun keineswegs, daß ich das Übel oder Wagner verachte. Im Gegenteil, ich bin davon überzeugt, daß beides, das Gute und das Übel, Hand in Hand existieren müssen — jedes in seiner eigenen gloriosen Gestalt. So also ist auch die Existenz eines Genies wie das Richard Wagners ein Beweis für den Schöpfer.

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In Salzburg wurde das Publikum von der Größe nicht nur des „Requiem“, also des Werkes, sondern auch der musikalischen Ausdruckskraft Berlioz überzeugt.

Ich muß bekennen, daß ich Berlioz am Anfang nicht vollständig verstand. Das dauerte solange, bis ich das Glück hatte, einige Jahre in der Busoni-Klasse der Berliner Akademie zu studieren. Zur gleichen Zeit war ich auch als Korrepetitor an der Staatsoper Berlin tätig. Wie alle Korrepetitoren war ich da sehr beschäftigt — und kam daher oft zum Unterricht zu spät. Der Unterricht bei Busoni begann um 14 Uhr und dauerte meist bis Mitternacht. Der große Busoni fragte mich einmal, was

ich denn soviel zu korrepetieren hätte. Ich erzählte ihm, daß in der Oper eben der „Ring“ einstudiert werde. Darauf sagte er spontan: „Wann werden diese Leute aufhören, diese wagnerischen Schweinereien aufzuführen und endlich die ‚Trojaner‘ oder andere Opern von Berlioz spielen!“ Damals fand ich das natürlich unverständlich. Das waren für mich Worte



Dimitri Mitropoulos

eines Fanatikers, der auch Beethoven einen Sünder genannt hatte, einen Vorläufer der Romantik, der Leidenschaften — und all der Dinge, die der reinen Musik fremd sind. Busoni hatte in den Zwanzigerjahren sogar in einer Musikzeitschrift einen Artikel unter dem Titel „Was gab uns Beethoven?“ veröffentlicht. Aber in diesem Aufsatz wurde Mozart als der Höhepunkt der Musik gepriesen.

Jedenfalls aber hatte mich die Äußerung Busonis über Berlioz so berührt, daß ich mich dem Studium seiner Werke widmete. Langsam ver-

stand ich dann, was Busoni gemeint hat, und so kam ich zu der Erkenntnis, daß Berlioz, wäre er ein ausgeglicheneres Genie gewesen, höher als Wagner zu werten wäre. Jedoch in seinem ganzen Werk — in dem wir immer wieder große Momente finden — fehlen die Proportionen, fehlt die Balance. Dadurch hat ihn das höchst proportionierte Genie Richard Wagners besiegt.

Wagner hat der Nachwelt ein vollständiges Werk hinterlassen. Aber man muß erkennen, daß er ein sehr gefährliches Genie war, denn sein Einfluß hat die Welt noch bis gestern hypnotisiert. Ich nehme damit Nietzsches Bekenntnis gerne an, in dem er feststellt, daß die Kunst Wagners eine magische ist! Gerne würde ich alle Musikverehrer fragen, wie sie sich nach einem „Don Giovanni“ und wie sie sich nach einem „Tristan“ fühlen! Das ist das Göttliche und das Satanische! Aber ich bin überzeugt: solange wir Menschen sind, brauchen wir beides.

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Zurück zu Busonis Ideen über die musikalische Kunst. Wir können froh darüber sein, daß die Zeit des Jubelns und des Weinens vorüber ist, und man sich heute darauf besinnt, daß die Musik eine Architektur der Töne im höchsten künstlerischen Sinne ist. Eine Kunst für sich und nicht eine Kunst der Illustration von allzu menschlichen Gefühlen oder der Nachahmung.

Für mich bedeutet ein Genie wie das Anton von Weberns eine überaus wichtige Richtungsänderung in der Musik. Aber wie immer am Beginn ist alles etwas übertrieben, und gerade jetzt befinden wir uns in einer Periode des Fanatismus jener jungen Generation, die unter dem Einfluß dieser Webernschen Umkehr steht.

Ich persönlich bedaure es sehr, daß ich nicht mehr jung genug und zu sehr mit der Prä-Webern-Periode beschäftigt bin. Es ist für mich unmöglich, mit dem einen Fuß auf der einen, mit dem anderen Fuß auf der anderen Seite zu stehen. Diese überaus interessante neue Richtung braucht Nachschöpfer, die sich ihr ausschließlich widmen können. Und so beneide und bewundere ich Künstler wie zum Beispiel Hermann Scherchen. Und dennoch gestehe ich meine Schwäche ein, oder besser gesagt, meine dramatische, tragische und höchst romantische Natur: sie ist mir ein Hindernis, mein nachschöpferisches Talent dieser Richtung widmen zu können.

DER 15. SEPTEMBER 1945, ANTON WEBERNS TODESTAG, SOLLTE EIN TRAUERTAG FÜR JEDEN AUFNAHMEFÄHIGEN MUSIKER SEIN. WIR MÜSSEN NICHT NUR DIESEN GROSSEN KOMPONISTEN VEREHREN, SONDERN AUCH EINEN WIRKLICHEN HELDEN. ZUM VÖL-LIGEN MISSEFOLG IN EINER TAUBEN WELT DER UNWISSENHEIT UND GLEICHGÜLTIGKEIT VERURTEILT, BLIEB ER UNERSCHÜTTER-LICH DABEI, SEINE DIAMANTEN ZU SCHLEIFEN, SEINE BLITZENDEN DIAMANTEN, VON DEREN MINEN ER EINE SO VÖLLKOMMENE KENNNTNIS HATTE.

IGOR STRAWINSKY

„LEIDER NICHT VON MIR!“

Musikalische Kuckucksei

Als Frau Adele Strauß, die Gattin des „Walzerkönigs“, Johannes Brahms ersuchte, etwas auf ihren Autographen-Fächer zu schreiben, notierte er darauf die Anfangstakte des Walzers „An der schönen blauen Donau“ und darunter die Worte: „Leider nicht von mir“ mit seinem Namenszug. Diese Worte waren nicht nur witzig, sondern auch ein Zeichen der Wertschätzung eines Meisters der ernsten Musik für einen der heiteren. Mancher große Komponist hätte vielleicht unter ein berühmt gewordenes Musikstück, das ihm fälschlich zugeschrieben worden ist, etwas Ähnliches geschrieben, wenn ihm das Brahmsische Wort eingefallen wäre. Allerdings sind solche Zuschreibungen zumeist erst nach dem Hingang dieser Meister erfolgt, wie z. B. die zahlreichen Kompositionen, die bald nach 1791 unter Mozarts Namen gedruckt wurden, aber nicht berühmt geworden sind.

Das erste musikalische Kuckucksei von Bedeutung stammt aus dem Jahre 1700, ist aber erst gegen Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts in ein fremdes Nest gelegt worden. Es ist das sogenannte „Trumpet Voluntary“, d. h. wörtlich Trompeten-Improvisation, das unter dem Namen Henry Purcells „for Pomp and Circumstances“ in England beliebt und während des letzten Krieges als einer der „signature tunes“ der Londoner B. B. C. weltbekannt geworden ist. Schon zu Beginn des Krieges aber hatte Donald R. Wakeling festgestellt, daß dieses Musikstück von einem weniger berühmten Zeitgenossen des großen Purcell stammt, von Jeremiah Clarke. Es ist zuerst in der „Choice Collection of Ayres for the Harpsichord or Spinett“ erschienen, unter dem Titel „The Prince of Denmark's March“, zu Ehren Georgs, des Prinzgemahls der Königin Anna von England. Kein Zweifel, das ist ein Meisterstück, wenn auch nicht von einem der großen Meister der Musik geschrieben. Der Marsch ist vielleicht ursprünglich für Orchester geschrieben, aber nur die Harpsichord-Fassung ist zu Clarkes Zeiten gedruckt worden. Erst 1878, also fast zweihundert Jahre später, erschien es, ornamental leicht verändert, als ein Stück für die Orgel, herausgegeben von Sir William Spark, mit dem Vermerk: arrangiert nach einer alten Handschrift im Besitz des Herausgebers. Das hat Charles L. Cudworth ermittelt und 1953 in den „Musical Times“ berichtet. Während Clarkes Original längst vergessen war, wurde Sparks anonyme Fassung bald populär, besonders in dem Orchester-Arrangement Sir Henry Woods, die vom Hallé Orchestra unter Sir Hamilton Harty für das Grammophon gespielt worden ist. Wood mag das Stück unter der falschen Bezeichnung Purcell erhalten haben, bevor er es instrumentierte. Jedenfalls heißt es seit Jahrzehnten „Purcells Trumpet Voluntary“. Das sollte aber nicht ein Trompetensolo bedeuten, sondern ein Solo für das Trompeten-Register einer Orgel. Es mag übrigens sein, daß Jeremiah Clarke nur eine populäre Melodie, die Prinz Georg liebte, für das Harpsichord gesetzt hat.

Ein Beispiel, das nur indirekt mit dem Namen eines großen Meisters zusammenhängt, sind Johann Sebastian Bachs Klavier-Bearbeitungen von 16 Violinkonzerten, die man alle vor hundert Jahren Vivaldi zugeschrieben hat. Arnold Schering hat herausgefunden, daß einige dieser Violin-

N.Y. Philharmonic Broadcasts Return to WPAR Today

Dimitri Mitropoulos Now in Fifth Season As Director of World-Famous Orchestra

The New York Philharmonic - Symphony, America's oldest symphony orchestra, now in its 26th consecutive season of Sunday concerts, will be heard locally over Radio Station WPAR at 2:30 to 4 p.m. Sundays, starting today.

Dimitri Mitropoulos is now in his fifth season as Musical Director of The Philharmonic, a Sunday tradition for millions of Americans. Guest conductors to be heard during the season will include Bruno Walter, George Szell, Pierre Monteux and Guido Cantelli. James Fasset serves as music commentator and intermission host for the broadcasts.

Mr. Mitropoulos made his conducting debut with the Boston Symphony. From 1937 until the spring of 1949, he was Musical Director of the Minneapolis Symphony with which organization he also toured widely. During this period he also appeared as guest conductor with such major orchestras as the New York Philharmonic - Symphony.

The Boston Symphony and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

His New York Philharmonic Symphony debut occurred on December 19, 1940, the beginning of a four-week engagement with the orchestra. Subsequent visits to the Philharmonic podium took place during the next two seasons when he participated in the celebration of the orchestra's centennial gala concerts. He returned in the spring of 1947 to direct part of the Philharmonic - Symphony tour. During the 1947-48 season, he led the orchestra for the first four weeks of the season; in 1948-49, the first eight weeks of the regular concert season were heard under his baton.

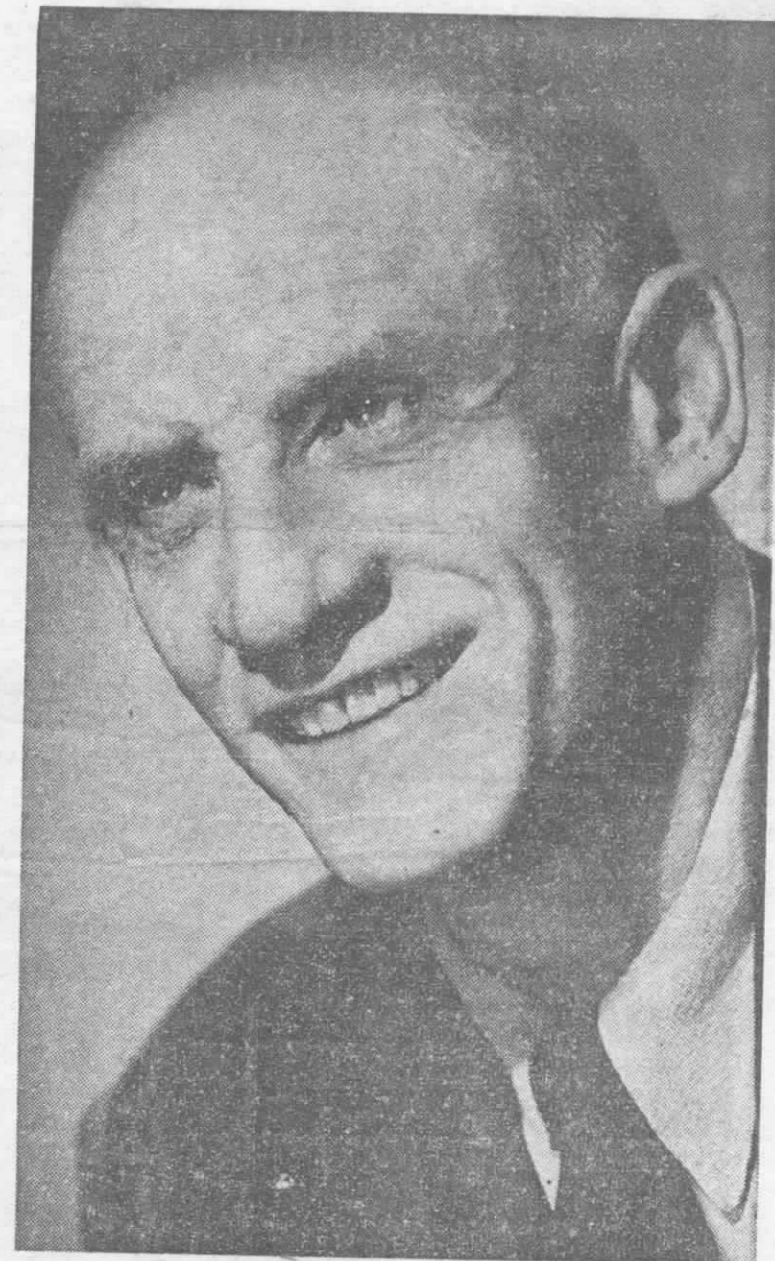
Born in Athens, February 18, 1896, Mitropoulos started piano lessons when he was seven. At fourteen he began to compose, particularly music for the theatre. After he had finished the equivalent of an American high school

education, he entered the Conservatory of Athens and devoted himself entirely to music. His first teachers, to whom he says he owes a great deal, were a German, Ludwig Wassenhagen, who taught him piano, and a Belgian, Armand Marsick, then conductor of the Athens Symphony, who was his composition teacher.

Although his parents were opposed to his embarking on a musical career, he soon overcame their objections. Most of his father's family were religious and were connected with the strict Greek Orthodox Church, and he was strongly attracted by the monastic life and wished to become a monk. The call of music was too strong, however, and he abandoned the monastic idea as a career.

Mitropoulos at first intended to be a pianist and composer. In 1919, he wrote and had produced an opera, "Sister Beatrice," with a text by Maeterlinck. In the audience was Camille Saint-Saens, then an old man of 86. He wrote an enthusiastic critique of the opera for a Paris paper and offered the young composer a chance to study in France. At this time, however, the city of Athens recognized its talented son and arranged for a scholarship for him in Berlin. There he entered the composition class of Ferruccio Busoni, who, as a man and musician, has been a great influence in the life of Mitropoulos.

On the completion of his studies the young Greek was appointed assistant conductor of the Berlin State Opera. In 1924, the Athens Symphony Orchestra called him home to become its conductor. Soon all musical Europe heard of this brilliant young conductor. In 1939, he was invited to Berlin where he made his debut with the Berlin Philharmonic. This turned out to be a double debut — as conductor and pianist. Egon Petri, whom he had engaged as soloist in the Prokofiev Third Piano Concerto, fell ill and no substitute was available. Mitropoulos saved the situation by learning the difficult solo part in two weeks



Dimitri Mitropoulos.
Piano lessons at 7, composing of theater music at 14

and played it, conducting from the keyboard, with spectacular success. After that he played and

conducted the concerto in other European music centers and in this country has performed it in both Minneapolis and New York. In Europe he has often conducted from the piano, particularly the works of such moderns as Mahler, Malipiero, Ravel, etc., but as he said, he did it only "because I wanted to let the public hear music for piano and orchestra which is not usually included in the repertoire of the piano virtuoso."

His first U. S. appearance, in Boston, was a sensation and he was invited to return the following season. That same year he was asked to direct a few concerts in Minneapolis with such success that he was immediately chosen as successor to Eugene Ormandy, who had resigned to go to the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Mitropoulos uses neither score nor baton. Intensive study and a trained memory enable him to master any work, however complex, so thoroughly that he even rehearses without a score, feeling that thus he can better penetrate the subtleties of the work and convey its meaning to the orchestra. His vital dynamic style of conducting is distinctive, and musicians of the orchestra respond instantly to his direction; his expressive hands make the use of a baton superfluous.

Schooled and experienced in the works of the classic masters, Mitropoulos is also keenly interested in contemporary music. Premieres of important works by such composers as Barber, Gould, Hindemith, his compatriot Perle, Poulenc, Webern, Krenek, Berg and Schonberg have been heard under his baton; he introduced to American audiences the Sixth Symphony of Gustav Mahler.

Away from the concert stage, he relaxes by going to the movies . . . and going mountain climbing. A member of several international climbing clubs, he has thoroughly explored and enjoyed the mountains of the American west.

TIME Magazine

JAN 9 1956

Shostakovich Premiere

Just before Soviet Violinist David Oistrakh left for his first visit to the U.S., he played the world premiere of a new concerto dedicated to him by top Soviet Composer Dmitry Shostakovich. That was in Leningrad, last October. In Manhattan's Carnegie Hall last week the violinist gave the composition its U.S. premiere with the Philharmonic-Symphony, conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. It turned out to be one of Shostakovich's most powerful works and the finest violin concerto to reach New York since World War II.

Mitropoulos, who usually conducts from memory, opened the score, apparently in deference to Oistrakh's nerves. The violin entered almost at once, spinning out a long, yearning melody in a rhythm that was at once syncopated and plodding. Violinist Oistrakh applied his tight, concise tone to it. He revealed it, at its best, as a line of high eloquence, although sometimes it was merely a dry-throated recitation. Later, the movement rose to a shuddering gong-burst of sound, and both orchestra and soloist glided into a barely comprehensible maneuver that slid to a high, fine-drawn conclusion.

Well-knit Work. The rippling second movement gave no clear idea of tonal home base, but it developed a comic effect as it progressed through subtly different rhythms. The third movement, again in pensive tempo, gave the soloist another long melody that breathed nostalgically of twilight among ruins, then let it sigh into a noontime atmosphere with a passage in octaves, then into a recitative of murmurous beauty, where Oistrakh's instrument spoke in unevenly repeated notes. The solo cadenza started with simple triads in different keys, then confronted them with each other in a clashing dissonance, then became more brusque, urgent and uneasy until it opened directly into the finale, an energetic Russian dance.

On the seventh curtain call, Conductor Mitropoulos took the score from its stand and held it aloft as if to give Composer Shostakovich his share of the applause.

He deserved it. For Shostakovich's Op. 99 is a composition that abandons the brooding effects, dark colors and heavy textures of traditional Russian orchestral music and his own brassy idiom for a broader expression that puts him firmly among top 20th century composers. It is a position he has been promising to occupy ever since his *Symphony No. 1* crashed onto the scene in 1926, when he was 19. During the '20s and '30s, his work was notably uneven, as he tried to follow the musical party line. In the early war years — when he made headlines because he stood duty as a fire fighter in Leningrad — he completed his highly touted *Symphony No. 7*, which in fact was a ragtag and feeble — though thunderous — work. But Shostakovich's new *Concerto* is strong and well-knit — particularly as played by Violinist Oistrakh.

Almost as Fat. Even before playing the *Concerto*, Violinist Oistrakh cut a swath of awe and good will in the U.S., and he will carry a bag of swag with him when he goes home this week (his gross fees amount to about \$100,000). Originally, he thought he would spend his profits on an American car, but in the end he decided he would rather buy a violin, if he could find one he liked (he has a fine collection).

Most of his recent spare time has gone into testing instruments. As a novelty, he teamed up with Isaac Stern and the Philadelphia Orchestra to record a Vivaldi double concerto ("Stern is almost as good a fiddler as I am because he is almost as fat!").

Oistrakh leaves behind him the reputation of a great and intensely serious musician. He showed, particularly with the playing of the Shostakovich *Concerto*, that Russia's deep talent for music is still alive.

TIMES
New York, N.Y.
JAN 15 1956

REHEARSAL ON METROPOLITAN ROOF FOR "BORIS GODUNOV"



The Mussorgsky opera, in the Karol Rathaus edition with English text by John Gutman, will be given its first performance of the season on Friday. Here Dimitri Mitropoulos, at far right, conducts the orchestra and five

members of the cast. The latter, seated among the instrumentalists, are, l. to r., Jerome Hines (Boris), Lorenzo Alvary, Giulio Gari, Martha Litton and Osie Hawkins. The opera was last given during 1953-54 season.

Opera: 'Boris Godunov'

Mitropoulos Conducts
Powerful Revival

By HOWARD TAUBMAN
"BORIS GODUNOV" returned to the Metropolitan Opera last night in a performance filled with the power and brooding compassion that Mussorgsky poured into it. Once again the chief architect of a first-rate revival was Dimitri Mitropoulos.

It has been many years since the Metropolitan has had a musical conception of "Boris" that was so much all of a piece. Thanks to his dramatic instincts as a conductor, Mr. Mitropoulos has brought urgency, grandeur and a sense of troubled humanity to this great operatic canvas of a Czar and a people.

Whatever one may think of the late Karol Rathaus' editing and revision of the original Mussorgsky version, one had to admit that Mr. Mitropoulos gave it full effectiveness. Mr. Rathaus was commissioned to do the job for the Metropolitan revival three years ago. It seemed bare and lacked luster then, compared with the richly adorned Rimsky-Korsakov version, which is most often employed. It was still wanting in size and color last night, but Mr. Mitropoulos and the well-trained and responsive orchestra brought out new values in it.

No one can quarrel with the Metropolitan's continuing to sing the opera in English in John Guttman's useful translation. If Mr. Mitropoulos will abate his ardor a bit here and there, nearly all the words will become clear. For the Metropolitan has assembled a cast extraordinary in most respects, and particularly impressive in that all but several singers are native Americans.

"Boris Godunov" requires a huge cast, and though some of the roles are short, they are not unimportant. Mussorgsky knew how to build character with the simplest of touches. But his gift goes for naught in the opera house if the minor roles are not done with understanding and affection. There was hardly a weak spot last night. In the inn scene the stage director might well have tried for once for a performance without slapstick.

Jerome Hines sang the title role. His dominating height is an asset to which he adds an intensely felt and sung performance. The California-born bass undertook the part for the first time several seasons ago, and he sang it only a few times. But his command



Jerome Hines
The Program

BORIS GODUNOV, opera in four acts; music by Modest Mussorgsky; text based on Pushkin's drama of the same name; English translation by John Guttman; acting and costumes by Matias Doboujinsky; choreography by Zachary Solov; stage director, Dino Yanopoulos; conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos. At the Metropolitan Opera House.

of it is growing. His second act caught much of the agony of the tortured Boris. It is a scene worthy of Macbeth, and if Mr. Hines has not reached such a peak, he has a chance to get there if he keeps on improving.

Albert Da Costa, replacing the indisposed Giulio Gari, undertook his second major role in as many weeks, and gave a most promising account of the false Dimitri. He sang with force and feeling. His voice was a bit veiled at first, but it took on clarity and impact in the Polish scenes.

Nell Rankin was a fine-looking Marina. She sang with control and freshness, and she actually danced in the charmingly choreographed Polonaise. Giorgio Tozzi, one of the most talented of the Metropolitan's young singers, was an impressive Pimen. Charles Kullman gave the proper insinuating blandness to Shuiski. Clifford Harvuot sang Rangoni with suavity.

One could go on and on. There were delightful bits by Mildred Miller and Laurel Hurley as the Czar's children.

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI.

Russia's major contribution to opera—Mussorgsky's "Boris Godunov"—returned to the Metropolitan repertoire last night in an orchestral performance directed by Dimitri Mitropoulos.

Except for Mr. Mitropoulos, who had not conducted the work at the Met before, and

Martha Lipton, Lorenzo Alvarry and James McCracken sang with peasant heartiness in the inn scene.

Let us not forget the chorus, which represents the people, Mussorgsky's protagonist even more than Boris. The Metropolitan contingent sang with stirring resonance, competing favorably with the overwhelming bells unleashed in the "Coronation" scene.

One keeps coming back to Mr. Mitropoulos. Following his surging "Tosca," this "Boris" makes it almost mandatory to get more work for him at the Metropolitan.

From JAN 2 3 1956

JOURNAL OF
COMMERCE
New York, N. Y.

Better Version Of 'Boris' Sung

On Friday evening the Metropolitan put on the best performance of Boris Godunov to be heard here since it dropped the old Rimsky-Korsakov version and the ridiculous practice of presenting a Russian opera in Italian.

It was the best performance because Dimitri Mitropoulos, working in the pit with relentless energy, brought the orchestra and chorus to the heights of their power, though to say this is not to detract from the performance of Jerome Hines, who made a wonderfully dark and brooding Boris.

There is no doubt that the current version, as orchestrated by Karol Rathaus three years ago, is better than the old. It is simpler and, quite rightly, starker. But we miss the brilliance of the Rimsky-Korsakov orchestration.

Some day, we hope, the best of this can be salvaged. When that is poured into the present, much improved mold, Mussorgsky's Boris should prove one of the finest operas in the Met's repertoire. S. F.

one or two changes of cast, this was substantially the same production as that of the revival of the 1952-53 season. The smooth English version was again that of John Guttman.

The conducting of the Philharmonic maestro, however, made quite a difference. If the biting torment and awesome suspense of the work were sometimes lacking in the action on the stage, they were like high voltage in the orchestra.

Vivid Commentary.
Even when the singing was a bit less than persuasive in the moments of terror, the orchestra throbbed a searing commentary that made the whole mad chronicle of the conscience-crazed monarch come vividly alive.

This was, it should be recalled, Mussorgsky's orchestra—or as close to Mussorgsky's as we are ever likely to get. One feature of Rudolf Bing's revival was a return to the original by discarding Rimsky-Korsakov's lavish but sonorous edition long favored.

The naked power of Mussorgsky's own orchestration, its realistic impact and incisive strength, were felt as never before. Thanks to Mr. Mitropoulos, one was ready to accept the current, if not permanent, separation of Rimsky and Mussorgsky.

Jerome Hines, as Boris, made quite a striking figure of haunted majesty as Boris. The athletic contortions of conscience were expertly enacted, and the voice was strong and manly. But the rage and terror of Boris were seldom in his tones.

Most of the individual singing was of that order last night—clear, technically precise, steady, but only rarely reflecting the stormy passions and conflicts woven into the fabric of this lurid drama. The chorus was something else again—a heaving sea of anxious or jubilant tone.

I thought Laurel Hurley was highly attractive as a new Xenia, and Giorgio Tozzi put some ringing authority into the role of Pimen. Albert Da Costa, last week's weighty addition to the tenor wing, pinch-hit diligently as a last-minute Dimitri.

The others—Mildred Miller, Nell Rankin, Martha Lipton,

Lorenzo Alvarry among them—all managed nicely without quite catching fire from the sizzling score.

The house, incidentally, was flooded with a fascinating new sound of bells last night—waves and waves of tolling produced by miniature generators struck with metal hammers and amplified to a volume equal to 129,301 pounds of cast bells. They were the neatest trick since Edgar Allan Poe.

Gina Bachauer Soloist
With Philharmonic

By HOWARD TAUBMAN
THERE WAS excitement at Carnegie Hall last night, and it stemmed from contemporary music. Carlos Chavez, Mexico's pre-eminent musician, conducted the New York Philharmonic in the first United States performance of his Third Symphony, a score of original and driving intensity. And Gina Bachauer, with Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting, gave a brilliant reading of Prokofiev's lively and winning Third Piano Concerto.

By comparison the supposedly radical Prokofiev of thirty-five years ago, at least in the C major Piano Concerto, is a tame, expansive fellow. The music has its virtuosic moments, and it sparkles with ingenuity. But it is also relaxed and cheerful. It is a concerto made to order for Miss Bachauer's gifts as a pianist.

She can take its technical problems in stride, while shaping the music with brightness and affection. With Mr. Mitropoulos, who has been an apt interpreter of the piano part in the past, leading the orchestra in spirited support, the concerto was fresh and attractive.

Mr. Mitropoulos ended the evening with another contemporary piece, Kodaly's "Hary Janos" Suite. The only other work, the seventeenth-century Buxtehude's Chaconne, got on to the program by the way of the twentieth century for Señor Chavez conducted it in his own skillful and large-voiced arrangement.

OPERA

'Boris Godunov'

By PAUL HENRY LANG

METROPOLITAN OPERA

HOUSE

Opera in four acts, libretto and music by M. P. Mussorgsky; English text by John Guttman; orchestral score revised and edited by Karol Rathaus. The cast:

Boris Godunov..... Jerome Hines
Xenia..... Mildred Miller
Fyodor..... Albert Da Costa
Xenia's nurse..... Sandra Warfield
Prince Shuiski..... Charles Kullman
Schekelavoy..... Arthur Budney
Grigori Pimen..... Giorgio Tozzi
Rangoni..... Clifford Harvuot
Marina..... Nell Rankin
Varlaam..... Clifford Harvuot
Ivan..... James McCracken
The innkeeper..... Martha Lipton
An officer of the frontier guard..... Paul Franke
The simpleton..... Lawrence Davidson
Nikitich..... Oberly Canell
A boy in attendance..... Thelma Voipola
A woman..... Louis Sasse
The Royal Khrenichov..... Louis Sasse
Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; staged by Dino Yanopoulos; decor and costumes by Matias Doboujinsky; choreography by Zachary Solov.

of his head. It can be omitted; the Jesuits wear no tonsure.

Jerome Hines was a superb Boris, a proud tyrant racked by superstition, remorse, and fear. Vocationally he rose to all the demands of the score and his acting was very convincing. The Met has an uncommonly fine artist in this impressive giant.

Mr. Da Costa, who gallantly took over the role of Grigori Dimitri from the indisposed Giulio Gari, deserves a big hand. To jump into such a role at a moment's notice takes not only courage but ability. Giorgio Tozzi (Pimen) sang with an unusually fine and rounded tone, while Charles Kullman (Shuiski) turned in a fine character act well sung. The many secondary roles were all quite satisfactory.

The ladies proved to be equally accomplished. Nell Rankin, in excellent voice, was a passionate Marina, Mildred Miller, who sang Fyodor, gave a charming impersonation of the boy, yet she managed to convey the feeling of doom that is sensed by the youngster. Laurel Hurley, Sandra Warfield, and Martha Lipton all sang very well and all of them were in tune throughout the evening.

Frankly, I am somewhat at a loss about the version used and the quality of Mr. Mitropoulos' interpretation. It is not considered to be *bon ton* to say anything nice about Rimsky-Korsakov's version which, indeed, changes the primitive and coarse



Jerome Hines as Boris

original into something musically civilized and well groomed. The late Karol Rathaus steered a middle course, so it seems, between the two extremes, but the results are not quite satisfactory. There are many crudities left in the score, notably as regards the orchestration, but I am unable to say whether the fact that the singers were often covered was owing to the writing or to the conductor's enthusiasm. Goodness knows, it is a pleasure to have a flesh and blood conductor in the pit. Mr. Mitropoulos never permits a dull moment, yet at times he could have been a little more merciful towards his singers. Nevertheless, this very problematical score received a fine performance and the Met rates at least a Bronze Star.

From JAN 2 3 1956

WALL STREET
JOURNAL
New York, N. Y.

Mussorgsky's Magic

If Tamburlaine the Great is more pageant than play, Boris Godunov seems more like a Shakespearean tragedy than an operatic pageant. As given at the Metropolitan Opera House for the first time in two years, the Mussorgsky masterpiece packed a dramatic punch few other operas can rival.

This is paradoxical in a way, for Boris Godunov has almost no dramatic structure. Disjointed and episodic, it consists of nine scenes Mussorgsky pulled from a 24-scene Pushkin work and rearranged with no great regard for theatrical continuity or impact. Yet it not only holds together; the total effect is of a powerful unity.

Several things explain this unlikely cohesion. The character of Boris was so magnificently realized in this production that he dominated the opera even in the several scenes where he did not appear. The onlooker was always aware of the relentless progression of Boris' downfall—a destruction of character dictated by the fatal flaw of overweening ambition within himself. For this sixteenth-century Russian czar murdered to gain power only to make the bitterly ironic discovery that his crime had paved the way for another usurper to assault his throne.

A major contribution to the impression of dramatic unity was the conducting of Dimitri Mitropoulos, who held the whole vast production always firmly in his grasp. Moreover, the skillful staging of Dino Yanopoulos never allowed the pageantry of rich and various settings and costumes and masses of people to interfere with the plot progression.

Jerome Hines sang and acted Boris to near-perfection; in addition, he has a physique and towering height that made the czar a really regal figure. To give them wholly inadequate credit, his impressive supporters in the cast included Charles Kullman, Giorgio Tozzi, Paul Franke, Nell Rankin, Albert Da Costa, Mildred Miller, Lorenzo Alvarry, and Laurel Hurley.

Mussorgsky's music—the Met uses the score as revised by Karol Rathaus rather than Rimsky-Korsakov's much more elaborately orchestrated version—itself makes for unity. Alternately wild and glorious, sad and sweet, it constantly advances the story, brooking no delays merely for the sake of song. Here are almost none of the usual operatic artifices—no overtures to speak of, no long-winded arias, quintets or sextets.

Finally, this structurally disordered work derives coherence from the choruses of Russian people. They are much more than choruses; they are protagonists. For this is their tragedy as well as Boris'; it is their fate to be "delivered" by his tyranny and thence delivered into another tyranny. This opera, which was written in the latter part of the last century, projects the corrosion of the people's own political perceptions that comes from the constant denial of the experience of liberty.

The "simpleton," whose perceptions remain uncorroded, sums it up after hearing the people glorify the usurper who is trying to succeed Boris. The simpleton sings the last words of the opera: "Russia's sorrow is great—Cry—cry—Russian land—hungry people—cry! . . .". Then, his arms outstretched cross-like, he bows his head in silent despair. It is singularly effective theatre; it is also profoundly political and painfully contemporary.

—J. E.

Robert Coleman's THEATRE:



'Boris Godunov' Is Off-the-Track Opera

• Jerome Hines earns bravos bestowed by the enthusiastic audience.

The season's first performance of "Boris Godunov" packed the Metropolitan Opera House Friday evening. The Mussorgsky masterpiece has a following all its own, an audience quite unlike that for most other operas. Because it is a different kind of music.

The librettist-composer was an innovator. He sought to make music resemble human speech. When the first patrons and critics failed to appreciate his work,

he made some minor compromises. These, however, did not lessen the greatness of the opera. OVER THE YEARS, a re-orchestration of the score by Rimsky-Korsakov has been used. In the present instance, revised and newly edited orchestrations by Karol Rathaus are employed, and it is sung in an English text by John Guttman.

"Boris Godunov" is stirring music-drama. It calls for artists who can sing and act. The title role is calculated to tax anyone. And those who essay it must stand comparison with the incomparable Chaliapin. Jerome Hines proved most impressive in the part. His stature and rich voice were eminently right, and his histrionics highly effective.

Nell Rankin, who has made remarkable progress over the past couple of seasons, was an outstanding Marina. Albert Da Costa, replacing the indisposed Giulio Gari, did justice to Grigori-Dimitri. Salutes are also due Giorgio Tozzi, Charles Kullman, Clifford Harvuot, Lorenzo Alvarry, James McCracken and Martha Lipton.

THE STAGING by Dino Yanopoulos and the decor by Matias Doboujinsky give "Boris" eye as well as ear appeal. Over recent seasons, Yanopoulos has won kudos for his direction. He gives the works under his supervision a theatrical touch. He gets good miming from the principals, and his groupings are striking.

One of the major assets is the conducting of Dimitri Mitropoulos. The musical director of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony has brought distinction to the Met's podium. He uses the orchestra skillfully, and has respect for the singers. He generates excitement without overpowering them.

In Hines, Rudolf Bing has one of the best Borises we've heard in quite a spell. He is fully up to the exacting demands of the role. He most certainly earned the bravos bestowed upon him by the enthusiastic first-nighters.

Robert Coleman's THEATRE:



Philharmonic Offers A Varied Program

• Chavez's 'Symphony No. 3' exciting and rewarding music.

The Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra gave the first performance here of Carlos Chavez's "Symphony No. 3" at Carnegie Hall Thursday evening. The work, commissioned by Clare Boothe Luce, had its premiere in Caracas, Venezuela, two seasons ago.

It is in the modern vein, churning, restless and dynamic. Its dissonances are calculated to distress the ears of conservatives. They are likely to find suggestions of glass-cutting and the blowing of factory whistles rather than the melodies of the timeless masters.

HOWEVER, THIS is a restless and dynamic age. A disturbed one, too. Seeking the new and

than most of the genre. It's not going to displace Beethoven or Brahms, but it is an excellent representation of our time.

The "Symphony No. 3" was preceded by the "Chaconne in E minor," an admirable transcription by Chavez of a melodic organ piece by Buxtehude. Personally, we preferred it to the newer work. The composer was a commanding figure on the podium, and the orchestra did justice to this portion of the program.

An outstanding feature of the evening, for us, was Prokofiev's "Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, C major." With Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting and Gina Bachauer as soloist, it was done brilliantly. This happens to be one of Mitropoulos' favorites.

SINCE BOTH HE and Miss Bachauer are dominant personalities, it was interesting to see how much in rapport they were. The Maestro subordinated his temperament to that of the guest artist most gallantly, and the result of their collaboration was felicitous, indeed. It won bravos.

Kodaly's "Hary Janos" Suite was the final number. It may not be great, but it is pleasant to hear. We thought Mitropoulos and the orchestra in fine form with this concession to popular taste. Toni Kovacs proved not only an artist on the seldom-heard cimbalom, but a tonic for the eyes. Would that all virtuosos were so good looking.

As musical director of the Philharmonic-Symphony, Mitropoulos has had an open mind in his choice of programs. He has maintained a nice balance between the classical and the modern. He has offered opportunity to the new, and not neglected the old. Thus, patrons of all preferences have found something to delight them.

WORDS and MUSIC

By Harriett Johnson

Bachauer Scores With Philharmonic

The combination of fascination in music and performance was best illustrated last night at the concert of the Philharmonic-Symphony in Carnegie Hall by Gina Bachauer's playing of the Prokofiev Piano Concerto in C Major, No. 3, Op. 26, with Dimitri Mitropoulos on the podium.

Miss Bachauer is attractively slimmer than she was, and her playing, always dynamic, can claim (for whatever reasons) even more vitality.

She played the Prokofiev with brilliant virtuoso mastery and with color variations which were as provocative as the work itself (no mean compliment). The second movement, saucy and satirical, and touched with fantasy, was performed with an alchemist's magic, imaginatively speaking. The final movement built consistently into excitement until the last chord when the audience burst into bravos as well as applause. Mitropoulos outdid himself in his sensitive collaboration with the artist. This is a work he understands to the core, and which he plays excellently himself.

Music

Philharmonic

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Carlos Chavez, who is to Mexico what Villa-Lobos is to Brazil and Sibelius to Finland, had the first half of last night's Philharmonic program in Carnegie Hall all to himself.

Mr. Chavez was there as conductor, as arranger of a chaconne by Buxtehude—an early German giant eclipsed only by the shadow of the greater giant Bach—and as composer of a new Third Symphony.

After the intermission Dimitri Mitropoulos returned to the Philharmonic podium with his Greek compatriot Gina Bachauer as guest in the piano concerto that has proved a lucky charm to both—Prokofiev's Third.

Surge of Volume.

Miss Bachauer gave one of her best performances to date in the Prokofiev classic. If some of the expected glint was missing, the rest was there—the hurtling power and surge of volume, the clean turn of phrase.

There and in Kodaly's "Hary Janos" suite, Mr. Mitropoulos was again the unrivaled master of the living, pulsing rhythms of the day—energy with a heartbeat.

Chavez, With Philharmonic, Conducts His 3d Symphony

By Jay S. Harrison

PHILHARMONIC-SYMPHONY
Carnegie Hall
Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; soloist, Gina Bachauer, pianist.
Chaconne in E minor, Buxtehude-Chaves
Symphony No. 3 (first performance in the U. S.)
Conducted by the composer.
Piano Concerto No. 2, Prokofiev
"Hary Janos" Suite, Kodaly

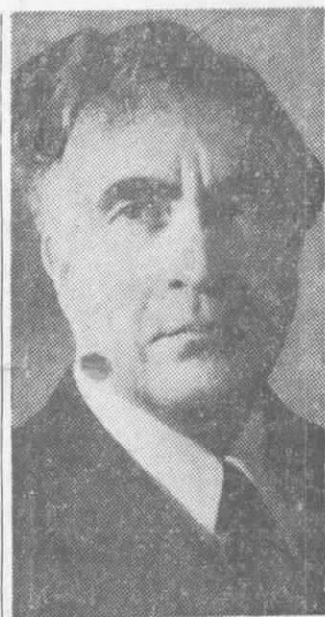
I can think of nothing more provoking than the chagrin of a master hypnotist who suddenly finds himself unable to put even a medium into a mild trance. And such a state of annoyance must have been felt last night by Carlos Chavez at the American premiere of his Third Symphony at Carnegie Hall. For Mr. Chavez, in former days, was every inch a mesmerist. He had only to rattle a gourd, set up an incessant cross-rhythm or design a quilt of sonority and the audience turned glassy-eyed and was his. But it was not so on this occasion. Mr. Chavez, in conducting his new work with the Philharmonic, simply reminded us that interest in a bag of tricks diminishes when the tricks are familiar and every one knows how they are done.

It was apparent from the start of the symphony that Mr. Chavez was out to capture his listeners' attention and hold it through any means available. And the means at his disposal, I must confess, are awesome. He has a way, for instance, of making his woodwinds sound at once bizarre, plaintive, shrill or voluptuous. His brasses he frequently handles as calls from the deep beyond, and the percussion writing is at every instant bathed in ingenuity. Moreover, the famed Mexican composer knows precisely how to gauge (and score) every effect that has come to his inner ear, and the results are frequently breathtaking. But once you have declared this fact the fact is, there seems little else memorable to record about the Third Symphony.

Chavez' dissonant content one takes for granted today through encountering its equal so frequently in background music, and his formal sense has a tendency to grow desultory. In addition, in the present work there is a good deal of figuration, a host of whizzing notes, that did not seem integrally connected with the piece as a whole. Indeed, the symphony is really not a whole, and that is its main weakness. It seems instead to be a collection of ideas that have been put together without actually belonging together. In the second movement, for example, the alternation of full orchestra and a concerto of winds grows patchy for lack of sturdy transitions between the sections. And the reasons for blending a lento and animate in the final movement escapes me entirely.

But I do not mean to suggest that the symphony is one long, slap-dash, no-account number. As he has shown for thirty years—and continues to show in the contrapuntal freshness of his high-low woodwind combinations—Mr. Chavez is an inspired musician. Had it come from any hand but his, I suspect, the work would have been met with wild acclaim. But from a master one comes to expect only masterly creations. And the Third Symphony is not that.

I allow that I also expected more from Miss Bachauer than I found in her playing. Somehow her interpretation of the Prokofiev concerto lacked brio, gristle, steel. It was a strong reading and it made a ringing sound, but the crispness, the brittle, the sheer headlong exuberance of the piece was reflected but little. Of course, the concerto having become a classic, it is amenable to any number of different performance viewpoints, and



Carlos Chavez, who conducted the premiere of his Third Sinfonia last night.

Miss Bachauer clearly regards the work tenderly and with love. During its more expansive lyrical episodes she outdid herself in evoking prismatic colors and maintaining a broad, flowing line. Still, I take her rendition to be a mite subdued. It was the romantic side of Prokofiev Miss Bachauer showed us last night. His brassiness she often overlooked or, at any rate, did not look squarely in the eye.

TIMES
New York, N. Y.

JAN 30 1956

Bagarotti Is Soloist

GIOVANNI BAGAROTTI was soloist with Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic-Symphony at Carnegie Hall Saturday night. He played the Mozart D major Violin Concerto (K. 271-A). As a violinist, Mr. Bagarotti has many positive virtues. His tone, while smallish, is of exquisite purity and pleasing refinement. His playing has refinement. As an interpreter, he is thoughtful, sensitive and lucid.

What chiefly handicaps Mr. Bagarotti is his lack of command of the mechanical problems of his art. Although he can turn a phrase beautifully, it is not always in tune. Rapid passages appear to disconcert him. There was a great deal of slippish playing Saturday night, especially in the speedy measures of the Rondo. It was an interesting but musically uneven performance.

Mr. Mitropoulos and the orchestra managed the considerable feat of making Mozart's "Domenech" Suite sound Wagnerian. It was an earnest but heavy-handed performance. The characteristic Mozartian grace and sparkle were buried under an avalanche of gorgeous orchestral sound.

Schumann's Symphony No. 2 in C completed the evening's music.

POST
NEW YORK CITY
FEB 3 1956

WORDS and MUSIC

By Miles Kastendieck

By Harriett Johnson

Barber's 'Medea' by Philharmonic

Samuel Barber's new work, "Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance," may sound foreboding as a title, but it proved absorbing and significant music as played by the Philharmonic-Symphony last night in Carnegie Hall with Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting.

Barber considers the composition a new one, and the performance was listed as the premiere, though the material was taken from dance music written for Martha Graham in 1946, entitled first, "Serpent Heart," then later "Cave of the Heart," and built around Medea as the central character.

From my remembrance of the "Medea" music dedicated to Miss Graham, the composer is quite right to consider his more recent "Medea" a fresh piece of music.

Though its central theme remains the horrific, jealousy-mad mother of the Euripides tragedy, who murders her children to avenge her husband's betrayal, the emphasis of the musical treatment varies from its original dance base and rises compellingly in its own symphonic right. Beginning with tenderness of emotion, expressive of Medea's feelings for her children, the music grows in intensity as her suspicions and tragic desperation increase, until it closes with the tightly knit but frenzied dance of vengeance. This is music of high emotion, brilliantly developed with symphonic synthesis, and, in general, well orchestrated, though Barber's use of the xylophone appeared, on first hearing, irrelevant. The piano, on the other hand, was used pertinently and fitted well into the general fabric.

From the enthusiasm of the

Barber Novelty Vivid and Bold

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

High among the attractions of last night's Philharmonic program was the strong and vibrant conducting of Dimitri Mitropoulos.

This has been one of Mr. Mitropoulos' most varied and stimulating seasons. He has brought a vital dramatic note to Metropolitan performances and further enriched the Philharmonic in readings and novelties.

A record to be proud of as the Greek-born director of America's oldest symphonic institution nears his 60th birthday.

The novelty on last night's program was Samuel Barber's "Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance"—a world premiere of the entirely rescored ballet music first written for Martha Graham 10 years ago.

Vivid Music.

I would place this among Mr. Barber's foremost achievements to date. The music is vivid, original, bold, masterfully contrived and contrasted, and in the "dance" mounting to a frenzied peak of power.

I couldn't imagine a more brilliant and imaginative sendoff for a new score than Mr. Mitropoulos' reading last night. It came alive with the very first phrase—and stayed that way.

After hearing the poetic Ansermet version of Chausson's B-flat major symphony last month, I wondered how Mr. Mitropoulos would differ and which I would prefer.

Both Preferred.

As of last night, I prefer them both. Mr. Ansermet's

for a certain loving nuance, Mr. Mitropoulos' for its broad scope and dazzling intensity. Of the two, last night's was the more dramatic.

Soloist of the evening was that gifted American youngster of the bow, Michael Rabin, who unreels a sweet, smooth tone and facile technique in the Brahms concerto

without altogether plumbing its depths of style and feeling. As he left the stage, young Rabin stooped to kiss the cheek and shake the hand of a beaming member of the violin section—his father George.

New York, N. Y.
Times
(Cir. 1,096,137)

FEB 4 - 1956

Music: The Philharmonic

Samuel Barber Work
Bows to Cheers

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

WHEN a contemporary piece draws braves from the subscribers of the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall, you may be sure that it is something special. Samuel Barber's "Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance" was the composition that stirred the Philharmonic audience last night, and it builds with unusual intensity.

This relatively short but tremendously powerful tone poem had its premiere. The basic material is drawn from a ballet score Mr. Barber wrote for Martha Graham, which is in her repertoire as "Cave of the Heart."

The composer has gone back to the ten-year-old work and taken from it the allusions to the ballet's central character, Medea. He has tightened the music and rescored it for full orchestra, and has come up with a composition that should be attractive to any virtuoso orchestra.

The introductory section, Medea's meditation, is rather gray in color and touched with muted bitterness. It is really a preparation for the wild rhythms of her dance of vengeance, which builds as relentlessly as her fury.

There is a suggestion of jazz in the rhythm, particularly in the way the piano pounds at it insistently. Whether Mr. Barber meant to imply that sort of contemporary idiom or not, his music goes on to take a wholly individual shape. His scoring has the authority of a man who is perfectly at home in his milieu.

Dimitri Mitropoulos, who thrives on music with a dramatic content, led a rousing performance of the work. The orchestra, which has not always been a ball of fire this season, played with virtuosity in the dance.

The evening's soloist was 19-year-old Michael Rabin, son of a Philharmonic violinist. His assignment was no less than the Brahms Violin



Samuel Barber

The Program

PHILHARMONIC-SYMPHONY SOCIETY: Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor; Michael Rabin, violinist. At Carnegie Hall: Symphony in B flat, Opus 20... Chausson; Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance, Opus 23-A... Barber; Violin Concerto in D major... Brahms

Concerto, and he was over-matched. Young Mr. Rabin is an enormously gifted violinist. He has shown in the past that he is one of the best of the new generation of virtuosos.

It may be that he had an off-night last night. Let us hope so, for his tone was not clean and he lacked a command of the concerto's style. It was a sentimental gesture for the Philharmonic to let him have a whack at the concerto. But in view of the fact that this is the year of the fiddle at the Philharmonic—there has been a steady succession of violin soloists—Mr. Rabin might have had something less taxing.

Mr. Mitropoulos led the orchestra in a big-voiced, if not elegant, performance of Chausson's B flat Symphony. The Philharmonic's share in the concerto lacked luster. The Barber work was the evening's success and the composer was on hand to enjoy its rewards.

Heifetz Still Tops Among Fiddlers

Music

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

After what seemed much too long an absence, Jascha Heifetz fiddled his way right back into the hearts of Philharmonic patrons last night. Appearing in Carnegie Hall as soloist in the Beethoven

Concerto, the celebrated master of the bow reminded us all once more that when it comes to elegance and finesse there is only one Heifetz.

The refinement and poise were incredible. It wasn't just the tone, which was

sweet and pure and infinitely shaded, and it wasn't just the technique, which was fabulous.

These things one has come to hail again and again in a season of superlative fiddling. Mr. Heifetz moved far beyond both. They were the means by which he achieved an aristocracy of art no distinction of skill could counterfeited.

Frankly, I had almost forgotten how beautifully this man could play. A kind of legend had already attached to the name. It was good to have the legend and the name materialize once more in a miracle of reality.

The slow movement was a dream last night. Dimitri Mitropoulos and the orchestra paved the way with a poetic hush and Mr. Heifetz went on from there in a whispered wonder of tone.

If anybody was getting the idea that some of the luster was rubbing off the Heifetz bow, last night's performance banished said idea. The Auer and Joachim cadenzas alone showed it in astonishing trim.

Mr. Mitropoulos was also in high form last night—in the Concerto and in Haydn's "Drum Roll" Symphony and Bizet's sprightly "Jeux d'Enfants" suite. All combined that inner and outer glow that is his strength.

From FEB 10 1956

HERALD-TRIBUNE

New York, N. Y.

By Francis D. Perkins

Jascha Heifetz, playing the Beethoven Violin Concerto, was last night's soloist with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, where the musicians led by Dimitri Mitropoulos began the program with Haydn's 103d Symphony, in E flat—the one which opens with a drum roll. The first performance of an American work, Ralph Shapley's "Challenge: The Family of Man," was the second item in the originally planned list, but this had been withdrawn, and Bizet's suite, "Jeux d'Enfants" was played in its stead.

Mr. Mitropoulos had offered the Bizet suite last Sunday in its first local performance by a major orchestra in thirty years or more in a regular indoor series. It is hardly momentous music, but its tunefulness is copious and engaging; it also has an unsophisticated atmosphere appropriate to its title.

Heifetz Performance
Mr. Heifetz's performance of the Beethoven concerto was of the high standard to be expected from an artist of his status; his thorough knowledge of the external aspects of the work was matched by his communicative insight into its essential spirit and atmosphere; his consummate technique was the servant of the music itself. His ingratiating tone was not quite at its best in a few measures of the concerto's earlier pages, but its pure lyricism in the poetically played larghetto was exceptionally memorable.

His fine distinctions of volume and color were also noteworthy; delicacy was carried almost to excess in a few phrases. This, however, was a minor point in this admirable interpretation, which received well balanced and sympathetic co-operation from the orchestra.

In his tempi, the noted violinist combined continuity of line with subtle flexibility. The Haydn symphony, which has not been played often in recent years, gave a sense of freshness in a lucid straightforward performance.

FEB 4 - 1956

MUSIC

The Philharmonic

By PAUL HENRY LANG

CARNEGIE HALL

Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; soloist, Michael Rabin, violinist. The program: Symphony in B flat major, Op. 20... Chausson; Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance, Op. 23-A (first performance)... Barber; Violin Concerto in D major... Brahms

Thursday night's concert found the Philharmonic in grand form. Beautiful and vigorous sound poured into the big hall in seemingly unlimited supply, but the soft passages were equally sonorous, as they should be—a pianissimo, too, must have body.

Mr. Mitropoulos was at his best and led his men with precision and gusto. Unfortunately, much of this laudable effort was wasted on a thoroughly insignificant work: Chausson's Symphony in B flat.

It is some years since I have heard this work and, honestly, at times I looked around to see whether any one was leaving. Chausson generously shares his score with so many musical friends and acquaintances that no room is left in it for himself. As a consequence neither individuality nor a musical personality emerged from the music.

This symphony is a potpourri of clichés from Wagner, Liszt, Franck, the Russians, and heaven knows what else. I would never guess it to be the work of a Frenchman except for the occasional "salon" tone. But there was not much chance for exhibiting this delightful Gallic trait because the work was dominated by the brasses which gave it a sauerkrautish flavor that was difficult to savor.

Mr. Mitropoulos presented this anachronistic relic in a wonderfully eloquent performance, though the brasses suffered from a touch of apocalypsis.

The spirited playing continued in the next number, Samuel Barber's new version of a score originally written for Martha Graham, "Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance," again demonstrated that Mr. Barber is a consummate virtuoso of the modern orchestra. His sonorities are so nicely calculated that when in one of the soft passages one of the cellists inadvertently dropped his mute, the slight metallic click actually disturbed the equilibrium.

It is perhaps an easy refuge for the critic to say that the somewhat disconnected nature of the beginning of "Medea" must be owing to the fact that originally it was a choreographic work. I rather think that unfamiliarity

with the thematic material caused this momentary uneasiness on my part which soon disappeared. The dance itself is really exciting and Mr. Mitropoulos whipped it up to a diabolical pitch. The piece was very cordially received and the composer responded with several bows.

After the intermission the excellent playing became memory. Mr. Rabin, a very young violinist, mistook Brahms for Glazunov and played the former's concerto with plenty of Slavic schmalz. This young man plays well, but he will have to reduce his sugar intake before tackling Brahms. Mr. Mitropoulos seconded the soloist with a heavy and noisy orchestral accompaniment. His Brahms, too, sounded more like Tchaikovsky than Brahms.

By the way, this was the fourth performance of the Brahms concerto heard this season. The season is not yet half over and there is a good chance of surpassing last year's record of six. How about a little variety, Messrs. Fiddlers?

Ortica Sings In 'Masked Ball'

A new Riccardo, Mario Ortica, was the assassin's victim for the first time here in Thursday night's repetition of Verdi's "Un Ballo in Maschera" at the Metropolitan Opera House, where a new Ulrica, Martha Lipton foretold his doom. Mr. Ortica, who presented the role with much dramatic plausibility, also provided much effective singing, although he did not seem at his vocal best. His lower notes were at times rather muffled and opaque; outspoken upper tones had ample vigor and pronounced color, but gave an impression of effort. While his voice usually carried Riccardo's emotions to his hearers, it suggested that his vocal resources are not yet fully organized.

Miss Lipton's first Metropolitan Ulrica was a rather young-looking witch; her performance told of musical and dramatic understanding of the role. Vocally there was a good range of color and dynamic control in mainly while not invariably well produced tones. Some of the lower notes needed a touch of more ominous portent to round out the characterization.

Zinka Milanov's Amelia continues to be one of her most impressive roles here; her singing, emotionally persuasive, was delectable in all degrees of volume and levels of pitch; Robert Merrill, in fine voice, was a notable Renato. Dolores Wilson sang Oscar, with Giorgio Tozzi and Norman Scott as the conspiratorial pair, Samuel and Tom, and Messrs. Marsh, McCracken and Anthony completing the cast.

Although this was the season's sixth performance, it avoided the air of routine which can beset a much repeated work, and there was momentum and expressive conviction in its general course under Tibor Kozma, who conducted the work for the first time this season. F. D. P.

TIMES
New York, N. Y.
FEB 6 1956

John Browning, Young Californian, Has Debut on Philharmonic Program

JOHN BROWNING, 22-year-old California pianist, made his debut with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony at Carnegie Hall yesterday afternoon. He was selected last year as a co-winner of the annual Edgar M. Leventritt Award.

Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini was the work he played. A relatively shallow piece, the Rhapsody did not give Mr. Browning an opportunity to show what he could do when confronted with emotional depth. But the work enabled him to show that he has a striking flair for the keyboard.

He has a strong rhythmic sense. He can make heavy octaves ring out without clangor, and he can ripple off an evenly articulated treble run with grace and playfulness. In the

FEB 13 1956
DAILY NEWS New York, N. Y.

A number of celebrations have been arranged to honor the 60th birthday—Saturday—of Dimitri Mitropoulos, musical director of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony. Other milestones touched by the maestro this year include the 20th anniversary of his American debut, his 10th year as an American citizen and his fifth year as the Philharmonic's director. A couple of firsts for Mitropoulos will come this year when he conducts his first opera at the Salzburg Festival, in the summer, followed by his conducting debut with the Vienna State Opera.

FEB 10 1956
STAR LEDGER
NEWARK, N. J.



HERE TUESDAY—Dimitri Mitropoulos will conduct the New York Philharmonic-Symphony at the Mosque in a Valentine's Night concert under auspices of the Griffith Music Foundation. Included in the program will be Ernest Chausson's little known Symphony in B flat major.

FEB 10 1956

WORDS and MUSIC

By Harriett Johnson

Heifetz Plays Beethoven Concerto

Jascha Heifetz was the eminent soloist with the Philharmonic-Symphony last night in Carnegie Hall, Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting. He played the Beethoven Concerto in D Major on a program which offered no perplexities for the listener. Haydn's Symphony No. 103 in E Flat Major, popularly called the "Drum Roll," because of its opening timpani trill, began the concert; it was followed by five movements from Bizet's fanciful Suite, "Jeux d'Enfants."

Mitropoulos, conducting throughout the evening with the score, was the restrained and somewhat subdued master of the occasion. Balance and dynamics were more in proportion than has been the case recently with the maestro.

The Haydn had a robust vitality, and the Bizet Miniatures sounded picturesque and charming. In general, the ensemble's tone quality was improved, and it was a relief to hear the various choirs integrated instead of bombed into a union of sound.

Heifetz suave Heifetz was his usual suave, controlled self, taking faster tempi than is necessary (the norm for him), and turning out an objective, well-scored unemotional performance. His tone appeared inhibited at times. His

TIME Magazine

FEB 13 1956

Medea by Barber

A decade ago Samuel (Adagio for Strings) Barber wrote a piece of music for Dancer Martha Graham called *Cave of the Heart*. It dealt with a Medea-like woman whose consuming love turned to hate and revenge; the score followed the choreography closely in mood and motion. Last week Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic-Symphony played Barber's re-composition of the same scenes, called *Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance*. It turned out to be a meatier work for full symphony than as a dance accompaniment, with the same virtues—and the same faults—that have made Barber, 45, one of the most-performed of contemporary American composers.

Among the virtues: a firm command of the orchestra, which produced a vividly mysterious opening figure on the xylophone, and two flutes that appear to bump and separate like a pair of slow-motion dancers. Chief fault: thematic aimlessness. After the promise of those opening bars, the next part of the brief score is limp and weary—a routine expression of Medea's mother love.

Only when the heroine goes into her "dance of vengeance" do things liven up again. At that point Conductor Mitropoulos took over the dancer's role for himself, shrugging one shoulder grotesquely to the syncopated piano rhythm, playing the fingers of his left hand to the spastic tempos. The music got more conventional in texture as it got noisier, but ultimately, sheer noise was sufficient; as the last, clubbing chord thundered out, the Philharmonic's subscribers gasped, and then burst into applause.

Ahead for Composer Barber: a new opera, with a libretto written by his composer-friend, Gian-Carlo (Saint of Bleeker Street) Menotti.

FEB 17 1956

WORDS and MUSIC

By Harriett Johnson

Mitropoulos Sets Fast Pace at 60

Dimitri Mitropoulos, who will be 60 tomorrow, is celebrating the event in the best musical tradition. He's working harder than ever during a week of special observances in his honor.

Beginning with his leading the Philharmonic-Symphony last night in Carnegie Hall, followed by a repeat of the program today at 2:30, he conducts "The Masked Ball" tonight at the Metropolitan Opera.

Last night's concert, which found the maestro in top conducting form, featured two soloists. Witold Malcuzyński, Polish pianist, played the Rachmaninoff Concerto No. 3 in D Minor, and Laszlo Varga, Philharmonic solo cellist, played the Hebrew Rhapsody, "Schelomo," by Ernest Bloch, a belated birthday tribute honoring the composer who reached 75 last July.

Sunday at 2:30, Mitropoulos will repeat his performances of these works in Carnegie Hall, after which members of the orchestra will take him to a party. Monday night he returns to the Met for "Tosca," and for the following Thursday-Friday pair of Philharmonic concerts in Carnegie Hall he has prepared a program which he considers his own personal birthday celebration.

Bach's Fantasia and Fugue in G Minor, arranged by Mitropoulos for orchestra, will open the program. Leon Kirchner's Piano Concerto, with the composer as soloist, will then have its world premiere. The concert will close with the "Alpine" Symphony by Richard Strauss.

Varga Impressive

Returning to last night's con-

cert, the performance of Varga, who played a magnificent cello which belonged to the late Emanuel Feuermann, was deeply impressive. He communicated the turbulence and the brooding of the richly scored "Schelomo" as well as its somber lyricism. His playing had technical mastery and his tone was rich in variations of autumnal coloring.

Malcuzyński has the virtuoso's flair for making the piano sound dramatically vigorous. He plays with dash. As the third movement of the Rachmaninoff swept to its climax, he built excitement which drew rousing enthusiasm from the audience at the work's conclusion.

During most of the piece, his emotional projection was superficial. He played the composer's singing melodies without the warmth of feeling they yearn for

FEB 17 1956

WORLD-TELEGRAM
New York, N.Y.

Music

Soloists, Shostakovich Feature Philharmonic

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

A double order of soloists—plus a Shostakovich novelty—were among the features of last night's Philharmonic concert in Carnegie Hall. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted.

One of the soloists, Laszlo Varga, stepped from his first-desk in the orchestra to mount the cellist's podium for the star role in Ernest Bloch's Hebrew Rhapsody, "Schelomo."

This was perhaps the highlight of the evening—a fine-spun reading that showed the Philharmonic's first cellist to have the heart of a singer and the fingers of a poet.

Biblical Vision. Behind him, the orchestra maintained a powerful web of sensuous tone and fierce commotion, the whole building into more than a suggestion of the Biblical vision that gripped Bloch.

The evening's keyboard soloist—Witold Malcuzyński—was less happy in his assignment, the 3rd Concerto of Rachmaninoff. As it turned out, the orchestra was the real virtuoso last night.

There was impetus and strength to the opening Allegro, but, after a promising start, the piano part cooled off and thickened. There was technique but no real brilliance.

Mr. Mitropoulos. The brilliance was in Mr. Mitropoulos' orchestra, a surging, restless voice ever alert to the endless shifts of mood to this dark, brooding reverie.

Mr. Mitropoulos opened the program in holiday mood with a local premiere of Dimitri Shostakovich's "Festive Overture." This is one long happy flourish, full of brass and marching rhythms and, presumably, cheers.

The Polish-born pianist began, the concerto with great promise, for in the relaxed, lyrical opening his tone was clear, beautiful and charmingly nuanced. But a hard edge came into it when the music got louder and more strenuous. Thereafter, his playing was steely most of the way and, though it had nervous intensity, it had little romantic ardor. The technical difficulties, not always fully surmounted, seemed to absorb most of his energy.

Mr. Bloch's birthday occurred last July when the Philharmonic was not in session, so the tribute was somewhat belated. It consisted of a performance of the composer's orchestral work that is most frequently performed—"Schelomo," his Hebrew rhapsody for cello and orchestra. The soloist was Laszlo Varga, the orchestra's first cellist.

Mr. Varga played it with unflinching expressiveness and with a tone that, for all its suavity, was never bland or sickly velvety. He traced the big curve of the work with a careful grading of its high moments and his interpretation was as thoughtful as his

Philharmonic Is Heard In Carnegie Hall Program

By Jay S. Harrison

PHILHARMONIC-SYMPHONY

CARNEGIE HALL. Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; soloist, Witold Malcuzyński. The program: Festive Overture, Shostakovich; Piano Concerto No. 3 in D Minor, Op. 30, Rachmaninoff; "Schelomo," Hebrew Rhapsody for Cello and Orchestra, Ernest Bloch; "Les Preludes," Liszt.

The Philharmonic concert last night in Carnegie Hall, under Dimitri Mitropoulos' direction, was another of those on which the stars of good fortune stubbornly refused to shine. Even the presence of two distinguished soloists and the first New York performance of a work by Dimitri Shostakovich failed to do more than make the event sputter occasionally with flecks of light. For the most, however, it was an evening of gloom, of musical darkness.

To begin with, Shostakovich's Festive Overture is a blatant piece of orchestral fluffery whose scoring is not quite noisy enough to conceal its lack of first-rate tunes. None the less it makes a fearsome row. Woodwinds tootle and scamper in a manner owing more than a nod to Prokofiev, and strings dart and careen in every conceivable direction. Cymbals, too, there are, unloosely cackling brasses and thudding percussion, but even allowing the work's ingenuities of sonority,

the Overture comes to little. It is, granted, festive; but so, for that matter, is a crowd of New Year well wishers. And there is no more creditable art in the latter's hoots, I suspect, than there is in Shostakovich's latest effort.

As for Mr. Malcuzyński's performance of the Rachmaninoff, it was, I fear, full of sound and fury signifying nothing. For persons familiar with Mr. Malcuzyński's playing this must have come as something of a surprise, since he is known to be a man able to grow passionately involved with the music he programs. Last night he simply read the concerto—energetically, to be sure—without the least sense of being more than casually fond of it. As a result, his show of bravura became an attitude rather than a means of expression.

Even his strange retards and eccentric accents emerged almost as last-minute considerations and did not seem to be an integral part of the pianist's conception. This conception, moreover, for all its tonal clamor, was infrequently possessed of sweep, breadth and the kind of inner vigor that gives to Rachmaninoff's work its rightful share of nobility. In short, though Mr. Malcuzyński's agile playing and enormous tone requested attention, they did not really warrant it.

Ernest Bloch's "Schelomo" ("Solomon"), presented in honor of the composer's seventy-fifth birthday, is a bardic piece, an epic poem. On this occasion, however, its sentiment could easily have been confined to a quatrain. For some reason or another, its native intensity, its dramatic urgency and Hebrew profundity were dissipated in a whirlwind of pretty sounds.

Mr. Varga succumbing, as all cellists do, to the lure of "Schelomo's" ripe and resonant melodies, wailed more than is necessary, and there was nothing statuesque or authentically grand about his interpretation. He was at his best in dealing with Solomon's mournful, introspective comments, but when heroic cello declamation was the order he turned timid, shy.

And, of course, a shy and cowering Solomon is no Solomon at all.

New York, N.Y.
FEB 18 1956

Festive Night at 'Met'

LAST night's performance of "Un Ballo in Maschera" at the Metropolitan Opera House was a festive one on several counts. It included a pre-birthday celebration for Dimitri Mitropoulos, the return to the company of Jussi Bjorling after an absence of a year and much beautiful singing, particularly on the part of the two principals, Mr. Bjorling and Zinka Milanov.

During the first act of the Verdi opera, Mr. Bjorling was perhaps husbanding his voice a bit for the torrents of vocal passion ahead. Or perhaps this was part of a well-calculated dramatic effect. For despite the restraint in his early scenes, his voice had its familiar golden resonance. The tenor was never at want for breath to sustain a phrase or to mold it with elegance.

This mastery served him well in the first act finale where, against a background of horror-struck courtiers, he sings his lightly mocking phrases, "E scherzo od è follia."

In the duet of the second act, where he is torn between guilt and love, Mr. Bjorling gave his all. His all was vocal rather than dramatic, but it had an urgency and brilliance that were irresistibly exciting.

Appearing in her role for the first time this season was Jean Madeira as the fortune teller, Ulrica. Miss Madeira has a fine vocal instrument to work with, but she marred her interpretation by booming her low chest tones too consciously. And she seemed to posture rather than act the role.

The cast also included familiar interpretations by Robert Merrill, Laurel Hurley, Calvin Marsh, Giorgio Tozzi and Norman Scott.

Verdi's gloomy melodrama got off to a merry start when general manager Rudolf Bing appeared in the pit. He announced that it was the eve of the sixtieth birthday of the conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos, and invited the audience to join the orchestra in singing, "Happy Birthday."

The members of the Philharmonic-Symphony also will honor their conductor, Mr. Mitropoulos, Sunday and present to him a silver plaque. E. D.

FEB 19 1956

TIMES PICAYUNE
New Orleans, La.

DIMITRI MITROPOULOS, musical director of the New York Metropolitan Opera, was 60 years old Saturday. Friday night he got a "happy birthday to you" from the orchestra and audience at the Met.

Rudolf Bing, the Met's general manager, took the podium before a performance of Verdi's "Un Ballo in Maschera" and led the symphonic group and audience in the traditional birthday song.



DIMITRI MITROPOULOS
Sixty years old.

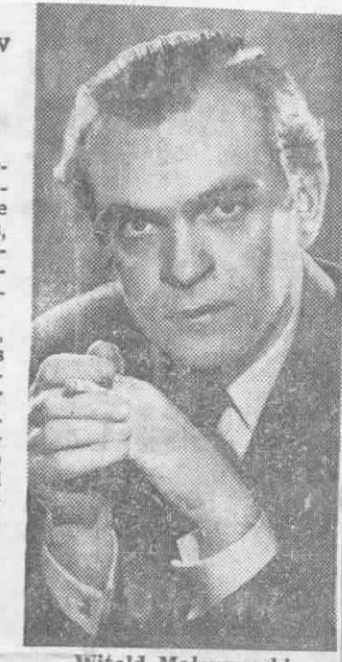
Mitropoulos then took over and conducted. Saturday the directors of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony and its orchestra members presented the maestro with a plaque, Verdi score, and a party.

FEB 18 1956

WORLD-TELEGRAM
New York, N.Y.

'Happy Birthday'

Dimitri Mitropoulos, musical director of the Metropolitan Opera, is 60 today. Last night he got a "happy birthday to you" from the orchestra and audience at the Met. Rudolf Bing, the Met's general manager, took the podium before last evening's performance and led the symphonic group and audience in the traditional birthday song.



Witold Malcuzyński

musicianship was refined. His colleagues joined in applauding him warmly.

The final work Dimitri Mitropoulos led was Liszt's "Les Preludes." His pace was a little more stately than one is accustomed to and, in consequence, there was some loss of excitement in the work's more martial moments. But the pace allowed time enough for a gracious moulding of the long phrases and the orchestra's tonal quality was finer here than anywhere else during the evening.

Los Angeles, Calif.
Examiner
(Cir. D. 380,582 - S. 708,711)

Mitropoulos, 60, Feted

NEW YORK, Feb. 18. (AP)—Dimitri Mitropoulos, musical director of the Metropolitan Opera, is 60 years old today. Last night he got a "happy birthday to you" from the orchestra and audience at the Met.

TIMES
New York, N.Y.
FEB 16 1956

Dimitri Mitropoulos was the conductor in this English version, a translation by John Gutman. As most of the singers in the cast are American, there even were times when a few words could occasionally be understood. H. C. S.

FEB 18 1956

WORLD-TELEGRAM
New York, N.Y.

Orchestra to Honor Mitropoulos at 60

By WILLIAM EWALD,
United Press Staff Writer.

Musical longhairs will let down their locks this week end to pay homage to Dimitri Mitropoulos, musical director of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony.

The occasion is the 60th birthday this Saturday of Mr. Mitropoulos. It will be marked by a special birthday party for the maestro given by the members of his orchestra. Special honor will be paid to Mr. Mitropoulos during his regular CBS radio concert broadcast on Sunday.

However, Mr. Mitropoulos dropped a small bomb on the celebration today.

"Actually," he said, "Saturday isn't my birthday at all. I'm not quite sure when I was born. I was born in Greece, you know, and they weren't very good about keeping records on that sort of thing."

What happened, said Mr. Mitropoulos, was that when he left Greece 20 years ago he needed a birth date for his papers and just made one up.

Birth Date Uncertain.

"My mother decided I was about 40 years old," he said, "and that's what we put down. I'm certainly not less than 60, but I may be even four years older. Who knows?"

Strangely enough, however, this natal mishmash doesn't faze the conductor at all. He's

not even interested in the birthday whoop-de-doo. "I'm not interested in myself," he said. "My position in life is to serve the community I live in. Work is all that matters to me."

"You know, an artist is not like a businessman who can retire. An artist can not live without his art. There is nothing more tragic than a man like Toscanini who no longer works at his art. There he is, living from day to day, waiting to die."

Mr. Mitropoulos, still vigorous at 60 or whatever he is, leads a life entirely devoted to music. His only hobby, mountain climbing, he gave up 10 years ago. It is with an almost childlike pride that he remembers his last ascent—a climb up the Grand Teton in Wyoming back in 1946.

"The ranger station there," said the maestro, "has a big picture of me. They show it to everybody who comes there to climb. Nowadays all I climb is the podium."

Cannot Stop Working.

"I am a man who cannot stop working. Work, eat, sleep in a system is my way of life. It is, in a way, something like mountain climbing. If you rest for five minutes while you are climbing a mountain, that is all right. But you can not rest for an hour, it is no good. That is the way with life. All I want is time to breathe."

WORDS and MUSIC

By Harriett Johnson

Resnik Sings Met Debut as Mezzo

Changing the voice has not yet become as popular as changing the name in the arts, but it's on the way up. The newest recruit is Regina Resnik, who, after having been on the Metropolitan Opera roster for several years as a soprano, has now taken to the slightly lower region of the mezzo-soprano. Last night she made her debut as Marina in Moussorgsky's "Boris Godunov" with Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting.

Miss Resnik has made the change successfully, and has improved her personality stage-wise along with the transformation. She looked the part of the noble, lovely Marina and sang with beauty of tone, with a vibrant, dark quality in the lower voice, and with dramatic impressiveness. She had her moments of vocal insecurity, and once in a while her gestures were exaggerated and a bit gauche, but her debut on the whole can be chalked up high on the credit side.

One of the triumphs of characterization in this production of "Boris" is tenor Paul Franke's interpretation of the Simpleton. He sang and acted so poignantly last night that the audience gave him an ovation.

George London, singing the title role for the first time this season, last night portrayed the torment of the dying Czar with horrific intensity and sang with a wealth of color. Being at pianist Artur Schnabel's concert in Carnegie Hall earlier in the

general technique, though still effortless, was also not as phenomenally smooth as it has been on many previous occasions.

From FEB 13 1956

HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

4 Artists Back In Met's 'Tosca'

Four artists made seasonal returns to former roles in "Tosca" at the Metropolitan on Saturday evening. Licia Albanese sang in the name part; George London was the Scarpia; Gerhard Pechner the Sacristan, and Paul Franke, the Spoletta. Also in the cast were Giuseppe Cam-pora, as Cavaradossi, and Clifford Harvuot, Angelotti.

The star of the occasion—a composite one—proved to be Dimitri Mitropoulos and the orchestra, who lived exuberantly every moment of the Puccini "verismo" in Act II. Mme Albanese and Mr. London both were effective musically and, in many respects, dramatically, although of vocal riches neither contributed freely. The soprano did deliver the aria "Vissi d'arte" in a prayerful and passionate way. Elsewhere her voice often failed to penetrate the orchestral sound, yet one should not have wanted the sound any the less potent, for all that.

Mr. London's Scarpia shows every sign of growing into quite a portrait one day. It is, as of Saturday evening, still too muscular and unrefined in spots and too stentorian, generally. What it requires, chiefly, is toning down.

Ο ΕΛΛΗΝ ΑΡΧΙΜΟΥΣΙΚΟΣ

ΠΡΟΣ ΘΑ ΕΡΟΤΑΞΗ

ΤΑ ΕΛΗΝΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΧΡΟΝΙΑ

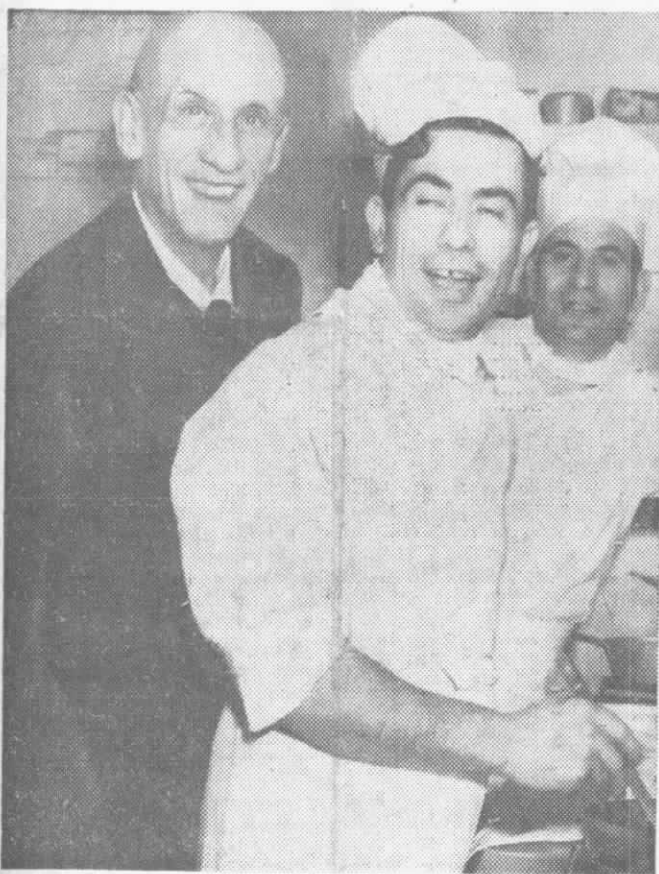
Ο ΜΑΕΣΤΡΟΣ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ

'Εντός του έτους συμπιπτουν και =όλλαι τρεῖς ἐπέτειοι τοῦ ἰδίου=

ΜΙΑ ΜΕΓΑΛΗ ΣΥΝΑΓΙΑ

ΝΕΑ ΥΟΡΚΗ, 10 Φεβρουαρίου. Ἡ διαίτερα Ὑπερσία.—Εἰς τὴν αὐαρία τῆς αὐαγῆς δόξης ἐπέτειον τῶν γενεθλίων τοῦ μουσικοῦ διευθυντοῦ τῆς Φιλαρμονικῆς Συμφωνικῆς Ὁρχήστρας τῆς Νέας Ὑόρκης κ. Δημήτρη Μήτροπουλου, ἡ ὁρχήστρα αὐτὴ θὰ δώσει μεθυστικὸν Κυριακὴν Ἐκτακτὸν συναυλίαν πρὸς τιμὴν τοῦ μεγάλου μαέστρου τῆς. Ἡ συναυλία θὰ μεταδοθῇ ραδιοφωνικῶς εἰς ὅλους τοὺς ἡμερικανούς. Ἐξ ὅλλων, κατὰ τὸ τρέχον ἔτος συμπιπτουν τρεῖς ὁλλαι ὁλοσημειωτοὶ ἐπέτειοι δὲ ἰὰ τὸν κ. Μήτροπουλον. Ἀναδῶν ἡ 20ῃ ἐπέτειος τῆς πρώτης ἀφιξέως τοῦ εἰς τὰς ἡνωμένας Πολιτείας, ἡ 10ῃ ἐπέτειος τῆς πολιτογραφίας τοῦ ὡς Ἀμερικανὸν καὶ ἡ 5ῃ ἐπέτειος τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀναλήψεως τῆς διευθύνσεως τῆς ὁρχήστρας τοῦ Ραδιοφωνικοῦ Σταθμοῦ τῆς Κολλούμπια.

Philharmonic to Give Party for Mitropoulos



Herald Tribune photo by Nat Fein

HAPPY BIRTHDAY—Conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos listens as the chefs at the La Scala Restaurant, 142 W. 54th St., sing him best wishes for his sixtieth birthday.

Director, 60, Will Receive Plaque And Copy of Verdi's 'Otello' Score

The directors of the Philharmonic-Symphony as well as the men of the orchestra will celebrate tomorrow the birthday of Dimitri Mitropoulos, their musical director, giving him a plaque, Verdi score and a party. The Metropolitan Opera observed his birthday last night when Rudolf Bing, general manager, led audience and orchestra in "Happy Birthday to You."

But Mr. Mitropoulos, who will be sixty today, will probably climax his anniversary celebration by seeking as usual the anonymity of a movie seat somewhere on 42d St.

Mr. Bing took the podium at the Metropolitan to give Mr. Mitropoulos a musical greeting prior to a performance of Verdi's "Un Ballo in Maschera," which Mr. Mitropoulos conducted.

To Get "Otello" Score

The men of the Philharmonic will give him a silver plaque on which they called him their "beloved director" and an "inspiring" leader. David M. Keiser, president of the Philharmonic, will give him a copy of the full score of Verdi's "Otello." Such scores cannot ordinarily be purchased but can only be rented from the House of Ricordi at Milan which controls performance rights. But even the publishers made an exception for Mr. Mitropoulos.

At an interview yesterday Mr. Mitropoulos said he never celebrated his birthdays personally. "The Philharmonic does," he said. "My colleagues do. I respond. But I don't personally celebrate."

His personal shyness was indicated by his attitude toward having his picture taken. He said he was "allergic" to photographs of himself and believed them a "loathsome variety of conceit." When the photographer tried to butter him up a little, saying his lean, ascetic face was very interesting to photograph, Mr. Mitropoulos admitted painters and sculptors had said as much but that he refused "categorically to subject myself to such torture."

He goes to the movies seven nights a week because after ten hours daily with his music he said movies were "a kind of drugging affair" that made it

possible "to forget music and go to bed and sleep like a baby. Nothing else in the world can so completely isolate you from your own thoughts."

Movies "Canned Life"

Movies he said were for him a kind of "canned life" and that although "naturally they don't taste like the real thing" the real thing "couldn't interest me, anyway, because I have something better." He chooses the theaters on 42d St., because they remain open long after other theaters are closed, and his own work usually occupies him until near midnight.

Any higher form of entertainment he said required both preparation and energy, neither of which he was willing to spare from music. All his time is devoted to that one art because he said "there are no other alternatives" for him.

But he did not believe this dedication a personal sacrifice. "It gives me great compensations," he said. He lives with music, he said, "like a monk who prays every moment, including the night when he gets up to say 'Ave Maria.' It is no more or no less. Simply utter devotion. The utmost devotion."

The interview was at his favorite restaurant, LaScala Restaurant, at 142 W. 54th St., a couple of blocks from Carnegie Hall where he usually works or the Great Northern Hotel where he lives alone. He ate fennel which he dipped in a mixture of oil, wine vinegar and herbs.

From FEB 21 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Barioni Is Heard In 'Tosca' at Met

After one postponement, the Italian tenor Daniele Barioni finally made his Metropolitan debut last night as Cavaradossi in Puccini's "Tosca." Curiously, he was there as replacement for the originally scheduled Giuseppe Campora.

Mr. Barioni has a fine voice, strong, sure and beautifully placed. He sings musically and with grace. A very young man, he is good looking, though not of heroic proportions. One gathers from this initial hearing that he requires further experience in the scenic part of his impersonation. But he is confident, pleasing in his movements, and his chances of improving along histrionic lines appear quite good. The audience took him to its collective heart with his delivery of the aria "Recondita armonia" in Act I, which earned him a prolonged ovation.

Della Rigal, returning to the Metropolitan this season, was the Tosca. And she was a lovely one to see, Titian hair and all. Her voice seems to have lost the besetting tremolo which it once had. Her voice is much clearer now, and occasionally it was capable of excellent and poised tone. However, her behavior was no more than academically emotional, especially in Act II, where she would have to go some, to put a scintillating Scarpia like George London into the shade.

For the rest, Clifford Harvuot was the Angelotti, Fernando Corena the Sacristan, Alessio De Paolis the Spoletta (always an effective portrait), and Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted with Olympian fire. R. B.

WORDS and MUSIC

By Harriett Johnson

Barioni Makes Debut in 'Tosca'

Daniele Barioni, 25-year-old Ferrara-born tenor, walked unsuspectingly into the Metropolitan Opera yesterday morning to see if a letter had arrived from his family in Italy.

"Do you know 'Tosca'?" Campora is sick" was his greeting from the Met staff.

Yes, he had sung it in Italy. Slated to make his debut tomorrow night in "La Boheme," Barioni agreed to replace his compatriot last night. At 3 o'clock he had a sketchy stage rehearsal, minus the orchestra.

But to him the opportunity was a dream come true. Last Friday he had attended the Met's performance of "The Masked Ball," with Dimitri Mitropoulos on the podium.

"What I would give to sing with him" was his reaction to a performance which was described by connoisseurs as "inspiring." Little did he then dream that his wish so soon would be granted.

From the moment Barioni began to sing last night, it was apparent, despite his obvious

nervousness, that the tall, handsome, curly-headed tenor possesses a beautiful lyric voice of unusual richness and virility. He acquired ease as he continued, and during the third act performed with a greater assurance than he had manifested during the first.

At his best he sang with fluidity and spontaneity; and considering the circumstances, his self-possession was remarkable. It looks as if the Met has a potential matinee idol who also, fortunately, has a voice and technique. His acting was creditable, though he will naturally gain greater conviction with additional performances.

During the second intermission, Mitropoulos dropped into Barioni's dressing room to shake his hand. "Very, very good," said the maestro, "and without a rehearsal, too."

Della Rigal, making her first appearance of the season in the title role, looked stunning and sang impressively. Miss Rigal has improved extraordinarily since I last heard her.

George London was the vocally opulent Scarpia.

As might be expected, Mitropoulos conducted with communicative excitement and rare perceptivity, though at times his tempos were a bit on the slow side.

Mitropoulos Is Honored

Dimitri Mitropoulos, who was 60 Saturday, received a couple of birthday gifts from the Philharmonic board and orchestra on the stage of Carnegie Hall yesterday afternoon.

Early in the program, David M. Keiser, newly elected president, presented the maestro with a conductor's score of Verdi's "Otello" on behalf of the board.

Morris Borodkin, chairman of the orchestra committee, followed suit with a silver plaque inscribed to "an inspiring leader" and loyal and devoted co-worker.

As the orchestra played and sang "Happy Birthday to You," members of the audience joined in. Visibly moved, Mr. Mitropoulos expressed his thanks warmly.

Birthday wires came from conductors, orchestras and managers here and abroad, and a special greeting, voicing the city's gratitude, came from Mayor Robert F. Wagner.

Mitropoulos Conducts Carnegie Hall Concert

By Jay S. Harrison

PHILHARMONIC-SYMPHONY
Carnegie Hall
Concert last night, Conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos. The program: Puccini's "Tosca" (first performance), "Alpine" Symphony, "Mephisto Waltz," "Hary Janos" Suite, "Kodaly."

The applause that greeted the world premiere of Leon Kirchner's Piano Concerto last night at the Philharmonic-Symphony concert was, as the saying goes, scattered. Indeed, this writer was surprised to hear any applause at all, for the work, to put it mildly, is not the Philharmonic followers' usual cup of tea. Quite the reverse. The new concerto is as barbed and unlovable as a cactus plant. But it has, none the less, a certain sturdy majesty of its own.

At once let it be set down that Mr. Kirchner is a young fellow of enormous gifts whose concerto has already won the Naumburg Award entitling him to a recording of his work on Columbia discs. It is quite possible, therefore, that a rehearsal of the piece after it has been committed to LPs will bring into focus several details that on first view are obscure; but this much is already clear—the concerto is harsh and biting and vigorously aggressive in its dissonant drive. For the most, it wanders on atonal fringes, accentuating its edgy and scabrous ideas with a scoring all shrill and restless and a rhythmic structure nervous and irregular.

Taken together these things naturally lead to what is practically a purposeful incoherence, or, perhaps more accurately, an organized disorder. At any rate, the concerto, in both its solo and orchestral dress, is forever twitching, hopping, busying itself with one thematic matter

or another. And even when it turns quiet, as it does in its second movement, it resembles Alban Berg in spots to the degree that it seems moodily intense even to the point of neuroses.

It's not a very pretty picture. But, then, Mr. Kirchner's concerto is not a very pretty work—nor was it meant to be. Its stamina and breadth, its ability to communicate resides in precisely those asperities devices mentioned above. And in truth the piece does communicate a certain craggy, granitic grandeur. It is a totally honest work, a concerto knowing neither sham nor compromise, and this lack of timidity harnesses itself to a wagonload of power.

The performance under Dimitri Mitropoulos' direction and with the composer at the piano was exceptional, as was, also, the orchestra's rendition of Strauss' "Alpine" Symphony. As for the work, it is often said that it is infrequently played owing to the huge symphonic resources it demands. That statement, of course, is humbug. The symphony is really quite dreadful and it has fallen out of the repertoire for this reason and no other.

Actually, the "Alpine" is an inflated grab-bag of every mannerism Strauss had developed up to the date of its composition (1915). As a result, it sometimes appears on the point of becoming a satire on Strauss himself—and an unkind one at that.

The performance, however, was a good one. Maestro Mitropoulos being an old hand at climbing mountains. He climbed the "Alpine" with no more difficulty than he would an ant hill.

Music

Barioni Smash Hit In Quick Met Debut

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

All hail the new Italian tenor—Daniele Barioni! Excitement ran high at the Metropolitan last night over the brilliant emergency debut of the 25-year-old newcomer in Puccini's "Tosca."

Scheduled to make his bow in tomorrow night's "La Boheme," Mr. Barioni was called in yesterday to pinch-hit for his indisposed compatriot Giuseppe Campora.

There was time for little more than a piano rehearsal. Whatever the nervous tension caused by the sudden switch in debut dates, Mr. Barioni showed more of it in the final vocal account he gave of himself.

Jubilant Welcome.

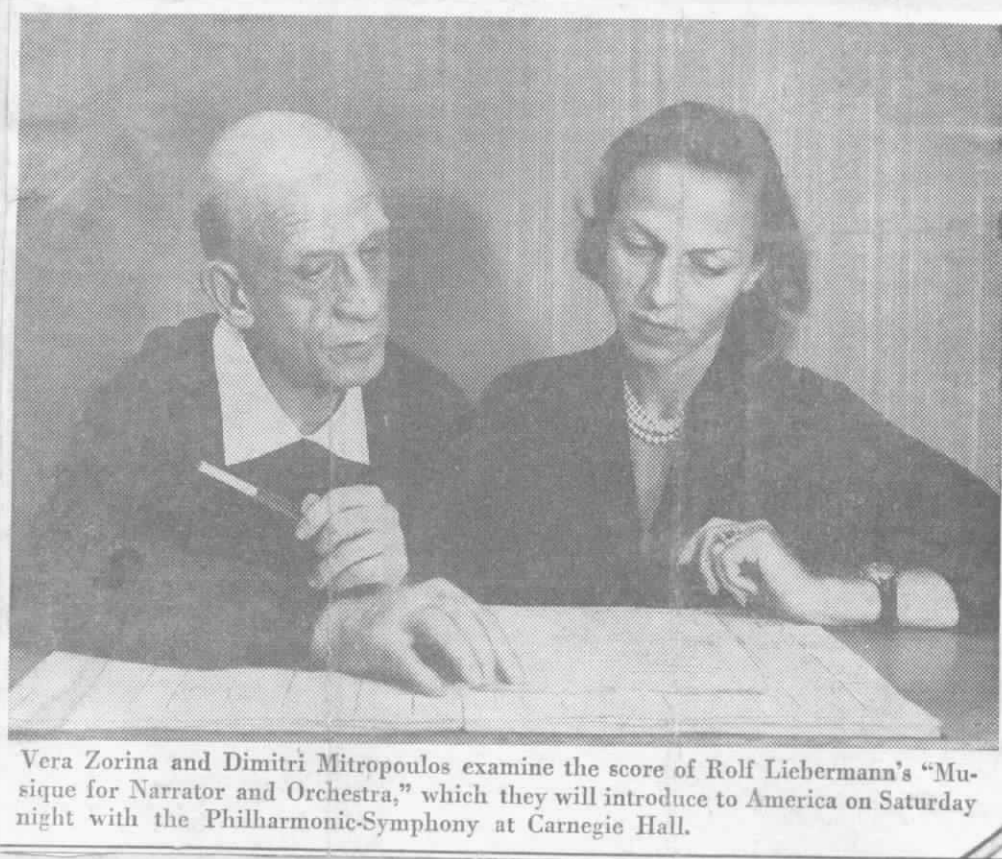
The house quite rightly gave him a jubilant welcome, beginning right after the first act aria and building up to ecstatic pitch after the beautifully sung high-point of the opera, "E lucevan le Stelle."

This handsome Italian—who has only been singing publicly for the past year and in small Italian houses—may or may not be THE tenor we have long been waiting for.

It is too early to say. Yet, as of last night, he is the likeliest of this season's newcomers, not to mention last season and a few seasons before that.

Round Hearty Ring.

With the very first aria,



Vera Zorina and Dimitri Mitropoulos examine the score of Rolf Liebermann's "Musique for Narrator and Orchestra," which they will introduce to America on Saturday night with the Philharmonic-Symphony at Carnegie Hall.

Music: The Philharmonic

Liebermann's 'Musique' Has U. S. Debut —Stern Is Soloist in Concerto

By HAROLD C. SCHONBERG

THE points of interest of the Philharmonic-Symphony concert at Carnegie Hall Saturday evening were the first American performance of Rolf Liebermann's "Musique" for narrator and orchestra and the appearance of Isaac Stern as violinist in Prokofiev's Concerto No. 1 in D.

Mr. Liebermann's work is in three fairly short movements (the entire work lasts about fifteen minutes), each hinging upon a poem by Baudelaire. The narrator—Vera Zorina, in this instance—recites the poems without orchestral accompaniment.

In style, the music is of a rather nondescript modernism. It has dissonances and also a decided feeling of romanticism. Its melodies are carefully plotted and its orchestration well conceived. But of individuality, spontaneity or interesting ideas, there is little. Fifteen minutes after the work is over, one has difficulty remembering a single salient feature.

audience and went on stage to take his bows.

In the Prokofiev concerto, Mr. Stern played with ease and coolness; nor was the orchestral share, directed by Dimitri Mitropoulos, especially compelling. We have heard the concerto sound much more exciting. Mr. Stern's mastery was indisputable, and he whizzed through the second movement to brilliant effect. But it was rather brittle brilliance, and in the last movement there is a degree of ardor that seemed to elude soloist and conductor.

Opening the program was Liszt's "Mephisto Waltz," so thrilling for solo piano, so tawdry in its orchestral dress. The witty "Hary Janos" Suite by Kodaly, one of the best scores of its kind in the literature, was the closing work. Here Mr. Mitropoulos was in congenial territory. Barring an amazingly fast tempo for the Intermezzo, his performance was that of a virtuoso conductor with a virtuoso orchestra, which is exactly what Kodaly had in mind.

Philharmonic Plays Kirchner Concerto

THE concert of the Philharmonic-Symphony last night in Carnegie Hall will never win any prizes for canniness in program-making.

Dimitri Mitropoulos opened the evening with his overblown transcription of Bach's Organ Fantasy and Fugue in G minor, and closed it with Richard Strauss' equally overblown meanderings along the Alps in that tired collection of scraps known as the "Alpine" Symphony. In between was a novelty, the world premiere of Leon Kirchner's Piano Concerto, with the composer at the piano.

Mr. Kirchner's work was welcome less for what it is than for what it attempts to be. He is a serious musician and a dedicated one, who writes with fervent belief in what he is doing. The trouble with his score, as much as one can hazard a guess about such complicated organization at

one hearing, is that it sounds overworked.

It carries on a flirtation with twelve-tone elements, though Mr. Kirchner does not use a tone row and even ends the slow movement with a tonic chord. Dissonances elsewhere are piled on dissonances. The piano writing—and Mr. Kirchner proved an exceptionally able exponent of his own music—is rather percussive but thoroughly idiomatic and very difficult.

The concerto was composed as a commission from the Koussevitzky Foundation. It also has received the Walter W. Naumburg Foundation award and will be recorded this morning by Columbia Records.

As for the "Alpine Symphony," it turns up every ten years or so. Its major virtue is to point up the fact that Strauss was a genius in previous tone poems like "Till Eulenspiegel" or "Don Quixote." H. C. S.

At the Metropolitan

By Walter F. Loeb and Shirley Cecille Cash

The performance of "Tosca" on Jan. 18 was memorable. It marked the last appearance this season of Renata Tebaldi in the title role. She sang opposite Giuseppe Campora, a young, lyrical tenor of considerable acting ability. Tito Gobbi, who sang the role of Scarpia, obviously mastered the role many years ago, and he asserted his presence from the minute he stepped on the stage. Perhaps his was not the most refined voice, though he sang fine pianissimos, but his ability to look and act the part was most rewarding. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted the opera from memory, and he kept the orchestra roaring. It gave the whole performance a drive few performances have had in years. The excellent cast also included Clifford Harvuot, Fernando Corena, Alessio de Paolis, George Cehanovsky, Calvin March and Peter Mark. It was no wonder that seven bouquets were thrown from the audience at Renata Tebaldi's feet. Let this be the eighth.

The Philharmonic

By PAUL HENRY LANG

CARNEGIE HALL

Concert Saturday night, Conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos; soloist, Isaac Stern, violinist. The program: "Mephisto Waltz," "Hary Janos" Suite, "Kodaly," "Alpine" Symphony, "Mephisto Waltz," "Hary Janos" Suite, "Kodaly."

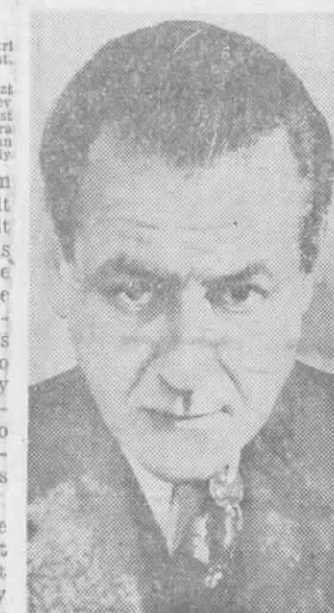
Mr. Mitropoulos' program making is an art that is difficult to fathom and at times difficult to bear. Last week he regaled us with the interminable "Alpine Symphony." No sooner had we recovered from that when Saturday night he gave us Liszt's "Mephisto Waltz," a good piano piece for a virtuoso but a totally insignificant thing in the orchestral version. It is hard to understand why a Grade A orchestra would waste its efforts in playing it.

From this dismal item we went to Prokofiev's youthful first violin concerto. Perhaps it is not as exciting now as it was thirty years ago, but it still is a very fine piece once it gets past the somewhat uncertain beginning. It has wit and grace, warm melody and jaunty rhythm, and its scoring is a sheer delight. The large orchestra never thunders, nor does it shimmer in the impressionistic manner, rather it is handled like a great big chamber ensemble.

Mr. Stern performed the concerto with consummate artistry. This distinguished violinist plays without any theatrics and his beautiful violin tone never touches your viscera, only your heart. Mr. Mitropoulos' accompaniment was at times brilliant but occasionally lacking in precision. The fast give and take in this work calls for unmistakable and economical gestures.

After the intermission the program see-sawed back to the atmosphere of the beginning.

Rolf Liebermann's "Musique" for narrator and orchestra presented that brisk, busy, and competently written music that starts from nowhere and gets nowhere. Its thematic material is nondescript and anemic, even its white corpuscles are off white. Frankly, I found the recitation, ably performed by Vera Zorina, a relief from the insipid music. The poems of Baudelaire were enjoyable, but they did not seem to have anything to do with the music.



Rolf Liebermann, whose "Musique" for Narrator and Orchestra had its first performance in the United States Saturday night.

yard can do this sort of thing but it would never reach the Philharmonic. And as to "Victory at Sea," it's got "Musique" beat hollow. The work received an excellent performance and composer, conductor and narrator were repeatedly recalled.

The concert returned to the domain of more substantial music with Kodaly's "Hary Janos" suite. Some of it, too, is a bit faded but it has good tunes and it is the work of an imaginative composer. Any Hungarian in the orchestra—and every orchestra has Hungarians—could have told Mr. Mitropoulos that a csardas calls for a far more flexible rubate than he accorded it.

Well, it was not a bad performance, but such a conglomeration of music does not send you home in a satisfied frame of mind. What was it that Miss Zorina recited?

Old Captain, it is time. Weigh anchor To sail beyond the doldrums Of our days. This could be addressed to our eminent director of the Philharmonic, for this able musician is fully capable of weighing anchor.

MAR 5 1956

How Some Successful Men Tame Their Tensions

Dimitri Mitropoulos, musical director
New York Philharmonic-Symphony Or.

TIME Magazine

MAR 5 1956

Leon Kirchner's *Piano Concerto*, the week's toughest nut, which the composer played with the Philharmonic Symphony, conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. It was romantic in its delicate, lyrical episodes, its sudden, violent climaxes, and the virtuosic intent of its solo part. It contained, as does all of Brooklyn-born Kirchner's music, many ideas of ear-bending originality that made flashes of beauty in a dark atmosphere. There were so many, in fact, that the listener became worn down before it was over.

From MAR 5 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.Met Repeats
'Boris Godunov'

A host of major cast changes distinguished Saturday night's repeat performance of Mousorgsky's "Boris Godunov" at the Metropolitan Opera. Lawrence Davidson sang the part of Varlaam for the first time with the company, and appearing in their roles for the first time this season were Cesare Siepi as Boris, Blanche Thebom as Marina, Vilma Georgiou as Xenia and Charles Anthony as the Simpleton. Other performers included Margaret Roggero, Sandra Warfield, Charles Kullman, Norman Scott, Giulio Gari, Frank Valentino and Thomas Hayward. Dimitri Mitropoulos was again the conductor.

It is clear that Mr. Davidson has the makings of a first-rate Varlaam, for he rigorously avoids those excesses of buffoonery that most basses bring to the part. Varlaam is a rogue and a scoundrel given to a strong preference for strong wine, but he is no bumbling idiot. Mr. Davidson, to his credit, did not lurch idly about the stage, grunting instead of singing and bellowing instead of producing recognizable vocal pitches. Throughout, he maintained an even melodic flow, colored his lines when the occasion arose and, in general, brought to Varlaam's central scene the elements of character rather than caricature.

Mr. Siepi, as is well known by now, easily faces the demands of Boris and takes them all in stride. There is no mock madness in his portrayal of the demon-ridden Czar; it is the madness of a man whose brain has shriveled up out of remorse and fear. As a result, Mr. Siepi is at his best when he is filled with torment. Elsewhere, as in the Coronation Scene, he seemed a bit stiff, a mite ill at ease in assuming the robes of majesty. And his voice mirrored his actions. When he was wild with terror it gleamed with a rich intensity, but at other moments it turned a bit gray and sapless.

As Marina, Miss Thebom looked a vision and moved with regal elegance. And her singing followed suit. Quickly throwing off some introductory vocal roughness, she spun out her third-act airs with all the total warmth and elan one has come to expect from the mezzo at her best.

J. S. H.

MAR 15 1956
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music

'Manon Lescaut' Back at Met

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Back at the Metropolitan after a five-year sabbatical, Puccini's "Manon Lescaut" was given a stirring interpretation under the baton of Dimitri Mitropoulos last night.

This early opera of Puccini's—the success of which opened the way to a series of masterpieces—may not be a "Bohème" or "Tosca" or "Madama Butterfly." But it is a mighty fine opera none the less.

And it took the power and affection of Mr. Mitropoulos to give it redoubled life last night. Musically, last night's performance was among the season's highlights—warm, firmly controlled and spacious.

Conductor Shines.

The intermezzo between the second and third acts was one of the many great moments last night, bringing out the full resources of the Met orchestra and showing Mr. Mitropoulos in absolute command of the Puccini idiom.

If it was a great night for the orchestra, it was also a great night for the splendid chorus which raised its col-

lective voice in page after page of Puccini's vivid writing.

It was also a good night for tenors and baritones. Richard Tucker never sang so amply and forcefully as he did as Des Grieux, and Frank Guarrera and Fernando Corena were excellent as Lescaut and Geronte.

Miss Steber Sings Lead.

I would like to add that it was also ladies' night, but I'm afraid Eleanor Steber, for all her earnestness, wasn't quite up to the standard set by Mr. Tucker and Mr. Mitropoulos.

To be sure, she was a handsome Manon, especially amid the sartorial splendors of the second act, but the voice, except in isolated tones and phrases of smooth beauty, was too often shrill and fuzzy.

She was just no match vocally for that chubby little geyser of golden tone, Mr. Tucker, and even less a match for the singing warmth and sensuousness of Mr. Mitropoulos' orchestra.

But let's not forget the opera itself—Puccini's pluck in defying the rivalry of

Massenet's "Manon" and going on to write music that may not be as elegant as Massenet's but is twice as human and romantic.

As usual, no librettist was listed on the program. This was because six pairs of hands worked at fashioning the character of Puccini's Manon—six authors in search of a character!

In the first place, I am afraid it is a bit late in her career for Eleanor Steber to be making her debut in the title role. Despite Miss Steber's few years, the impression she created was a little as though Jeanette MacDonald were doing "Naughty Marietta" for the first time.

And Richard Tucker, who also sang this role during the 1950-51 season, when "Manon Lescaut" was last staged by the Met, is no great shakes as Des Grieux. True, he is a forceful tenor, but he has not yet learned even the rudiments of acting, and his heroics last night were frequently ludicrous.

What's Left?

Well, what have we left? A bombastic Geronte by Fernando Corena, a surprisingly rich-voiced but inadequately performed Lescaut by Frank Guarrera, and that's about it in the

So we come now to Dimitri Mitropoulos, conducting his first Met performance of the opera. It was a vigorous one, to be sure. You couldn't miss the orchestral

chestra: "I go to the movies seven nights a week. After ten hours a day with music, movies are a kind of drugging affair which let me forget music and go home and sleep like a baby. The movies can completely isolate you from your own thoughts."

POST
NEW YORK CITY
MAR 7 1956Philharmonic Plays
For Pension Fund

By HARRIETT JOHNSON

A rainy night and an unprecedented list of violinists this season with the Philharmonic-Symphony did not prevent a few thousand music lovers from filling Carnegie Hall last night to hear Yehudi Menuhin play two concertos with the Philharmonic-Symphony. Though the house was not completely sold out, it was well filled, and earned \$10,000 for the ensemble's Pension Fund, the "raison d'être" of the occasion. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted the program which opened with Mendelssohn's Overture to "Ruy Blas," and continued with the same composer's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in E Minor, Op. 64. After the intermission, violinist and ensemble concluded with the Beethoven Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61.

The violinist, who donated his services, was received so enthusiastically that he responded with two encores, both movements from the Sixth Partita by Bach in E Major for Unaccompanied Violin.

TIMES
New York, N. Y.
MAR 7 1956

Music: Menuhin Plays

Soloist in 2 Concertos
at Benefit Program

By ROSS PARMENTER

YEHUDI MENUHIN did the only playing he is going to do in New York this season at Carnegie Hall last night. His solitary appearance was an act of generosity, for he donated his services to play with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony in a concert for the benefit of the orchestra's pension fund.

The event raised \$10,000 for the fund because Dimitri Mitropoulos, the conductor, also donated his services and the event drew 2,500 persons, who paid premium prices for the tickets. It was the orchestra's second and last pension fund of the season.

Mr. Menuhin's appearance gave violinists a clean sweep of the pension concerts, for he did his finest playing. One gained the impression that the violinist was in a grave, somewhat withdrawn mood. This meant that in the Mendelssohn concerto, he was very serious and, as usual, his authority held the ensemble and the work's magical lightness and its spontaneous flow of melody.

In the Beethoven, though, the violinist's approach was much better suited to the work. By the time he got to the Largo he felt grateful for the somewhat impersonal, inward manner of playing.

It meant the slow movement emerged with the other-worldly poise of one who has obviously thought deeply about the things Beethoven pondered and then expressed in musical terms in this particular movement. It was the high point of the evening.

The applause at the end of the concert was prolonged and appreciative and the men of the orchestra joined in. When he came out for the fifth curtain call, the violinist didn't just bow. He surprised the audience by giving an encore—the Prelude to Bach's unaccompanied E major Partita.

MAR 15 1956
POST
New York, N. Y.

WORDS and MUSIC

By Harriett Johnson

Mitropoulos Leads 'Manon Lescaut'

"Manon Lescaut" was Puccini's first major success in the musical theater, and last night's performance at the Metropolitan Opera after five years' absence gave us reason to realize why.

The opera is suffused with a poetic glamor, like lovely Manon herself, but it has neither the lustiness of "Tosca" nor the variety of "Bohème."

It moves lyrically with continuous beauty, but its very tenderness makes it necessary to have the most sensitive re-creation.

Proving again that a conductor who withdraws mood, this makes an opera, in the Mendelssohn-Dimitri Mitropoulos version, as usual inspired and always, his authority held the ensemble and the work's magical lightness and its spontaneous flow of melody.

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New York City

From MAR 14 1956

VARIETY
New York, N. Y.

Marc Blitzstein, who wrote incidental music for both the Louis Calhern and Orson Welles "King Lear" productions on Broadway, has been commissioned by the N. Y. Philharmonic's Dimitri Mitropoulos to rework the music into a symphonic suite, titled "King Lear."

From MAR 16 1956

NEWS
New York, N. Y.

Met Revives 'Manon Lescaut' to No Avail

By DOUGLAS WATT

(Reprinted from yesterday's late editions)

You would think, after five years, the Met could present a better revival of Puccini's "Manon Lescaut" than was offered last night. This one was ham all the way around.

In the first place, I am afraid it is a bit late in her career for Eleanor Steber to be making her debut in the title role. Despite Miss Steber's few years, the impression she created was a little as though Jeanette MacDonald were doing "Naughty Marietta" for the first time.

And Richard Tucker, who also sang this role during the 1950-51 season, when "Manon Lescaut" was last staged by the Met, is no great shakes as Des Grieux. True, he is a forceful tenor, but he has not yet learned even the rudiments of acting, and his heroics last night were frequently ludicrous.

What's Left?

Well, what have we left? A bombastic Geronte by Fernando Corena, a surprisingly rich-voiced but inadequately performed Lescaut by Frank Guarrera, and that's about it in the

So we come now to Dimitri Mitropoulos, conducting his first Met performance of the opera. It was a vigorous one, to be sure. You couldn't miss the orchestral

THE NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 1956.

Opera: 'Manon Lescaut' Is Revived

Puccini's First Success
Offered at 'Met'

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

If you wish to observe a composer achieving mastery of the lyric theatre, go and hear Puccini's "Manon Lescaut." If you want to hear this opera as it should be done, with tension and sentiment, be sure to catch the revival that opened at the Metropolitan Opera House last night.

It is five years since "Manon Lescaut" was presented at the Metropolitan. From time to time this opera, which was Puccini's third and his first success, returns, stays briefly and departs.

The trouble, one would guess, is that it is in competition with "Bohème," "Tosca" and "Butterfly." Puccini's later and more fully realized operas, "Manon Lescaut" does not match these works as a consistent, sustained creation, but it has things worth cherishing—an abundance of tunes, a fresh point of view and, as the opera goes along, increasing dramatic power.

You have the feeling, as you listen to this opera, that you are sitting in on the miracle of artistic growth. The first act has pleasant details of local color and it introduces the main characters, but they do not absorb you. In the second act, there is Manon's aria, "In quelle trine morbide," in the touching, yielding Puccini style, and then a charming scene of a levee.

As this act comes to a close, the opera begins to move with intensity. In the third act, you have the full flowering of Puccini's dramatic style. There is no waste motion here. Every phrase serves to quicken the drama. Every effect is the right one.

With Dimitri Mitropoulos in charge as conductor, the freshness, charm and theatrical power of "Manon Lescaut" was strikingly conveyed. Mr. Mitropoulos is in his element in the opera house, and he appears to have a fondness as well as an affinity for Puccini. He conducts this opera as if it moved him, and he ends by moving his audience.

He had the orchestra play-



Richard Tucker and Eleanor Steber in "Manon Lescaut"

The Cast

MANON LESCAUT, opera in four acts by Giacomo Puccini; text by Praga, Oliva and Illica, based on the novel of the same name by the Abbé Prevost; sets and costumes by H. M. Crayon; staged by Herbert Graf; conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. At the Metropolitan Opera House.

Manon..... Eleanor Steber
Des Grieux..... Richard Tucker
Geronte..... Fernando Corena
Edmondo..... Thomas Hayward
Bailiff Master..... Alessio De Paolis
Musicians..... Rosalind Elias
Sergeant..... Calvin Marsh
Lampighter..... James McCracken
Captain..... Gail Hawkins

ing with rich vibrancy, which is eminently desirable for Puccini. The orchestral intermezzo preceding the third act was a sentimental little tone poem, and the third act built with poignancy and impact.

Only in the first act were things a bit unsatisfactory, for here Mr. Mitropoulos let his orchestra become too dominant, and there were moments when you could not hear the individual singers.

Eleanor Steber undertook her first Manon Lescaut at

the Metropolitan and did some lovely singing. There was some tentativeness in her characterization and musical approach, which began to disappear in the second-act duet. Richard Tucker sang Des Grieux with richness of tone and the proper Puccinian ardor. Frank Guarrera did as much as could be done with Lescaut and Fernando Corena was at home as Geronte. There were delightfully played and sung bits by Alessio De Paolis, Rosalind Elias and James McCracken.

The sets and costumes designed by H. M. Crayon in 1949 for a revival that year are still in good shape and have atmosphere. Herbert Graf's staging, once he got past the first act and the awkward use of the chorus, was effective.

Can "Manon Lescaut" catch hold this time? If this performance, with its color and vitality, cannot turn the trick, then audiences want only the familiar Puccini operas.

18 HERALD TRIBUNE, NEW YORK

'Manon Lescaut' Returns
To Met After Six Years

By Jay S. Harrison

'MANON LESCAUT'

METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE
Opera in four acts, music by Giacomo Puccini. The cast:

Manon..... Eleanor Steber
Des Grieux..... Richard Tucker
Geronte..... Fernando Corena
Edmondo..... Thomas Hayward
Bailiff Master..... Alessio De Paolis
Musicians..... Rosalind Elias
Sergeant..... Calvin Marsh
Lampighter..... James McCracken
Captain..... Gail Hawkins

Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos, staged by Herbert Graf; sets and costumes designed by H. M. Crayon in 1949; chorus master Kurt Adler.

Above all else there is one thing Puccini's "Manon Lescaut" demands of its singers—belief. To make a success in the opera you must believe in its explosions of sentiment, have faith in its melodic pronouncements, dote on its throbbing tunes. Any lack of personal involvement with the score and the work is betrayed.

With the exception of Richard Tucker, last night's Metropolitan Opera cast, which returned "Manon" to the repertory after an absence of six years, quite failed Puccini where he needed them most.

To begin with, the opera is far more difficult than the composer's "Tosca" and "Butterfly" because it is far less perfect work. As opposed, for example, to "La Bohème," which is indestructible, "Manon Lescaut" can be dealt killing blows. And a refusal to accept its passion at face value constitutes an attack at the heart of the opera from which it can never really recover. Hesitancy, timidity leave "Manon" tottering. On this occasion it tottered.

As Manon, Eleanor Steber was markedly out of her element. She made the proper sounds and many of the proper gestures, but her portrayal in the main was unconvincing, one-dimensional, a thing of cardboard. In the first act it seemed that she was holding back so as to make a greater effect with a superb dramatic craftsman, the second; but when that ar-

rived without a more profound show of vitality than had preceded it, her characterization began to grow dim, loose force and focus.

Frankly, I suspect that Miss Steber is too refined a soprano to claw her way into Manon's part and give it the zest it wants. The role cries out for a genuine Italian reading, with all the best and the worst that implies. Last night, Miss Steber brought reserve to a creature for whom reserve is anathema. As a result, her rendition no sooner jelled than it froze.

Miss Steber's faults, then, were mostly in the category of expressivity. She failed to project a living figure, thus she failed to persuade. Her singing, however, was of the same floating charm and delicacy that has this year graced her work. As a collection of well placed tones, it had color, precision and of all those attributes that have long since attached themselves to the soprano's name. Sadly, these were not enough. Her heroine was a pallid puppet.

On the other hand, Mr. Tucker was a wholly vigorous and bronze-voiced Des Grieux. When he let loose, he let loose with a vengeance and there was no questioning—on the basis of his performance—that the alternating agonies and joys of the part he was feeling at every moment. In addition, his tenor was clear as a giant bell and equally as resonant. In no other role of his, in fact, do I remember Mr. Tucker so vibrant, so virile, so full of unleashed power. For "Manon Lescaut" nothing less will do.

Frank Guarrera, as Lescaut, sang better than he has in many a long week, though he, too, seemed rather casual about turning Lescaut into more than a collection of operatic attitudes. And Fernando Corena, normally a superb dramatic craftsman, overlooked the sinister aspects



Eleanor Steber, who sang the role of Manon Lescaut last night at the Met.

of Geronte to the degree that they vanished altogether.

All in all, Dimitri Mitropoulos' conducting of the score was uneven and, despite an occasional blast of sonority, surprisingly dispassionate. Moreover, his tempi were pointedly erratic, some being faster than is necessary and others slower than is wise. His orchestra, too, frequently overwhelmed his cast members and made them seem to be mouthing rather than singing the words.

"Manon Lescaut," in sum, did not burn with its usual fire. No wonder. It was supplied with fuel in most respects dilute.

Robert Coleman's THEATRE:



'Manon Lescaut' Gets Bravos at Met

• Puccini's first major work had Bing hanging up 'All Sold Out' sign.

(Reprinted from yesterday's late editions.)

A capacity house, with standees to the limit, greeted the Metropolitan Opera's initial performance of "Manon Lescaut" this season on Wednesday evening. And they got their money's worth. If it wasn't notable for distinction, it was exciting.

From MAR 2 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

'Lescaut' Heard Again at the Met

A second performance of Puccini's "Manon Lescaut" was given at the Metropolitan last night, virtually to an accompaniment of loud applause. The Geronte was assumed by Lorenzo Alvaro, that being the only change from the previous cast. Surprisingly, Mr. Alvaro turned him in like something out of slapstick, which he most certainly is not. Geronte may be an old lecher, and he is ridiculous because of his elderly passion for the beautiful Manon. But he is not the fool, or worse, the cringing Parisian bumkin that Mr. Alvaro made of him.

Geronte never appeared to have the affluent man's authority, not in his orders to lackeys, nor in his exaggerated lover's behavior toward Manon. Of course, the basso sang the music well, as he always does. But his stage business failed to provide the light comic relief required, nor did it add cubits to Mr. Alvaro's stature as a caricature.

The other principals were Eleanor Steber, Manon; Richard Tucker, Des Grieux, and Frank Guarrera, Lescaut. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted the score flawlessly and always with true Puccinian expression. R. B.

This was Puccini's first opera of stature. It is packed with drama, and boasts some of the master's most stirring music. Based on the Abbe Prevost novel, "L'Histoire de Manon Lescaut," it has suspense and emotional impact. It also has pace and drive.

ONE REASON for its popularity is that it has to do with a timeless theme: the pretty gold-digger who would accept the money and jewels of an elderly sugar daddy, and cheat with a younger lover on the side. But the sinful life doesn't pay, for the double-dealer bites the dust in the end.

Richard Tucker won deserved bravos as Des Grieux, who, when his flame is condemned to exile, has enough loyalty to accompany her. Eleanor Steber, all things considered, was excellent in the title role. Though she hasn't the most powerful of voices, she sings with skill and feeling.

We liked Fernando Corena as Geronte, Manon's vengeful patron. His miming had style, and

From MAR 2 1956
HOME NEWS
New Brunswick, N. J.

Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor of CBS-Radio's broadcasts of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, thinks people are too relaxed when they listen to concert music. And he wants you to try listening hard. "A concert, to me," he says, "is not a place to relax. It does not come easy, like watching a football game or a burlesque show. But it is worth the effort, really to hear music."

From APR 1 1956
POST
New York, N. Y.

WORDS and MUSIC

By Harriett Johnson

Mitropoulos Leads Mahler's 'Third'

My friend and colleague, Winthrop Sargeant, music critic of the New Yorker, may have forgotten that he penned in 1940 one of the most pungent remarks ever written about Gustav Mahler.

"Mahler, in his time, like Mozart in his, used music to express the most poignant poetic experiences of contemporary humanity," wrote Sargeant in an article in "Chord and Discard."

While refreshing my memory concerning the Third Symphony, which hasn't been performed here since 1922, and which until last night I had never before heard, I came across this sentence. To me it sums up the genius of one of the most imaginative and exuberant creative talents of the late 19th century.

Dimitri Mitropoulos should be commended for bringing us the first performance in almost 35 years of Mahler's long Third Symphony, which is in six movements and takes about 75 minutes to play. His performance last night with the Philharmonic-Symphony in Carnegie Hall also employed the services of Beatrice Krebs, contralto, and the women's chorus of the Westminster Choir. The fourth movement has an alto solo taking its text from Nietzsche's "Also Spoke Zarathustra," while the fifth movement uses chorus and solo alto in a setting of a poem from the famous anthology of old German folk poetry, "Des Knaben Wunderhorn."

Krebs Excellent

The general inspiration of the work is the physical world of nature with a "Summer Midday Dream" as the inclusive title. The individual movements give us the moods of the day and night, with inspiration derived from both flowers and beasts. Probably, the most beautiful movement is the final section entitled "What Love Tells Me."

Now to the contemporary, realistic mind, all of this may sound a little corny, but we must remember that Mahler has been called "the last of the romantics." Furthermore, the inspiration of his music in performance is far beyond what the titles indicate.

This is not to say that upon first hearing, the "Third" rises to the heights of the Second or the Fourth Symphonies, but it is highly imaginative, contains much beauty, and is well worth reviving.

Miss Krebs, contralto soloist at Riverside Church, possesses an easily produced voice of lovely quality. She was an asset to the lofty proceedings. Mitropoulos outdid himself in the fifth and final adagio, creating a mood of nobility which combined beautiful sound with spiritual intensity. The work will be repeated Sunday at 2:30.

F. D.

Music

Met's 71st Season Struck High Note

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

With its performance of "Die Fledermaus" tonight, the Metropolitan winds up its 71st season in a brilliant flourish of pride and satisfaction.

On all major counts the season has been one of the most spectacular in recent years. Both artistically and financially, the results are highly gratifying to the management.

The box-office showing is "the biggest in memory," according to one official. Estimates show a 93 percent capacity for the entire season. For an institution recurrently faced with financial hazards, these are welcome vital statistics.

One a Week.

Repertory was a quite extensive one, 24 operas in 22 weeks, with Puccini, Verdi, Mozart and Richard Strauss the composers accounting for the heaviest returns in public response.

Interest in operas like "Tosca," "Boheme," "Der Rosenkavalier," and "The Magic Flute"—most of them in new productions—mounted to the point where the Met could not feasibly meet full public demand.

On the conducting side, the most exciting news of all was the continued brilliance of Dimitri Mitropoulos, the vivid reading of "The Magic Flute" by Bruno Walter and the debut of young Thomas Schippers.

Because of the sharp interest centering in these three podium personalities—not to mention their gifted colleagues—the Met's 71st season was something of a conductor's season.

I'd like to single out Mr. Mitropoulos for special mention—for the new vigor and

animation, the fresh vivacity and intensity he has brought to the Metropolitan. Electricity is in the air when he conducts.

Credit goes to Rudolf Bing and his tireless band of officials for bringing in new talent, brightening up decor, pressing the hunt for that vanishing species, the tenor, and continuing to ignore all grounds but merit in hiring singers.

24-Week Run Seen.

They have a giant organization to run, these watchful scholars, and they have the thanks of all for keeping it on such close schedule and in such working trim. Emergencies, caused by illness and other problems, have been met decisively.

Next year promises a 24-week season at the Met. The chances are that with air-conditioning improving the life expectancy at the present site—the season could be extended to 30 and perhaps 35 weeks.

The Metropolitan has proved once again how much New Yorkers want opera, how much they would like more of it, and how very much they know a good thing when they hear and see it. "Bravo!" To one and all.

Mahler 3rd Presented At Carnegie

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

A Gargantuan among concert scores, Mahler's Third Symphony measured its giant length in a brilliant performance by Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic Symphony in Carnegie Hall last night.

Mr. Mitropoulos' grasp of style and design, plus a strong sense of conviction in the genius of Mahler, made the performance one of the memorable events of the Philharmonic season.

The orchestra, put to a severe test by Mahler's highly individual scoring, honored both the conductor and the composer with a superb technical job, heightened by what seemed more than a borrowed fervor for the music.

Problematic Symphony.

This is problematic symphony in more ways than one. Its length alone—almost an hour and a half—would by itself explain why last night's was the first performance here in 34 years.

Besides being long, the symphony is complex, divided in style, and of a philosophical program requiring some attention on the part of the listener before the six movements fall into place with any semblance of coherence.

Mahler had in mind a scheme of reconciliation with the world around him. The theme is a sort of comradeship with the world of nature, the world of man, the world of God. It is the ultimate peace and security of belonging.

Chiefly of Time.

There is doubtless much too much of everything in this symphony, though chiefly of time. Yet, for all the overextended passages, the seemingly pointless repetitions, it is an arresting work, profound and sincere.

One brought away last night a sharp sense of Mahler's love of nature—not even Beethoven exceeded him there—and of his affirmation of life. The symphony ranges far and wide, and much of the ground covered is new and exciting.

Besides an enlarged Philharmonic, Mr. Mitropoulos had the added assistance of Beatrice Krebs, who handled the contralto solos beautifully, and the Westminster Choir, which also rose nobly to Mahler's message.

From APR 1 1956
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

Mahler's Third Heard in Carnegie Program

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

MAHLER'S Third Symphony was last done by the New York Philharmonic under Willem Mengelberg in 1922, and that was its American premiere. When Dimitri Mitropoulos undertook this work with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony at Carnegie Hall last night, he was conducting what amounted to a premiere for a new generation.

The Third is a long symphony even by Mahler's standards. It runs for almost an hour and a half, but it is neither difficult nor forbidding. Some of his technical procedures are familiar from frequent use by later composers—contrasts of the highs in the woodwinds with the lows in the brasses, the unprepared dissonances and the almost self-conscious evocation of archaism.

But the technical devices he used were not arrived at arbitrarily. They were the inevitable harmonic, contrapuntal, sonorous dress of his basic musical thought. And that thought was deeply sincere, whether it reached for the heavens or concerned itself with the simple things of nature.

Even if one is not a Mahlerite, one is bound to find touching and diverting things in this symphony. It is filled with song and exciting rhythms. The long first movement does not have the tightness of organization of the greatest symphonies, but there is something of interest going on most of the time. If the attention wanders a bit, it can return without too much loss in the thread. And the later movements, each more of a piece, are attractive evocations of mood.

Mr. Mitropoulos conducted the symphony with an appreciation of its structure and creative world. This was one of his best evenings with the Philharmonic this season. The orchestra played, on the whole,



Beatrice Krebs

The Program

PHILHARMONIC-SYMPHONY SOCIETY.
Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor; Beatrice Krebs, mezzo-contralto; Westminster Choir. At Carnegie Hall. Prelude and Fugue in D, Bach-Respighi Symphony No. 3.....Mahler

with vitality and color. The brasses, which have long, exposed passages to do, had a little trouble, but not so much as might have been expected. Beatrice Krebs, mezzo-soprano, sang glowingly, and a female chorus from the Westminster Choir contributed pleasantly.

There was one of those expansive Respighi orchestrations of Bach, the D major Organ Prelude and Fugue, to serve as a curtain raiser. But the evening was Mahler's and the Mahlerites'.

MUSIC

Mahler Third Impresses Under Mitropoulis

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Having heard Mahler's Third Symphony yesterday for the second time in four days—and never before that—I should like now to amplify the opinion I expressed Friday.

My review contained a few reservations concerning the length, size, and "seemingly pointless repetitions" of the symphony. On the whole, I thought it a powerful work.

As of yesterday's Philharmonic broadcast, I still think it a powerful work, but I confess my reservations are a good deal weaker. I found myself revising my opinion upward yesterday.

Profound Adagio.

I believe Mahler's Third—not heard in Carnegie in 34 years—a monument of the concert writing of the last hundred years. If profounder slow movements than the final Adagio exist in that period, outside Mahler, I hereby invite correction.

This enormous score—an hour and a half in length—is more than a symphony. It is almost a set of symphonies within symphonies, a concert by itself, a whole banquet of interrelated solo, choral, orchestra courses.

What an experience it is to live through this music—to follow its evolution of thought, its controlled growth of theme and variation, until its rise and fall and expansion of tone unfold like the limitless wonder of life itself.

Unlike Any Other.

Mahler's plan is unlike any other I know of. Even among his own irregular structures, the Third is unique in its contrasts of tension and rest, drama and commonplace, song and symphony, brevity and length.

Often, the music builds to a heady crest of whirling intensity, only to settle abruptly on a humdrum plane of repose. Sometimes, the passage is crowded to bursting; sometimes, it is sparse and hollow and distant.

It is as if Mahler wanted the low and the lofty to be equally accommodated in this symphony, the swift and the slow, the deep and the shallow—life on the run and life as an illusion of arrested motion.

'Bravos' for Mitropoulos.

I was glad Dimitri Mitropoulos and the orchestra were given the "bravos" that

MAESTROS AT 'MET'

Their Work Highlights Opera Season— Staging Experiments Need Boldness

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

WHAT kind of a season did the Metropolitan Opera have? At the box office, wonderful. Receipts were almost \$100,000 higher than in 1954-55 (expenses went up commensurately). The customer couldn't be wrong, could he?

There were evenings when he was right. Thanks to the domination of conductors with special sympathies for certain works in their charge, the Metropolitan Opera had some productions that were a joy musically.

Pierre Montoux in "The Tales of Hoffmann," Dimitri Mitropoulos in "Tosca," Rudolf Kempe in "Rosenkavalier" and Bruno Walter in "The Magic Flute" fulfilled the requirements of creative musicians. They brought a vital sense of style to these operas, illuminating the sounds that came from pit and stage. They conducted with a conviction that turned each of these pieces into a fresh and coherent experience.

Not every cast was of equal strength. And not every cast retained its leads in every performance. In an extensive repertory season, it is probably too much to expect that the best singers will be available for every repetition. Outstanding performers are scarce; their services are in demand throughout the world and can rarely be obtained for an unbroken stretch of more than twenty weeks.

When it was good, the Met was very good, indeed. It is difficult to imagine a "Tosca" with a stronger alignment than Tebaldi, Tucker and Warren. The "Rosenkavalier" with Della Casa, Stevens, Gueden and Edelmann was also felicitous in its principals. The replacements, particularly in "Tosca," were sometimes fortunate, sometimes not. In an ideal operatic world, casts that have rehearsed and appeared in the first performances of an opera would remain together, giving the production the advantages of flexibility and security.

Of the newcomers, there was a young American conductor, Thomas Schippers, who proved again that he had a flair for the lyric theatre. His competent work at the City Center and with the Menotti opera on Broadway was confirmed by his "Don Pasquale" at the Met. For this bubbling piece he had a sprightly ensemble led by Peters, Valletti, Guarnera and Correna.

New Voices

There were not many new singers. Tito Gobbi, Italian baritone, and Hermann Uhde, German baritone, were admirable in their knowledge of routine, if not the possessors of extraordinary voices. Two Italian tenors, Gianni Poggi and Mario Torcia, were disappointing. The former had a fresh lyric voice but as much temperament as a stick; the latter was simply not ready for a major opera house. A third, Daniele Barioni, was the most promising, and a young American, Albert Da Costa, who had joined the company the season before, indicated he would be helpful, particularly in the Wagner works.

In a repertory of more than twenty operas it is to be expected that there will be dull performances. The Met did not disappoint. The fact that other major opera houses offer routine productions does not excuse the Met. It has the prestige to insist on the best. It should not tolerate anything but the finest conductors, and there are improvements it could make in its singing personnel.

Hardest to forgive is carelessness in mounting a work once done brilliantly. In Alfred Lunt's staging Mozart's "Così fan tutte!"

LASZLO VARGA PLAYS

'Cello Performs With Own Orchestra at Carnegie Hall

Laszlo Varga, the accomplished first cello of the Philharmonic-Symphony, appeared as soloist with his own orchestra Saturday night in Carnegie Hall.

Prokofiev's First Cello Concerto in E minor, Op. 58, is certainly not that master's most exciting work. Mr. Varga played the solo part with unfailing musicianship, fleet fingers, and an accuracy of intonation that was often a genuine joy to the ear. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted with apparent sympathy for the music and the subtle glints of color the score affords.

The program opened with Ottorino Respighi's "orchestral interpretation" of Bach's early D major organ Prelude and Fugue. It ended with the D major Symphony No. 2 of Brahms. E. D.

Music

Prokofieff Cello Co.

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Brilliant high point of last night's Philharmonic concert in Carnegie Hall was the American premiere of Prokofieff's Second Cello Concerto.

Much of the brilliance was the work of Soviet cellist Mstislav Rostropovich, whose phenomenal artistry was again on view, and of Dimitri Mitropoulos, who turned the supporting orchestra into a collective virtuoso.

Let us credit Prokofieff with the rest. This is a magnificent score, humming with life and variety, compactly put together, and a gold mine of precious themes and episodes.

Complementary Theme.

Between them, Mr. Mitropoulos and annotator Irving Kolodin have appraised this score as a basic restatement of Prokofieff's First Cello Concerto, which was heard Saturday night. It is now a sort of alternate, rather than revision or replacement.

The general scheme of theme and sequence are the same, but the Second Concerto is the fruit of Prokofieff's later concern for clear-

er and more flexible writing for both orchestra and solo cello.

Mr. Rostropovich was supreme master of all the concerto's moods—now the exciting executant, now the refined phrase-maker, now the poet, at all times an artist at the service of the composer and his music.

Mr. Mitropoulos conducted as if once again he were at the heart of the composition, grasping and controlling its very life, allotting each part exactly what it needed of energy and function.

New Flute Concerto.

Also billed last night was the New York premiere of "Flute Concerto" by Virgil Thomson, whose diverting opera, "The Mother of Us All," I was glad to reacquaint myself with Monday night at the Phoenix Theater.

As an avowed "bird piece," twitter with fine-feathered agitation, the Concerto brought out the extraordinary merits of the Philharmonic's first flutist, John Wummer. The rest of the score I thought rather glossy and grounded.

A beguiling arrangement of Debussy's "L'Isle Joyeuse" by Bernardino Molinari made a welcome change from the usual program-openers. The weighty note of tradition was sounded with Brahms' Second Symphony.

Spivakovsky Plays With Philharmonic

The eminence of Tossy Spivakovsky was amply demonstrated in his playing of the Sibelius Violin Concerto over the week-end with the Philharmonic-Symphony, Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting. He was soloist at the Saturday night and Sunday afternoon concerts in Carnegie Hall.

Completed in its present form 50 years ago, the concerto represents the composer's only work for solo instrument and orchestra. In its elemental, Nordic, and in the final movement baroque splendor, the composition remains one of the great works of the repertory. Spivakovsky performed it with an appreciation of its melodic sumptuousness and its rhythmic fascination if not always with the impassioned ardor and sweep inherent in the music. On the whole, however, this was an excellent rendition. Mitropoulos and ensemble cooperated with sympathy and high skill. H. J.

MUSIC

The Philharmonic

By PAUL HENRY LANG

CARNEGIE HALL
Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; soloist, Mstislav Rostropovich, cello. The program:
"L'Isle Joyeuse".....Debussy-Molinari
Concerto for Flute, Strings and Percussion
(first N. Y. performance), soloist, John Wummer, flute.....Virgil Thomson
Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, No. 2 (first performance in the U. S.), Prokofieff
Symphony No. 2 in D major.....Brahms

Last night's concert of the Philharmonic began, as usual, at 8:45, but it was another half hour before the audience could settle down and enjoy itself. Mr. Mitropoulos began, with a light-weight Debussy piano piece duly blown up, that is, orchestrated, by an Italian conductor who had nothing better to do. It was a pretty poor and useless offering that lasted only a few minutes. Then the large orchestra trooped out, because the Thomson concerto uses only strings and percussion. This is bad program making and bad orchestral logistics.

Mr. Thomson's flute concerto (1953) completely baffled me. It surely is an unusual specimen of this venerable genre, for it begins with the cadenza—the flute playing all by itself. Upon reading the program notes I discovered that the cadenza was actually the first movement; well, I stick to my own impressions.

The second movement I found quite monotonous with its contrived harmonic scheme, while the third, full of rather aimless runs and whatnots, struck me as mortally fatigued music. In a word, this is not one of Mr. Thomson's good pieces.

Mr. Wummer, a distinguished artist, played with his wonted skill and beautiful flute tone. He has my sincere admiration for remembering his part.

The Prokofieff concerto for cello, No. 2, turned out to be a reworking of his cello concerto No. 1. Since this is a thoroughgoing revision done by the composer late in life, the work must be considered a new one. It retains a rather youthful spirit, expressed in a romantic-Russian tone that is quite engaging for



Mstislav Rostropovich, cello soloist last night.

it is entirely free of the bawling and trashing usually associated with the moody Russians of the romantic era.

While perhaps not a great work, the concerto is a nice piece. It has good tunes, it is well scored, offers a grateful part to the soloist, the melodic writing is always tasteful and Prokofieff throws into the game plenty of wit and humor. It does seem a little long, though, considering the rhapsodic manner of construction.

Mr. Rostropovich played the solo part with impressive artistry. He is the "musician first" type of virtuoso, consequently he went to work on the concerto without acrobatics, excessive rubatos, oversize vibrato, etc. The public sensed the devotion and gave him an ovation.

Mr. Mitropoulos did not have much to do in the Thomson work, and did his best in the Prokofieff, but more than once he fell behind the batter. This sort of music calls for split-second precision and that was not forthcoming except in spots. The evening ended with Brahms' Second Symphony.

Music: A Soviet Soloist

Rostropovich Plays
With Philharmonic

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

MSTISLAV ROSTROPOVICH, the 'cellist, is a Soviet "traveling salesman" whose merchandise is welcome in the Western World. As soloist with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony at Carnegie Hall last night, he was responsible for drawing one of the larger audiences of the season. Once again, as in his solo recital, his wares encompassed brilliance of technique, a singing tone and, best of all, searching musicianship.

Mr. Rostropovich's vehicle was Prokofieff's Cello Concerto No. 2, Op. 125, billed as a United States premiere. Actually this concerto is an extensive rewrite of the Cello Concerto No. 1, also in E minor. Dimitri Mitropoulos, who conducted the rarely played No. 1 last Saturday night, noticed the resemblance and reported his findings to Irving Kolodin, the Philharmonic program annotator.

One gathers that Prokofieff, in preparing this version not long before his death, tightened and sharpened the earlier concerto. He dedicated the new product to Mr. Rostropovich who, although then only in his middle twenties, was the Soviet Union's most distinguished 'cellist.

The concerto, like many other Prokofieff pieces, uses folk-like material with a whip-like sardonicism. There are many more places than in earlier Prokofieff works of this character where the solo instrument and the orchestra are allowed to sing broadly. It may be that this is how the composer felt about his themes; it may also be that under the lash of decrees from on high Prokofieff found it prudent to be easily accessible part of the time.

For the soloist there is every sort of problem and opportunity. He has two cadenzas in the middle movement, each with its invitations to technical display. He has also some broad-gauged lyrical passages. Mr. Rostropovich accomplished everything required of him, dashing off multiple stops and delicately colored runs and articulating every note even in the highest positions with clarity. Deep down on the C string and way up on the A, he never failed to make the 'cello sing.

Mr. Mitropoulos conducted the Philharmonic in energetic support of the soloist, and the audience gave all concerned a rousing reception.

Rostropovich Plays Prokofieff '2nd'

By HARRIETT JOHNSON

Mstislav Rostropovich may have an unpronounceable first name, but his cello playing is much easier to take. Thus, though the 29-year-old Soviet artist looks more like a young professor than a virtuoso, his playing gives him away. A suave master of his instrument, he plays the unwieldy golden box with the ease of a fiddler.

As soloist with the Philharmonic-Symphony last night in Carnegie Hall, Rostropovich played the so-called "Second" Concerto of the late Serge Prokofieff, who died in 1933. From Irving Kolodin's program notes we learn, however, that this work, reportedly completed only shortly before the composer's death, is, in fact, a rewritten version of his First Cello Concerto, first performed in 1939.

Though the original work is seldom played, it happened to be performed last Saturday by the Philharmonic with Mitropoulos conducting. The latter, who naturally had carefully studied both works, verifies Kolodin's opinion for those of us not familiar with both pieces.

Apparently, Prokofieff, using the same musical ideas, has improved the scoring and writing for the solo instrument in the second version. The result is a long but impressive piece, which has folk-like themes attesting to his ancestry, developed with singing eloquence. There are several piquant rhythmic sections which remind us of other Prokofieff music of similar verve; the slow movement of the Third Piano Concerto; "Peter and the Wolf"; portions of "The Love for Three Oranges," to mention a few.

The work closes with a theme and variations which abounds in rhythmic and melodic fascination. It is a provocative addition to the limited cello repertory, and should be popular with audiences since its style doesn't disturb established ear habits.

An odd piece by Virgil Thomson, "Concerto for Flute, Strings and Percussion" preceded the Prokofieff concerto, with John Wummer, solo flutist of the Philharmonic, officiating. Thomson calls it a "bird piece," and he is right. To like this music one must like the species more than well. The first movement is played by the unaccompanied flute. As the composer suggests, it might be called a "Nightingale's Meditation." Personally, I would prefer the real thing. Preferably, in its native habitat.



John Wummer

The Program

PHILHARMONIC-SYMPHONY SOCIETY.
Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor; Mstislav Rostropovich, cello; John Wummer, flutist; At Carnegie Hall.
"L'Isle Joyeuse".....Debussy-Molinari
Concerto for Flute, Strings and Percussion (first New York performance).....Virgil Thomson
"Cello Concerto No. 2 (first U. S. performance).....Prokofieff
Symphony No. 2.....Brahms

Fortunately, there was the Brahms Second Symphony to provide a rewarding conclusion to the program. The two pieces preceding the Prokofieff were not very edifying. Why should Mr. Mitropoulos seek out Molinari's noisy orchestration of Debussy's "L'Isle Joyeuse" when there are so many short, charming overtures around? And Virgil Thomson's Flute Concerto is music without a vestige of creative energy, though it gave John Wummer, the soloist, a chance to show his stuff.

Music: First Symphony

Reginald Hall, Civil Engineer, Has Work
Played in Premiere by Philharmonic

BEGINNER'S luck is hardly enough to explain Reginald Hall's success in having his first attempt at symphonic music introduced by the Philharmonic-Symphony at Carnegie Hall Saturday night.

The honor is all the more striking when we learn that Mr. Hall is a 30-year-old practicing civil engineer. He has trained himself in two fields and now, having won the George Gershwin Memorial Award of \$1,000 and a Philharmonic premiere, he is hesitating between two careers.

Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted the score, which did not sound like beginner's work. Although it is a short piece, it is built on broad lines. It has the expansive emotional flow of some late romantic music. Yet its harmonic vocabulary is of today and so is its effective orchestral dress. It was well worth hearing.

The program's soloist was Tossy Spivakovsky in the Sibelius Violin Concerto. His performance was essentially an intimate one, which meant that he was most eloquent in the slow middle movement. Here his warm, velvet tone and sensitive molding of melodic line were beautifully suited to the nostalgic mood of the music.

In the first movement, Mr. Spivakovsky was a sensitive musician, although there were passages where a bigger or brighter tone would have made a better foil to Sibelius' dark orchestra. The finale's brilliance by being rushed.

Mr. Mitropoulos ended with Schumann's entrancing "Spring" Symphony No. 1. He respected Schumann's wish for a leisurely unfolding of the final movement. But elsewhere the conductor's instinct for dramatic sweep and excitement led him roughshod over many of the score's most beguiling details. E. D.

Music

It Was Springtime In Carnegie Hall, Too

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

It was just as sunny a spring day inside Carnegie Hall yesterday as it was outside.

By an amiable coincidence of nature and art the Philharmonic program contained the "Spring Symphony" of Schumann.

While brightly attired groups ambled by Carnegie to and from Central Park, Philharmonic patrons promenade through the enchanting strains of Schumann.

Broad Sunlight.

Dimitri Mitropoulos and the orchestra were in eager form for the afternoon jaunt, and the themes and harmonies blossomed in a broad sunlight of tone.

Sibelius' Violin Concerto may not be exactly a hymn to spring, but it was good to celebrate its 50th year in America on such a fine day.

One was reminded, too, of Sibelius' love of outdoor life, his search for the "pedal point of nature," his symphonic sense of landscape.

High Adventure.

So perhaps it was as good a concerto as any other to hear in such weather, music of the open road and high adventure.

Yesterday's soloist was Tossy Spivakovsky, a fiddler with plenty of technic and drive and a beguiling tone. Mr. Mitropoulos gave him excellent support.

This concerto is no virtuoso's paradise. There is challenge for the artist and musician, but next to nothing for the showman. It is not a "display piece."

Toes Line Nicely.

Mr. Spivakovsky took a few liberties of rhythm that might be pardoned him in such treacherous terrain. On

the whole, he toed the stylistic line nicely.

By design or chance, the head of Sibelius made by the Finnish sculptor Vaino Altonen was back in the Carnegie corridor over the weekend—a loan of Carleton-Smith.

Some months ago a plaster cast of the head was smashed in an overflow of high spirits from a jazz concert.

The aficionados will find Sibelius a little harder to demolish the next time. The grim bald head is now in bronze.

DAILY WORKER

New York, N. Y.
APR 24 1956
The Soviet cellist Mstislav Rostropovich once again enriched a packed Carnegie Hall last Thursday night with a beautiful performance of Prokofieff's Concerto for Cello and Orchestra No. 2, backed by the N. Y. Philharmonic under Dimitri Mitropoulos. This was the first performance of the work in the U. S.

The youthful Rostropovich is a vastly gifted musician, as those who heard him in his solo recital on April 4 had already discovered. His technique is practically flawless, and he always projects music with glowing sensitivity. There is no prima donna-ish bellowing here, no display of technique for its own sake. Doubtless he ranks with the finest.

The Prokofieff concerto, listed as No. 2, Op. 125, is actually the second rewriting of the concerto No. 1, first begun in 1933, and finished in 1938. As the result of controversy and criticism, some changes were made soon after the initial performance, and it was rewritten once again two or three years before the composer's death (1953). The new version is dedicated to Rostropovich.

Prokofieff certainly must have thought a lot of this piece to go to the trouble of revising it not only once, but twice. On first hearing (and from way up in the peanut gallery) it gave the impression of a Japanese landscape: expansive, flat areas, out of which suddenly rise striking, beautiful and sometimes fantastic hills and mountains. The first movement, broad and lyrical in feeling, works up to a dramatic mood and then subsides again at the end.

The second movement is very long and complex, containing scherzo-like moods, folk-like melodies and a couple of brilliant cadenzas for the solo instrument. (The audience applauded after this one.)

The last movement, a sharp, concise theme and variations, bubbles with Prokofieff's famous sardonic wit. However, it must be reported that many persons were somewhat disappointed; and although the master hand is always evident, it was felt that this is not one of his most distinguished creations.

Before commenting on the performance itself, there is another characteristic of the work which should be pointed out, and that is the very extensive use of the orchestra. It has so much to do, in fact, that it is almost on an equal par with the soloist.

The work has been listed at times as "Symphony-Concerto" for cello and orchestra, and this seems a more accurate description.

Of course, this poses a difficult problem of balance in performance, and although the conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos, is no doubt partly to blame for allowing the orchestra to sometimes drown out the cello, nevertheless, the question arises as to whether this piece was the best vehicle to display Rostropovich's particular talents. It needs a cellist with a big tone, and this is the one quality he does not possess. However, his impeccable musicianship overrode this shortcoming, and he was enthusiastically acclaimed by the audience.

The rest of the program included an intricately orchestrated version of Debussy's "L'Isle Joyeuse," a rapid concerto for flute, strings and percussion by Virgil Thomson (expertly played by John Wummer) and, except for the last movement, a rather too "comfortable" interpretation of the Brahms' Second Symphony.

JOHN MEER.

Philharmonic-Symphony Gets Warm Reception From Student Audience



Partial view of the Julia Richman High School auditorium, where high school students from the five boroughs heard a special concert by the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. The concert was sold out.

From APR 27 1956
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music Series Ends At Carnegie

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI.
Philharmonic patrons were treated to a banquet of brilliance at the final Thursday concert of the season in Carnegie Hall last night.

Feature of the program was an imposing performance of Rachmaninoff's Second Symphony, a work heard none too often that should now begin a brisk new life thanks to Dimitri Mitropoulos.

This was just the reading needed to re-establish a symphonic masterpiece of Rachmaninoff's long overshadowed by his piano concertos. Wags may insist the Second Symphony needs a piano; it needs only a performance like last night's.

It is a score teeming with warm, haunting melodies, richly colored, and in a state of almost constant agitation. There is nothing strikingly original about the symphony, but what vivid commotion it works up!

There was much else of high virtuosity on last night's bill—the reading, for instance, of Ravel's "Alborada del Gracioso" and the performance of Saint-Saens' Third Violin Concerto by Zino Francescatti.

From APR 27 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Philharmonic At Carnegie Hall

Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra gave their last Thursday concert of the season last evening at Carnegie Hall. Zino Francescatti was soloist in the Saint-Saens Violin Concerto No. 3, and the remainder of the program comprised Ravel's "Alborada del Gracioso" and the Symphony No. 2 by Rachmaninoff.

Regardless of what one's personal reactions to such a conservative program might be, there could be no doubt of the virtuosity involved in its performance nor of the magnificent musicianship that lifted even the music's more commonplace moments to a level of intellectual interest. Mr. Francescatti's Stradivarius sang one long, grand song—warm, throaty and brilliant by turns—so charged with personalism that resemblance to a prima donna seemed continuously in the foreground. Mr. Mitropoulos, too, reigned as a virtuoso on his podium.

It was, in short, an intelligent, creative interpretation, and distinctly refreshing. L. T.



Autograph hunters besiege Mr. Mitropoulos after the concert. The girl is wearing a Julia Richman senior class hat.

From APR 27 1956
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

Music: Violin Soloist

Francescatti Is Heard With Philharmonic

By ROSS PARMENTER
ZINO FRANCESCATTI was the soloist last night with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony in Carnegie Hall. Because illness forced the violinist to cancel his February engagement with the Philadelphia Orchestra, this was his first orchestral appearance here this season.

The work he played was Saint-Saens' Third Violin Concerto. In the opening movement, his playing sometimes had an unwonted roughness, but he was in the vein by the time he came to the Andantino. He played its pastoral-like melody with a rare combination of simple sweetness and refinement of taste. And in the finale he played with the freedom and boldness of a master.

This is the violinist's fourteenth season of playing with the Philharmonic, and he must be popular with the men in the orchestra. They applauded him as warmly as the audience. The works for orchestra alone that Dimitri Mitropoulos led were Ravel's "Alborada del Gracioso" and Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 2. The former was the weak spot of the program, for its quiet sections tended to fall apart while the climaxes were noisy. But with the Rachmaninoff Mr. Mitropoulos was in his element. He played it for all it was worth. Its brooding passages, its outbursts of turbulence, its big sweeping romantic melodies and its sea-like surge and ebb were all dramatically projected in a well-graded performance that traversed a big curve from the somber opening to the stirring realized finale.

The concert was the last Thursday program of the season, and many of the subscribers filed from the hall with a sense of leave-taking.



Zino Francescatti

CLASSICAL MUSIC ENCHANTS PUPILS

High School Appearance by Philharmonic Is Cheered by Rapt Audience

A capacity audience of high school pupils from the five boroughs yesterday heard the New York Philharmonic-Symphony under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos. The concert was held at Julia Richman High School, Sixty-seventh Street and Second Avenue.

It was the second of two special student concerts by the orchestra this season. Like the first, which took place under Thomas Schippers' direction at Prospect Heights High School, Brooklyn, yesterday's concert was sold out and numerous ticket orders could not be filled.

Yesterday's program, chosen jointly by Peter J. Wilhousky, director of music for the Board of Education, and Mr. Mitropoulos, offered the Haydn "Drum Roll" Symphony, Bizet's "Child's Play" Suite and Liszt's "Les Preludes."

The young listeners followed the music with rapt attention, applauding between movements of the Haydn symphony in good-natured defiance of a faculty member who had raised his hand for silence.

The "Call to Arms" section of "Les Preludes" evoked the greatest enthusiasm. Youngsters could be seen in all parts of the auditorium beating time with rolled-up programs to the lively trumpet fanfares.

At the end of the concert Mr. Mitropoulos was greeted with whistles and squeals of the sort usually associated with a basketball victory.

Following the concert, a tea-reception was held at the home of Mrs. John Straus, 941 Park Avenue. She is co-chairman of the Philharmonic Young People's Committee and the function was in honor of Mr. Mitropoulos, Mr. Schippers, Wilfrid Pelletier and Franco Autori.

From APR 30 1956
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music

Mitropoulos Ends Carnegie Hall Season

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI.

To an obligato of warm and grateful applause, the New York Philharmonic closed its 114th season in Carnegie Hall yesterday afternoon.

The concert was the 5577th in the organization's fruitful and brilliant history, this season having added 147 concerts to the grand total, 27 of them on tour and, before that, five exciting weeks in Europe.

The leave-taking was especially significant for Dimitri Mitropoulos, who has closed

From APR 1956
MUSICAL LEADER
CHICAGO ILL

New York

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With the Orchestras

Bruno Walter brought his incomparable magic to the Philharmonic-Symphony during the first two week-ends in March, when he conducted the Mozart Festival programs. We have only the highest praise for these concerts and we are grateful not only for the beauty of the music but also for the opportunity of hearing this splendid symphony orchestra in such good form. We have rarely heard the Philharmonic-Symphony play with such fine cohesion, sweetness of tone, refinement and warmth. Wonderful Myra Hess played the Piano Concerto in G major (K. 453) on March 1 and 2, and the one in D minor (K. 466) on March 4. With Dame Myra and Mr. Walter, there was a true meeting of minds. The music was performed on a becomingly modest scale, but what a variety of color was achieved within that self-imposed framework. The orchestra performed Symphonies No. 29 and 41 (Jupiter) on the first two occasions, and No. 29 and 39 on the third. On March 8, 9, and 11, the program featured the "Requiem" in D minor (K. 626). The soloists were Irmgard Seefried, Jennie Tourel, Leopold Simoneau and William Warfield, and the Westminster Choir (Dr. John Finley Williamson, director) also participated. If one were to single out the performance of any single artist, it would destroy the impression one had of complete unity among all elements, with Bruno Walter in complete command of all these wondrous forces. It was indeed a privilege to hear this superlative offering from the gifted, generous hands of the phenomenal conductor, and from the warm depths of his soul. These programs opened with fine readings of the Symphony in G minor, No. 25, "Et Incarnatus Est" from the Mass in C minor, with Miss Seefried as soloist.

The Philharmonic's Feb. 23 concert, under Dimitri Mitropoulos, featured the world premiere of Leon Kirchner's Piano Concerto. The product of a man who has much to say, and knows how to say it, the work impressed us as a serious contribution worthy of further hearings—although the composer,

who doubled as soloist, did not appear to be his own most sympathetic interpreter. Strauss' "Alpine" Symphony, a long descriptive composition containing some brilliant Straussian orchestration, constituted a fruitful object for the conductor's dramatic flair, and was given a dedicated reading. . . . Guido Cantelli began his four week stint with the Philharmonic-Symphony, March 15. The program included the first New York performance of Creston's "Dance Overture," a work that is delightful and pleasant; Schumann's Fourth Symphony; and Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto, with soloist Wilhelm Backhaus at his best in a strong, masterly exhibition.

From APR 7 1956
POST
New York, N. Y.

WORDS and MUSIC

By Harriett Johnson

Francescatti Scores at Carnegie

The Philharmonic-Symphony's "Violin Festival," as some of us have termed the abundance of fiddler-soloists ever recurring this season in Carnegie Hall, entered its final week last night with memorable excitement. Zino Francescatti was the soloist playing the Saint-Saens Third Concerto in B Minor with effulgent beauty of tone. He colored the sound with subtle blends of loud and soft, tinged by a musical imagination which was at once profound, communicative and intensely alive.

There are those who deprecate this concerto, lamenting its easy melodic grace. To this listener there is much to be said for it on a spring program, particularly now when its effortless song-like exuberance makes a good substitute for a season which forgot to arrive. When played with the superb mastery of so eminent an artist as Francescatti, admirably assisted by Mitropoulos and his ensemble, the positive aspects are considerably heightened.

Rachmaninoff's long, but consistently appealing Second Symphony comprised the final half of the evening. Its style is romantically nostalgic in the first and third movements; pulsating with rhythmic momentum in the second and fourth. The vigor of the two latter portions cascades furiously, combining sophisticated technique with elemental Russian inspiration.

Mitropoulos conducted the work with an impassioned sweep, making the most of its melodic richness and its rhythmic spontaneity.

The "Alborada del Gracioso" by Ravel, which opened the program, sounded too bombastic for its picturesque, atmospheric character.

From APR 29 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Philharmonic Season Dominated by Mozart

By FRANCIS D. PERKINS

What with the celebration of his 200th anniversary, it was a foregone conclusion that Mozart would be the champion in the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra's repertory during the season which opened Oct. 20 and closes this afternoon. The immortal Wolfgang Amadeus was represented by twenty-two works, which had fifty performances, not counting the Young People's series, at Carnegie Hall.

Beethoven, yielding his customary championship, was a fairly remote second, with ten works played twenty-eight times. In number of works played, the next in line were Tchaikovsky with seven; Brahms, Saint-Saens and Prokofiev with six each; Wagner, Richard Strauss and Weber with five, and Schumann and Shostakovich with four each.

In all, the orchestra will have given 120 concerts here under ten conductors by this afternoon, of which 100 were in the regular subscription series. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted forty-seven performances.

one of the most productive chapters of his career with his combined achievements at Carnegie Hall and the Metropolitan Opera House.

Strong and Exuberant.

The fervent applause following his strong and exuberant reading of Brahms' Second Symphony was testimonial of the public's faith in him as a symphonic guide of firm conviction and broad culture.

The high level of performance was maintained through a repetition of last Thursday's "Alborada del Gracioso" of Ravel and Prokofiev's Second Violin Concerto, with Zino Francescatti as soloist.

If Mr. Francescatti was even better yesterday than he was in Saint-Saens' B Minor Concerto Thursday, it was only because the Prokofiev work offered the sharper challenge, in style and technique, of the two.

Stunning Stuff.

This is stunning stuff, this 20-year-old score of the late Russian master—bristling with dazzling themes amid a restless, vibrant web of color

and rhythm. It is romantic modernism at its provocative best.

Mr. Francescatti's tone wove through the gathering stress like a voice bewitched, chanting now of remote mystery, now of pensive calm, now of a bustling world of strange stirrings. He has certainly earned his high rank, this Franco-Italian.

And Mr. Mitropoulos was right there beside him, in a realm of symphonic magic that one would be tempted to call his first home in music except that he has so many other equally inviting homes.

THE PHILHARMONIC—WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT AND WHY

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

THE Philharmonic-Symphony Society of New York does not have too many reasons for pride in its 114th season, ending today. It does have many reasons for concern.

During the 1955-56 season the New York Philharmonic-Symphony rarely sounded like an orchestra of the first order. Its programs lacked an over-all design and were often badly balanced, being either top-heavy or flimsy. Its policy on conductors remained static, and its policy on soloists was planned maladroitly, if it was planned at all. Attendance, though no figures have been published, appeared to fall off; the deficit is bound to be hefty again.

Orchestras, like any other organizations, can have poor years. One unsatisfactory season need not cause alarm; it may be written off as unlucky and forgiven. But the Philharmonic's prestige has been waning in recent years, and the 1955-56 season seems to this observer another step in a process of deterioration. Unless an objective, thoroughgoing diagnosis is undertaken and a candid prognosis laid out, the orchestra's affairs may very well worsen.

Such a situation must not be allowed to occur. The New York Philharmonic-Symphony is America's oldest orchestra, the third most venerable in the world. For generations it has been a bellwether of American music. Through its national broadcasts, recordings and tours, it has had a profound influence on symphonic standards and development in this country. Its history and tradition have been among the shining ornaments of the nation's cultural life. Wherever great music is known and loved, across the borders and overseas, this orchestra has won respect and admiration in years gone by.

Its importance to New York cannot be overestimated. It is the metropolis' one major ensemble with a long, full season. Although there are annual visits by leading out-of-town orchestras and inviting performances by smaller groups, the New York Philharmonic-Symphony serves as the center and fulcrum of our live orchestral music. It is vital to the city's pre-eminence as a musical center, just as is the Metropolitan Opera. It is—and should be—one of the great showpieces of New York.

The compelling force of these considerations has led this department to make an exhaustive analysis of the Philharmonic's problems. In addition to normal critical attention to performances, there have been careful studies of programs and of conductor and soloist assignments. There have been talks with members of the orchestra, with eminent musicians who have appeared as guests and with loyal listeners, both professional musicians and laymen.

The ultimate findings are this department's alone. They are designed to be constructive. If we were not convinced that a healthy and respected Philharmonic is of the utmost significance to New York and the country, we would not be devoting so much space to the subject.

What is wrong with the Philharmonic? And why?

1 THE ORCHESTRA

On a sheer technical level its standards have fallen. Week in and week out, it does not sound as impressive as the Philadelphia and Boston Symphony Orchestras. Compared with those two, or with the London Philharmonia, which was here last fall, it is distinctly second class.

The orchestra does not play with precision. Attacks and releases, which are hallmarks of a smartly trained ensemble of the first rank, are often careless. The texture of chords is frequently raveled, with upper, lower and middle voices in inept balance. The weight of the separate instrumental choirs is not always neatly poised, and individual soloists within the ensemble play with varying effectiveness. The orchestral tone has a tendency to coarseness; the old sheen and lustre are disappearing. A pianissimo of shimmering transparency is rarely heard, and fortissimos are apt to be hard driven.

There have been exceptional occasions this season when the orchestra played glowingly and brilliantly. But we have a right to expect such performances most of the time. They do not happen by accident. An orchestra is like a finely trained athlete; it must be kept in the best competitive trim from the beginning of the season to the end. Careless procedures foment bad habits, and then great effort or burning inspiration is needed to restore a measure of the quality that has been dissipated.

Certain weaknesses have become noticeable in the orchestra, but it should not be difficult to clean them up. Even as it stands, this group of men could be turned into a fine ensemble. But drastic changes in approach are needed. If they are not made soon, it will become harder and harder to recoup. Demoralization is setting in. The players admit as much. Ask them why and you will get these answers: They sense the relative decline of the orchestra's prestige and are unhappy.

Some of the men believe that



The Philharmonic-Symphony rehearses under the leadership of Dimitri Mitropoulos, extreme upper left, its musical director. The orchestra's 114th season ends today.

favorites are being played in the handling of individuals in the orchestra.

Some are miserable because divisions among the men on a basis of nationality and religion are appearing.

Many are resentful because the Philharmonic does not have as many weeks of employment as the Boston, for example.

Some feel that their liaison with the management is defective.

Are these and other complaints well-founded? It is hard to say. Orchestra players, like soldiers, are experts at griping. It is clear, however, that the morale of the orchestra needs improving. The Philharmonic does not have anything like the esprit de corps of ensembles like the Boston and Philadelphia.

2 THE CONDUCTORS

Because Dimitri Mitropoulos is musical director and principal conductor, he bears the heaviest responsibility. He is a serious, dedicated musician, with strong sympathies for the repertoire of the late nineteenth century and for certain areas of twentieth-century music. His flair is for dramatic music, and he can communicate an almost feverish intensity. With a Richard Strauss, Mahler, Schoenberg or Berg work at the Philharmonic or a Puccini opera at the Metropoli-



Guido Cantelli, regular guest conductor in recent seasons.

tan he can do an outstanding job.

Such virtues, applied to classic and early romantic music, become failings, for these works need proportion, delicacy, occasional repose. In short, Mr. Mitropoulos is not at his best in an important area of the orchestra's repertoire. As musical director, he is obliged to conduct a lot of concerts and to cover diverse styles and epochs. He is not the first conductor to be overmatched by the requirements of the Philharmonic post.

Mr. Mitropoulos, moreover, has not established his capacities as an orchestral drillmaster. It may even be asked whether he cares about refinements of execution.

It follows that Mr. Mitropoulos may not be the wisest choice for musical director. He would certainly be a valued guest conductor in his specialized repertoire.

Why is he re-engaged each year? Obviously he has his supporters and admirers. It is clear, too, that personally he is a sweet-natured, agreeable man. He evidently gets along smoothly with management and guests.

There are no crises with him like those that occurred when a conductor of Toscanini's iron will and flaming temperament was the musical director.

In recent seasons it looked as if Guido Cantelli were being groomed as the Philharmonic's second most important conductor and later on perhaps as the principal maestro. The young Italian has great technical competence. His beat is clear, and his ear for orchestral sound is good. But his repertoire is limited, and he does not bring irresistible illumination to everything he conducts.

The policy on guest conductors has not been diversified. In recent years Bruno Walter and George Szell have been regular visitors. In the past season we also had Pierre Monteux, Max Rudolf and Thomas Schippers, with Carlos Chavez getting half a program to lead his own symphony. Next season, Leonard Bernstein, Paul Paray and Igor Stravinsky will be on hand.

There are many others of stature. Here are some names that come to mind, all men of established qualifications: Ansermet, Van Beinum, Von Karajan, Beecham, Markevitch, Fricsay, Solti, Boult, Reiner, Steinberg, Gul, Knappertsbusch, Boehm, Cluytens, Keilberth and Mravinsky.

The Philharmonic's patrons are entitled to a wider range of interpretive approach than they have had recently, and some of these conductors might supply it. Conductors like Munch and Ormandy, heard here regularly with their own orchestras, would also be an attractive change of pace for the Philharmonic audiences.

3 THE SOLOISTS

Most of the illustrious figures have been guests in the course of the last five years, some regularly and some not. But some of the world's ablest musicians have been neglected. Novas has not appeared with the Philharmonic since 1952, Piatigorsky not since 1951. Solomon at long last has been invited for next season.

It is difficult to make sense out of the Philharmonic policy on soloists. The great names must form the base of any program for guest artists. But the Philharmonic has a duty to make room for young performers who have proved themselves elsewhere.

A glance at the showing of the last five years indicates that quite a few performers with little or no right to solo appearances have been invited once, twice or more often. Yankoff, Deering, Gousseau, Henriot, Malcuyski, Scarpi, Bagarotti, Gitlis are among those who belong in this category. Next season Slenczynska and Xydis are on tap.

On the other hand, talented young Americans like Bolet, Ciliburn, Graffman, Keene, Masselos and Ricci have done extremely well and have not been asked back. There are others of established gifts who have not been invited at all in the last five years: Odnoposoff, Joseph Fuchs, Goldberg, Carol and Mitchell, violinists; Lillian Fuchs and Primrose, violists; Nelsova and Gendron, cellists; Kirkpatrick, Mariowe and Valenti, harpichordists; Lipkin, Lympant,

Uninsky, Tureck, Nadas, Moiseiwitsch, Lateiner, Entremont, Marsh, Brockman, Webster and Bogin, pianists, and Gold and Fizdale, Vronsky and Babin and Luboshutz and Nemenoff, duopianists.

There have been a good many singers, mostly in oratorios, liturgical works, operatic excerpts and operas in concert form. But some lovely music for voice and orchestra is neglected, and there are distinguished vocal artists like Della Casa, De los Angeles, Schwarzkopf and Fischer-Dieskau, to name just a handful, who have not appeared with the Philharmonic.

4 THE PROGRAMS

The music, of course, provides any orchestra with its fundamental excuse for being. The standard repertoire is always there—the symphonies of Beethoven, Brahms and Tchaikovsky, the indispensable concertos for the visiting virtuosos. This is as it should be. A large part of the public wants the established masterpieces to be the foundation of symphonic concerts.

But the arrangement of programs appears to be haphazard, dependent on the conductors and soloists who happen to be engaged for the season. Convenience often takes precedence over design, and the whims of individuals receive too much leeway.

There are good programs. There are also too many bad ones. A concert with three piano concertos by Mozart, even to celebrate the composer's bicentennial year and even with so fine a soloist as Rudolf Serkin, is too much of a good thing. A program that juxtaposes minor pieces by acknowledged masters with innocuous novelties ends by inducing ennui. The patron is entitled to something substantial and meaningful at every concert.

What about the Philharmonic's record for presenting contemporary music? Mr. Mitropoulos' accession to the post of music director in 1951 was hailed as the admission of the twentieth century to full partnership in the orchestra's proceedings. It is true that he has introduced works by important composers. Schoenberg, Berg, Shostakovich, Prokofiev and Milhaud have fared well, but so have Morton Gould and Rolf Liebermann, who do not deserve that much attention. Ghedini, thanks to Cantelli, has been played beyond his deserts.

How many interesting composers are under-represented or missing? An examination of all the premières—world, United States, New York or Philharmonic—in the last five years shows that the following men received no consideration or were represented by minor pieces: Bernstein, Bergsma, Carter, Diamond, Fine, Foss, Ives, Persichetti, Porter, Piston, Riegger, Shapero, Stravinsky, Pijper, Britten, Bliss, Henze, Rawsthorne, Rubbra, Messiaen, Orff, Honegger, Frickier, Tippett, Finzi, Egk, Orrego-Salas, Ginastera and Nielsen.

5 THE BOARD

No one would suggest for a moment that these men and women serve as officers and directors of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society for any other motive than the best interests of

the orchestra and the community. They give their time freely and often contribute substantial sums to help keep the books in balance or to support special, worthwhile projects.

In principle, we have been assured in the past, the board makes all the important decisions. No conductors or soloists are engaged without its approval. Whether it has also kept a firm hand on musical policy in the past is uncertain, but David M. Keiser, recently elected president of the society, told this observer that a music committee of the board had been named during the past season and that it would keep a close watch on programs. This is a good move and may lead to improvements.

It is noteworthy that there are few musicians on the board and that the orchestra's personnel is not represented at all. Richard Rodgers, the composer, and Carleton Sprague Smith, chief of the music division of the New York Public Library, are the only board members whose profession is music. It would seem that other distinguished representatives of the musical profession might add useful voices to the board's deliberations. In years gone by, several members of the orchestra belonged to the board, but this procedure has been discontinued. It seems a pity. The men who do the playing would be in a position to give the board invaluable guidance.

Without knowing what goes on behind the scenes at board meetings, one suspects that the directors have exercised more of the letter than the full spirit of the authority vested in them. Mr. Keiser has given indications that he will be a vigorous leader. The board should have a vibrant, up-to-date philosophy of the role an institution like the Philharmonic can play in the city and nation.

6 MANAGEMENT

The co-managers are Arthur Judson, a powerful, if not the most powerful, figure in America's concert business, and Bruno Zirato, once Caruso's secretary, who came into the Philharmonic organization in the years of Toscanini's leadership.

These men combine a tremendous amount of experience in management. Together they represent effective skills for running the day-to-day business of an orchestra.

The principal criticism made against them is that they do not confine themselves to managing the Philharmonic. Mr. Judson is a member of the firm of Judson, O'Neill & Judd, a branch of the huge concert agency, Columbia Artists Management, Inc. He is a former president of the corporation, and is accustomed to large affairs. Mr. Zirato is also a figure in Columbia Artists Management, Inc., with Judson he manages a list of well over fifty conductors, including some of the world's most famous.

The question of whether the Philharmonic's managers should also be engaged in handling other musical artists has been considered by the board. When Arthur Rodzinski quit his post as musical director of the orchestra almost a decade ago, he raised this issue dramatically. At that time the board held that it saw nothing wrong in the managers' dual activities.

If an unenterprising choice of conductors is one of the Philharmonic's defects, is there any relationship between the Judson-Zirato management of conductors and the Judson-Zirato management of the orchestra?

There is no proof of any connection. It is true that, of this and next year's Philharmonic conductors, Mitropoulos, Monteux, Bernstein, Paray, Rudolf, Szell, Stravinsky, Walter, Auranti, Kostelanetz, Schippers and Pelletier are on the Columbia list; Cantelli is not on the roster. It is also true, however, that many of the men eligible for engagements with the Philharmonic are represented by Columbia, notably, Boult, Munch, Ormandy, Boehm, Van Beinum and Von Karajan.

If you survey the American orchestral scene you will find that Columbia-managed conductors are in charge of a big majority of the country's major orchestras: Caston, Denver; Dorati, Minneapolis; Johnson, Cincinnati; Jordan, San Francisco; Katims, Seattle; Kempe and Rudolf, Metropolitan Opera; Leinsdorf, City Center and formerly Rochester; Mitchell, Washington; Mitropoulos, New York; Munch, Boston; Ormandy, Philadelphia; Paray, Detroit; Schweiger, Kansas City; Solomon, Indianapolis, effective next season.

son; Szell, Cleveland, and Van Beinum, Los Angeles, effective next season.

These facts prove that the Judson-Zirato team is extremely effective. They also imply a tremendous concentration of power in one group, but that has been a trend in other areas of American life in recent years.

In the case of soloists, the managers' connection with a major concert agency also raises questions. We do not say that the Philharmonic's soloists are recommended by the management to give the Columbia list the best representation. In fact, virtuosos managed by other companies and individuals are invited to appear with the orchestra. But Columbia artists preponderate. This is probably to be expected; Columbia has the biggest list in the business.

In the last five years the tally has been: Soloists represented

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Arthur Judson, co-manager of Philharmonic-Symphony.

by Columbia, about 50 per cent. These figures do not take into account soloists drawn from Philharmonic personnel. For the 1956-57 season the count on instrumental soloists shows: From Columbia, 17; from all others, including orchestra, 12.

It should be emphasized that there is not the slightest evidence of wrongdoing. But disaffected people, with or without axes to grind, keep insisting that the Philharmonic is being used to magnify reputations of Columbia artists. Let us take for granted that the Philharmonic's managers—and board—would not tolerate such a state of affairs. Would it not be better if there were an independent management in charge of the orchestra, as in Philadelphia, Boston and other cities?

7 THE PUBLIC

It is beyond dispute that the Philharmonic's subscriptions have been diminishing. The records show that in 1947-48, subscription sales accounted for 93.4 per cent of capacity; in 1948-49, 91.2 of capacity; in 1949-50, 86.2 of capacity; in 1952-53, about 80 of capacity. For the 1953-54 and 1954-55 seasons, Floyd G. Blair, then president, reported slight declines in subscription sales; he added that in 1954-55, single sales increased.

Obviously, the downward trend in subscriptions set in before Mr. Mitropoulos was chosen musical director. The staggering final deficit of \$245,463 for 1954-55 tells its own story. And a regular attendant at Philharmonic concerts can discern

certain things with the naked eye. As far as this observer could make out this season, the only Thursday night concerts that looked absolutely sold out were those at which Heifetz and Oistrakh were the soloists and the two at which Walter conducted Mozart. On most other occasions, there were stretches of gaping, empty seats.

The blunt truth is that the Philharmonic concerts have not been wildly popular this season. On the other hand, the Boston Symphony and Philadelphia Orchestra, which, it is true, play only ten concerts each in New York, have been much better attended.

Needless to say, there are external factors beyond the quality of programs and performances to explain the Philharmonic's attendance record. The ubiquitous television set has made deep inroads on attendance at all public entertainments. The spread of the high-fidelity vogue and the vast expansion of the repertory on records have had their impact. The inflationary pinch has caused some concertgoers to think twice about paying out high prices for concert tickets. The competition in opera house and concert hall for the music lover's dollar is intense in New York.

Furthermore, the Philharmonic assumes an ambitious schedule. It plays for twenty-eight weeks during the regular season, offering different subscription series on Thursday nights, Friday afternoons, Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons, not counting the special children's and young people's programs and the set of popular concerts conducted by André Kostelanetz.

Is it possible that there is no market in New York for so many concerts? That may well be. But before such a defeatist explanation is accepted, it is fair to ask whether a more vigorous and creative approach to all the orchestra's commitments and problems might not turn the tide.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Here are some recommendations that might help to restore the Philharmonic to its old position of pre-eminence.

Appoint a musical director who has the capacity and desire to keep the orchestra in excellent shape as a musical instrument. Give him full authority to make changes in personnel, if necessary, and expect him to turn the Philharmonic into a proud, responsive, sensitive ensemble.

Make the music the point of departure for the season's plans. Be sure that each program is well balanced. Show more initiative in selecting works. Include the established repertoire, and be more coherent and more selective in choosing contemporary pieces so that all schools and trends will be represented. By all means, play a role in our own music by commissioning pieces. And look more closely into the riches of the past. How many of Haydn's 100-odd or Mozart's forty-one symphonies do we hear? How much of Handel's, Corelli's, Vivaldi's instrumental works?

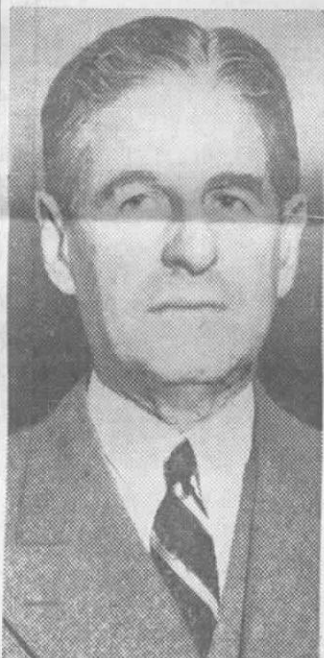
Once the works are selected—and they should be planned for the season as a whole and announced fully in advance—choose the conductors and soloists best equipped to give eloquent accounts of the music. It is true that the most renowned musicians have tight schedules and are not easy to sign up. But long-range planning should overcome some of the difficulties. And let us not underestimate the pull of New York. Nearly all the great musicians are eager to appear here. The Philharmonic, like the Metropolitan, could command the best, if it had the determination.

When it comes to young soloists, the Philharmonic should conduct a continuing campaign to search out the most promising. It should find occasion to give them a hearing, and if they prove their worth, it should provide them with further opportunities to establish their growth as artists.

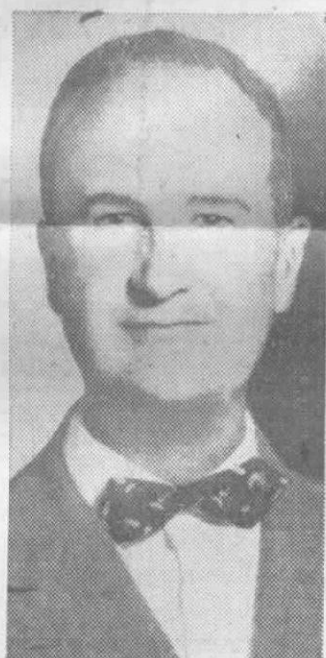
The Philharmonic should do a great deal more than it has done to build its audience now and for the future. The Friends of the Philharmonic is an organization that has made a valuable contribution, and the memberships constitute a step in the right direction. With the help of the Eda K. Loeb Foundation, several concerts are played in high schools each season. But all these things amount to a partial mobilization of public support. The Philharmonic must be more vigorous in reaching a wider public, and the city, through its officials and citizens, should make an effort to stir civic pride in a distinguished cultural institution.

The board must lead the way in producing a fresh, enlarged policy and in marshaling the energy to put it into effect. If it wishes to go along with its old management, it should make sure that its administrative people are willing to act forcefully and creatively for the Philharmonic's well-being.

The Philharmonic's future need not be black. Its best hope lies in a redefinition to the highest artistic values. Great music has a larger following in America than at any time in the past. The Philharmonic should lead the way in nurturing and increasing this flowering of musical taste.



Floyd G. Blair (left), chairman of the Philharmonic board of directors, and David M. Keiser, board president.



The New York Times

MAY 18 1956

THE PASSING SHOW:

Silly Season Over As Opera Departs

By JOHN ROSENFELD

WHILE ALL THAT THE PUBLIC said about opera in Dallas was not wise, the choicest comment came from Houston where Donizetti's "Lucia" and Mozart's "Le Nozze di Figaro" were given by the Metropolitan Monday and Tuesday, or immediately after the four-opera stay here.

One Houston patron registered official protest over the alleged "cutting" of "Le Nozze di Figaro" because "Figaro, Figaro" was not sung.

Some effort was made to explain the difference between Rossini's "Il Barbiere di Siviglia" and the Mozart opera but it didn't register. "Le Nozze di Figaro" was composed by Mozart in 1786. "The Barber" is a later opera, to get familiar about it, wherein is sung "Figaro, Figaro" or "Largo al Factotum" (to get formal), was composed by Rossini in 1816.

Both are operatic versions of plays from a trilogy by Beaumarchais in which "The Marriage of Figaro," although an earlier opera, is a sequel to "The Barber of Seville," a later opera. We have been told that the banks of the Buffalo Bayou are still muddy.

Something as incredible was heard a week ago at the Dallas performance of Wagner's "Die Meistersinger." Speaking of Eleanor Steber as Eva one dowager asked, "When does the soloist come on again? They cut her to nothing in the first act."

For the record, "Die Meistersinger" is never given uncut or you would be there yet. Nevertheless many cuts were opened for the Dallas production, cuts not before sung on tour. Those remaining were chiefly repeats of the Prize Song, a verse of Beckmesser's Serenade, part of Sachs' Monologue—many traditional and sanctioned by Wagner himself who didn't like to "cut" his favorite composer.

SOME CALORIES of heat rose over the Met's "Tosca" here. To us it wasn't a satisfactory "Tosca" although some people behaved as if the Metropolitan had done it on purpose.

"Tosca" as a dramatic concept was originally a play for the histrionic arts of Sarah Bernhardt. The Puccini Tosca must have a measure of this acting skill, especially for Act II. Geraldine Farrar, a famous Tosca in an earlier Metropolitan day, actually coached the part with the then aging Bernhardt.

Zinka Milanov, the 1956 "Tosca," has vocal amplitude which some, but not us, rate the greatest dramatic soprano outpouring to be heard. Nobody has ever claimed that her acting range extends much beyond hand-wringing.

Leonard Warren, who used to have the most exciting baritone of our time until he became a crooning bel canto addict, was Scarpia.

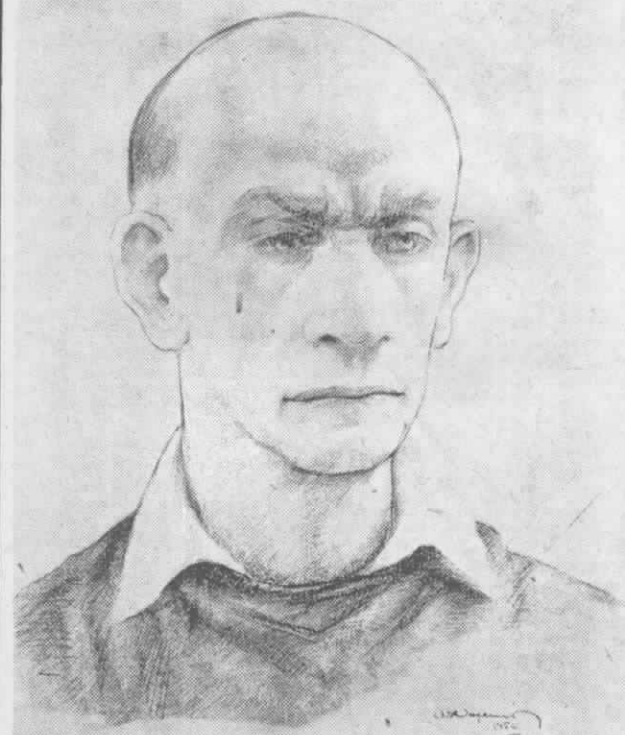
He never has been an actor of flair or conviction although he usually knows where to stand and which singer to grab and back into the footlights. His Scarpia was on a par with Miss Milanov's Tosca.

"TOSCA" HAD been restaged this year under the direction of Dino Yampopoulos and with the musical bossing of Dimitri Mitropoulos.

16 MAY 1956

Η «ΒΡΑΔΥΝΗ»

Ο ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΥΔΟΣ



"Ενα μοναδικό σκίτσο του μεγάλου μας μαέστρου Δημήτρη Μιτροπούλου, φιλοτέχνημένο από τον Έλληνα ζωγράφο Ανδρέα Κ. Νομικό, που μένει στη Ν. Υόρκη.

"Οπως εξομολογείται ο Ένα φιλικό του γράμμα ο Νομικός, εάν είναι εύκολη δουλειά να ζωγραφιστεί κανείς, τον Μιτροπούλο. «Ποτέ—συνεχίζει—δεν έπολεσε. Πήγαίνα στο σπίτι του να απογειωμένα και σχεδόν ιρακίαν, φαινό, έκανα πολλά γράμματα σίτσα σε ποι, να καταλήξω στο τελικό σχέδιο. Κι' αυτό μου πρόσφερε μία κα-

ταπληκτική ενδιαφέρουσα έμπερεια. Ιδιαίτερα τις στιγμές που ο Μιτροπούλος, ζεχόνταν ολόκληρα και δαδίζον σε σέ, κεις ή παρυσούσαν από την έμπνευση της δημιουργίας.

Για τον ίδιον τον Νομικό, πληροφόρούμαστε ευχάριστα να από την Ν. Υόρκη: Τού άρεσε να εσή τα σκηνικά και τις φορεσιές στο μέλοδρμα του Μιτρούτεν, κ'Ο δισσμός της Λουκρετίας που θα παιχθεί το Σεπτέμβριο στην Όπερα της Νέας Ορλεάνης. "Ο Έλλην σκηνογράφος, έπιστρέφει στην Ελλάδα τον προσεχή Οκτώβριο.

From MAY 13 1956
STAR-LEDGER
Newark, N. J.

The Philharmonic under fire

By IRVING KOLODIN

Not only because it is the oldest established orchestra in this country, but also because it comes into millions of homes every Sunday through the winter via CBS radio, what concerns the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra concerns music lovers all over the country. Hence a seasonal summing up that appeared in The New York Sunday Times last month under the title of "The Philharmonic—What's Wrong With It and Why" and bearing the by-line Howard Taubman, music critic of that paper, is of active interest to music lovers far and wide.

Taubman's full-page analysis fell into seven categories: the orchestra ("On a sheer technical level its standards have fallen"); the conductors (Dimitri Mitropoulos is "not the first conductor to be overmatched by the requirements of the Philharmonic post"); the soloists ("some of the world's ablest musicians have been neglected"); the programs ("convenience often takes precedence over design"); the board ("it is noteworthy that there are few musicians on the board"); management ("a tremendous concentration of power in one group," referring to Arthur Judson and Bruno Zitrato, who have important responsibilities in affairs other than those involving the Philharmonic); and the public ("The blunt truth is that the Philharmonic concerts have not been wildly popular this season").

IN HIS SUPPORTING recommendations, Taubman called for "a musical director who has the capacity and desire to keep the orchestra in excellent shape," a seasonal range of programs that would show "more initiative," a



The Philharmonic's conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos

FROM MAY 1956
MUSICAL LEADER
CHICAGO ILL

New York

Editor and Critic: SHIRLEY CECILLE CASH, 42 Cloverfield Road, So. Valley Stream, N. Y. Tel: Tilden 4-8192
Other Critics: Harry L. Fuchs, Sherman Gottesman, Walter F. Loeb

With the Orchestras

Guido Cantelli conducted the special Easter Program of the Philharmonic Symphony during the week-end of March 29. The program included Wagner's "Good Friday Spell" from "Parsifal," Verdi's "Te Deum" for Double Chorus and Orchestra, Brahms' Alto Rhapsody, and Monteverdi's "Magnificat" for 7-part Chorus, Organ and Orchestra. Mezzo-soprano Martha Lipton and the Westminster Choir also participated. It was a curiously disjointed program, with diverse elements not quite adhering. However, the performances were seriously and sincerely put forth, and, except for an Italian-sounding "Parsifal," we thought Mr. Cantelli's readings were of a high order. Miss Lipton sounded lovely in the Brahms, which, for us, was the high point of the evening.

On April 5, with Cantelli again conducting, Rudolf Firkusny was piano soloist in Brahms First Piano Concerto. It was a performance of great beauty and fluency. Moreover, there was fine rapport between soloist and conductor. The orchestra was also very responsive to Mr. Cantelli's wishes in an exquisite performance of Haydn's Symphony No. 88. Hindemith's "Concert Music" for Strings and Brass completed the program.

After the heavily-orchestrated Prelude and Fugue in D major by Bach (transcription by Respighi), Dimitri Mitropoulos devoted his efforts to Mahler's Third Symphony, in the program on April 12. The orchestra was assisted by the Westminster Choir, and Beatrice Krebs, mezzo-contralto, was the soloist. This symphony is so long that the first movement was performed before intermission, and the other five movements after intermission. It was a real treat for the Mahlerites, for Mitropoulos did a really fine job of it. However, for our taste, it is too long and sprawling. There is some excellent musical material in this symphony, and some wonderful orchestration. But we would enjoy it better if someone could tighten up the whole thing into a normal sized symphony. Perhaps this can't be done without sacrificing a good portion of fine material, but it did seem to go on and on.

MAIL POUCH: THE PHILHARMONIC'S PROBLEMS

Comment on Programs, Conductors, Soloists and Drop in Attendance

THE New York Philharmonic-Symphony has been and will continue to be, to my ears and way of thinking, the finest orchestra in the land. The diversified programs of Rodzinski, Cantelli, Stokowski, Monteux, Walter and Mitropoulos, to mention a few, plus the spirited playing of the men of the orchestra, have all helped to make the Philharmonic a thrilling experience, whether heard in concert or over the radio on Sunday afternoon.

I agree that the repertoire could be improved upon. We appreciate the Mahler and Strauss of Mitropoulos, the Mozart of Walter and the Verdi of Cantelli, and believe that more of the theatrical, spectacular in music should be performed to attract the public from apathy. At the same time there is neglect of some beautiful pastoral music, especially for voice and orchestra, chorus, etc. We might suggest for performance in the near future "Das Paradies und die Peri" by Schumann, "La Vita Nuova" by Nabokov, "The Death at Basle" by Conrad Beck, "Legend of St. Elizabeth" by Liszt, a concert version of "Die Frau ohne Schatten" by Richard Strauss, vocal excerpts from

"Schwanda" of Weinberger, and various arias and opera selections. For the pastoral type music, how about some more Haydn, Gluck, and especially some Delius?

R. W. HAINES.
Allentown, Pa.

FOR MITROPOULOS

The conclusion Mr. Taubman so thoroughly and forcefully argued for in his "agonizing reappraisal" of the Philharmonic-Symphony's position was left, diplomatically implicit, but it seems clear the "rededication to the highest artistic values" must start percussively with the rolling of Mr. Mitropoulos' head.

I, for one, will be very sorry if this should happen. I think Mr. Mitropoulos is a musician of rare dedication, fervor and insight. He is not an "all-around" conductor, I admit, but then those conductors Mr. Taubman suggests as possible alternatives have demonstrated on occasion that they have their failings. What impresses me most about Mr. Mitropoulos is that he under-

stands the function of a large, virtuoso orchestra very well, and fulfills it.

RAUL H. GERSTEN.
Cambridge, Mass.

FULL-TIME MANAGER

The Philharmonic needs its own exclusive and full-time manager. It is impossible for those who are also involved in other full-scale concert managing activities to give the efficiency of an exclusive manager. Despite what might be said, the present management is prone to give preference to its own conductors and soloists. The Philharmonic manager should owe allegiance to no other agency than the Philharmonic itself.

RAYMOND SEAY.
Blackstone, Va.

PREFERS PRIVACY

I am one of Mr. Taubman's readers who agrees with his point of view many times, but his article on the New York Philharmonic disturbed me a great deal. I feel, as a native-born New Yorker, that perhaps he might have expressed his opinions to the "powers that be" of the Philharmonic. I do hope that he made an effort before this public denunciation to be heard privately. My personal fear is that Mr. Mitropoulos will be wooed away from the Philharmonic by the Metropolitan Opera, where he did such a wonderful job.

MRS. OSCAR C. FINK.
Long Beach, N. Y.

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FROM AN EX-MANAGER

When it comes to soloists, I can speak from my thirty-five years of experience. During those years I managed at least 40 per cent of the world's greatest artists and during the last twenty-five years the list included some of the most glamorous artists under the Hurok management. And yet my company has always been poorly represented on the Philharmonic list of soloists. I will not go so far as to say that there exists a "monopolistic" alliance between the Philharmonic and Columbia Artists Management. Maybe the Columbia executives "living" within hailing distance of the Philharmonic have greater and more frequent access to "sell their goods"; maybe the "nepotist" relationship of the conductors exerts an "unholy" influence; maybe among the board of directors, the management and the conductors there is such a shuffle of soloists that the Columbia list is always on top, while other artists land at the bottom of the available roster.

The facts speak for themselves, and, since Mr. Taubman mentions names, I will relate a few cases. Alexander Brailowsky, acknowledged to be one of the great pianists of the day, was under my management for eighteen years. For at least fifteen years I could not get him into the Philharmonic. The pretext was always that "somebody" on the board of directors did not like him. Finally in desperation I quoted such a ridiculous fee for him that Bruno Zitrato overcame the dislike of the member of the board. Now that Brailowsky is under Columbia management, I see he is announced again for next season and for four appearances. Coincidence? Maybe, but a strange one.

Moiseiwitsch, another great pianist, has been coming under my management for the last six years, but the Philharmonic has consistently refused to consider him, while presenting pianists of much lesser stature. Luboshutz and Nemenoff are unquestionably one of the two or three greatest two-piano teams in the world today. What is more important, they command a repertoire of at least three effective modern concertos. During the last twenty years they have appeared repeatedly with every orchestra in the country, particularly with the Boston and Philadelphia, but the Philharmonic, with one exception, always found an excuse to dismiss them from consideration.

As far as young artists are concerned, there is a definite policy. Any new artist under Columbia management gets a chance, any new artist under a competing management is either disregarded or is given a sop in the form of a Saturday night engagement.

I agree with Mr. Taubman

Wallington, N. J.

DONALD J. MOLNAR.

NEW YORK.

TO WIN THE PUBLIC

The New York Philharmonic-Symphony should advertise much in the same way as theatrical productions advertise. This type of advertisement is appealing, and will succeed in getting more people interested in the concerts. Second, the society should cater more to the individual than to a select group.

EDOUARD NIES-BERGER.

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EDOUARD NIES-BERGER.

NEW YORK.

From MAY 27 1956

TIMES

New York, N. Y.
FOR CONNOISSEURS

I have been attending Philharmonic concerts for more than twenty years and I have some definite ideas on the subject. Here they are:

If Mr. Mitropoulos' direction is the main reason why the Philharmonic is playing so badly, why is it I heard such excellent playing by the Metropolitan orchestra in "Salome," "Vittorio" and "Tosca"? Only Mitropoulos and Monteux make the Met sound so good. The fault must lie in what Mr. Taubman calls lack of "esprit de corps" in the Philharmonic.

As to programs, you can't please everybody all the time. You end up neutralizing all life out of the repertoire. After years of subscribing I gave it up to become a free-lance concertgoer. I was becoming numb to the standard works. They can win me back to the subscriber's fold if they'll give a loyal old supporter like me the same consideration they give the novice. How about a seven-concert series for connoisseurs? Mitropoulos certainly could do interesting things here. And don't think a well-planned series doesn't have an audience.

The biggest fault of the management is failure to keep this fine orchestra working a longer year. More work and a management that genuinely takes care of its orchestra will produce that esprit de corps so vital to the organization.

SAM NORRIN.
Forest Hills, N. Y.

om MAY 13 1956

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

that the programs during the last season were anything but inspiring. Perhaps Mr. Mitropoulos' engagement with the Metropolitan had something to do with it. One cannot expect even a man of such talent and capacity to prepare two or three operas, to participate in many chamber music concerts and to think of a variety of symphonic programs at the same time.

MARKS LEVINE.
Ex-director of National Concerts and Artists Corporation, New York.

FOR LONGER SEASON

Before blaming either an individual member or the orchestra, or the ensemble as a whole, or the music director, it would be better to examine the conditions under which the men have to work. There is much room for improvement. Additional time for rehearsals and a less crowded schedule of concerts should, in my opinion, be the first goal in order to try to remedy an existent situation. With a twenty-eight-week season and an insecure summer season, how can we expect an ideal result?

WERNER LANDSHOFF.
New York.

SPIRITUAL RESPONSIBILITY

May I express to Mr. Taubman my deep admiration for the brilliantly conceived article on our Philharmonic-Symphony, of which I was the official organist for nine years? If the oldest symphony orchestra in our country will ever regain its pre-eminent position among the great orchestras in this world, and in this country in particular, it will be largely due to Mr. Taubman's courage and honesty in regard to the spiritual responsibility that falls on those who administer music as an art to the people who have the right to expect integrity and perfection from all those who are involved in the making and managing of music.

EDOUARD NIES-BERGER.

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EDOUARD NIES-BERGER.

Seasonal Inventory (II): Orchestral Music

To continue the auditing of the season's events, or rather to consider the lessons learned from them, let us turn from choral to orchestral music. While it is very unfortunate, the fact remains that choral music is tacitly accepted as an amateur contribution to our musical life, whereas the orchestras we regard as the acme of our professional music.

An orchestra is usually associated with the fame of its conductors. It is well known how Muck, Monteux, and Koussevitzky built up the Boston Symphony, Stokowski and Ormandy the Philadelphia Orchestra, and both of these orchestras are today in good hands and indubitably among the world's best. There was a time when the New York Philharmonic, a matchless ensemble under Mengelberg and Toscanini, was one of the "Big Three," but for some time now it has been languishing, a poor cousin of the "Big Two." Yet the potential of this body of musicians is as great as ever. It has excellent players who, under proper leadership and proper working conditions, could snap out of their lethargy and once more be the pride of the musical world—as of the city—but both of these conditions are missing. I shall devote next Sunday's column to its *modus vivendi*, today I should like to discuss its conductors.

The Conductors
To conduct an orchestra is one thing, to make it into an organic instrument is another. It is my opinion that neither of the men now in charge of the musical direction of the Philharmonic is capable of building up the orchestra into a homogeneous and responsive ensemble. It is understood, of course, that the distinguished guest conductors cannot perform this feat for the very simple reason that a fortnight or two is too short for such a tremendous task.

Mr. Mitropoulos, the Musical Director of the Philharmonic, is a musician of extraordinary gifts, and a gentleman of not only sterling but very engaging character. He has a wonderful sense for the dramatic, the taut, the fatal—and for the opposite extreme, the sentimental, but is lacking in much that lies between. With music older than

Techniques
On the other hand, there can be question neither of the genuineness of his intentions, nor of the very real success he achieves with those works with which he has a real affinity. However, since the latter are invariably of the type that permit dynamic extremes, of which he is fond, this fact has materially contributed to the coarse quality that characterizes the delivery of the orchestra these days. When Mr. Mitropoulos conducts "Tosca" or "Salome" at the Met, these same qualities turn into positive assets, and there can be no question that for quite a segment of the Metropolitan's repertoire he would be the ideal conductor.

Mr. Cantelli is a fair conductor, but without a clear artistic personality. He is given to softness and to rounded corners, though at times he, too, aims for the rafters. One is aware of a certain lack of identification with a wide variety of composers, for in spite of his undeniable musicianship and intelligence he is vague about stylistic requirements and has a very limited repertoire. He still is an unfinished product and no doubt will grow, but he should not mature at the expense of the Philharmonic. Mr. Cantelli's technical shortcomings are manifest, especially in the accompaniment of con-

certain, the touchstone of the conductor's art, which few who do not come to the conductor's stand from the ranks of the orchestra ever master.

Thus the two long-haul conductors of the Philharmonic are not the type to mould an orchestra into a homogeneous unit and provide the cultural leadership that a great public trust like the Philharmonic should assume in the city's intellectual life. Moreover, their serious limitations with regard to repertoire (although I am not sure whether they are altogether responsible for that) gave the past Philharmonic season a drab and unexciting complexion.

What Is Needed

Now in sizing up the guest conductors, Messrs. Walter, Monteux, and Szell, we immediately notice that they are impeccable technicians, every one of them placing great importance on precision of ensemble playing and judicious tonal balance, which, after all, are the first requisites for a great orchestra. But what can they do in a few weeks? It is a high tribute to the inherent capabilities of the New York Philharmonic that in the hands of each of these able conductors it sounds like a different, and technically better, orchestra within a couple of weeks.

Clearly, the Philharmonic needs a "principal" conductor, like Munch or Ormandy, who will stay with it for the better part of the season and endow it with a personality. This conductor must be an all-around musician with a large repertoire, and willing to explore regions above and below the musical equator—the specialists can come as guests. He must be a first-class technician and orchestra builder; we have seen what such a person can do within a very short time in the case of the London Philharmonic, witness Herbert von Karajan. But he must have authority, real authority, and not take all his orders from the management.

Needless to say, a change in conductors alone would not eliminate the present deplorable situation; Mr. Mitropoulos—and his orchestra—are victims of many circumstances for which they are not responsible. About these, next week.

From JUN 17 1956

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

MAIL POUCH: MUSIC FOR THE LIVING

To the Music Editor:

THE Philharmonic's problems, like those of most of our larger orchestras, are moral no less than musical. As to whether the orchestra's musical punctuations and precision are top-drawer, I am not too concerned. We needn't try to make our orchestras so fine that American musicians will forever be thought unworthy to lead and perform with them. Besides, as Delacroix said, "Cold perfection is not art."

Indeed, perfection often becomes the enemy of art, which should be creative—even to some extent in the realm of interpretation. And all creation involves hazards and inevitably some failures. Final perfection is found mainly in museums. And we don't think the Philharmonic should become a museum. Certainly, to go along after all these years on the safe basis of "perfectionism" may well be the most dangerous course.

Mr. Mitropoulos is surely a man of enterprise and imagination, who is probably restrained every time he essays to do anything out of the ordinary. This would dampen any man's spirit.

I am not arguing for music that is unpalatable to the public or lacking in high qualities. Nor have I any desire to see the classics neglected. But they exist not only to be enjoyed but to be emulated. "The earth," said Jefferson, "belongs in usufruct to the living" and so, we may add, does art and its institutions.

American musicians have a right to feel that our costly orchestras and operas are for them, too, and are not the sole property of a few generals of an occupational music force.

Let them establish contact with the public, as in our theatre (which has succeeded almost without subsidy in developing plays and actors that have won the world's respect) and very soon the public will have nothing to complain of.

The conductor's role becomes ever more that of politician. He must at once please his constituents and satisfy the power through which he was given his public position, which is management, which is here now not to serve, but to be served—a sort of "General Music, Inc.," to cross which is the surest path to contemporary extinction.

Orchestral Responsibility
In a country virtually without opera, the symphony orchestras have become the definitive organs of our musical life. Through them taste and reputations are made. But despite their non-commercial and even educational character, some have fallen under the control of a purely commercial management, which imposes not only tribute but also its own vulgar and ignorant taste upon their artistic policies.

If this is a good thing, then why not let Young & Rubicam take over Harvard University

and Mount Sinai Hospital? I doubt, however, if they would go so far as to rule that a physicist may not be a professor if born within a radius of 2,000 miles from the laboratory, or that an American surgeon shouldn't be allowed to operate, or that the hospital beds are reserved mainly for the dead.

Finally it is time to recognize that major orchestras now have such a large season that, instead of one conductor, there should be a staff of conductors, each one of whom would do only what he does best, as in every opera house, and give few enough performances to preclude the usual exhaustion, and allow a decent attention to contemporary works and performers. Public contests should decide such posts, rather than the closed deliberations between publicity magnates and credulous patrons. Nor should the amount of money a candidate has sunk into personal advertising and management be an index of his capacities.

All honor to the founders of our great orchestras; but need we honor those who stand selfishly in the way of our national self-development and who hog entire seasons with their immodest self-display on the flimsy grounds that only through such single dictatorship may an orchestra achieve perfection? As if that perfection were all we are after!

ERNST BACON,
Stanford, Calif.

From JUN 1956

MUSICAL LEADER
CHICAGO ILL

"Boris Godunov" Opens Metropolitan Opera Season in Chicago

By Bethuel Gross

The validity of any form of criticism is contingent upon the premise of the critic. If the music critic approaches his evaluations as a perfectionist he is deluding both himself and his reader. In all human endeavor there is no such thing as perfection. Perfection is reserved for angels, schizophrenics and those who believe in absolutes.

If my readers accept the premise that it is the job of the music critic to evaluate music performance on the premise of perfection, they had best turn the page. If my readers accept the premise that a music critic should give an account of the relative values of performance then the following account might be of interest.

The opening night of the Met at the Civic Opera House in

Chicago, May 24 at which Moussorgsky's "Boris Godunov" was presented had assets which certainly balanced the liabilities. The highest dividend in the asset column of this operatic ledger was the fact that Dimitri Mitropoulos was the conductor. I found myself on a number of occasions particularly listening to the orchestra even on accompanimental passages. The chorus was the epitome of precision, enhanced with a range of dynamics seldom heard on the operatic stage. A stage director might have, from his point of view, insisted that there were things to be desired, but considering what I have observed in other operatic performances, it was magnificently staged and directed.

I overheard one tight-lipped individual complain that the singers were second rate. Second rate to what—the "name" stars whose exorbitant fees have placed the majority of our American opera companies in bankruptcy? It has long been my contention that the so called "second-rate" singer, many times do just as well if not better, than the "name" stars who from highly-publicized reputation are like Caesar's wife—"above suspicion." There were a number of singers in this performance who while not considered operatic planets were stars in their own right as to vocal production and histrionic ability.

Cesare Siepi was a regal and musically articulate Boris. Clifford Harvuot did full justice to the role of Rangoni. Herta Glaz was vocally equal to the limitations of the score. Giorgio Tozzi was a superb Brother Pimen and Paul Franke earned blue ribbons as the simpleton. It is within the margin of safety to say that the rest of the cast did a respectable job.

The audience playing the role of late-comers won the booby prize. They were crawling over seats and knees throughout the entire first scene. If I were on the managerial staff the delinquents would enter only between scenes or acts.

Those who are interested in operatic mink and ermine parades got a major production. Why don't managers face it—and build a ramp for all contestants.

To summarize, I, for one, enjoyed the opening night of the Met. Those who didn't—well, every man to his own brand of neurosis. If the five remaining performances of the Met match the opening night, our opera devotees need have no serious cause for complaints. Harry Zelzer again earns a twenty-one-gun salute for being Chicago's top flight impresario.

From JUN 16 1956

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

MITROPOULOS BIDS COMPOSERS RELAX

Tells Providence Meeting of the Danger in Pushing Contemporary Music

By EDWARD DOWNES
Special to The New York Times

PROVIDENCE, R. I., June 15—Dimitri Mitropoulos threw a bombshell this afternoon into the Providence convention of composers, conductors, managers, orchestral boards and committee members. He told them to relax.

Today's meeting was a joint session of the American Symphony Orchestra League and the League of Composers—International Society of Contemporary Music. Its purpose was to find ways of increasing the performance of contemporary orchestral music, particularly the works of American composers.

"The American composer today," Mr. Mitropoulos said, "has chances that no other composer in the world has."

The conductor of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony added that while subscribers to symphony concerts in this country show some resistance to unfamiliar music, subscribers in Europe are still more conservative in their tastes.

Cautious Conductors

Mr. Mitropoulos cautioned that conductors must be "practical idealists" and not undermine the finances of their orchestras by performing too much contemporary music. He added that he felt he himself had sinned in this respect in the past.

Indeed, there was such a strong note of "mea culpa" in Mr. Mitropoulos' remarks that many listeners later criticized him for viewing the national scene in too narrow a personal perspective. Many recalled that Mr. Mitropoulos had had a considerable reputation as a crusader for modern music, particularly of the twelve-tone school.

In the discussion period, Aaron Copland, composer, challenged Mr. Mitropoulos' optimistic view on the amount of contemporary music performed by orchestras in this country. Mr. Copland recalled statistics he had presented at a morning meeting to show that only 8 per cent of the repertoires of American orchestras is contemporary. He added that this deplorable figure had not changed substantially over the last fifteen years.

Second Panel Meets

While this discussion was proceeding, a second panel made up of managers, board members and composers was meeting in another room under the chairmanship of Thomas D. Perry Jr., manager of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Ralph Black, manager of the National Symphony Orchestra of Washington, and Harold Kendrick, manager of the New Haven Symphony both produced statistics based on the experience of their respective orchestras showing that programs that included contemporary music had greater box-office appeal than those that did not.

The opinion of other managers present was summed up, to the surprise of composers, as "the more contemporary music the better."

From JUN 3 1956

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

MAIL POUCH: CIVIC PRIDE AIDS SYMPHONIES

To the Music Editor:

THANK you for Mr. Taubman's most profound and perceptive analysis of the New York Philharmonic situation. While it modestly limited itself to a specific orchestra and city, I believe his analysis is much broader in scope and brings out points which will sooner or later affect other orchestras as well, perhaps even the very future of orchestral life in this country.

I should even go a step further and ask whether some of the things he mentioned as causes for the "decline" of the New York Philharmonic's prestige are not, perhaps, rather effects of the more general development of the world around us. This development is more cruelly manifest in New York, already established in its world leadership, than in smaller American cities still busily engaged in establishing their claim to national and international recognition, therefore more proudly conscious of their prestige-assets, such as a good orchestra.

Could it not be that, from an over-all civic viewpoint, the Louisville Philharmonic is more important to the cultural pride of Louisville than any New York orchestra could be to the cultural pride of New York?

Cross-Section

Suppose you were to ask a cross-section of the population of, say, Minneapolis, Kansas City and New York to answer the question: "What institutions do you think bestow the highest prestige on your city?" I feel sure that the respective orchestras would fare better in the smaller cities than in New York, simply because the former would have fewer institutions to pick from. And this without regard to critical evaluation of an abstract "standard of performance," but only on the basis of their existence and part of civic life.

As a matter of fact, I have long felt that the comparison of performance standards is a rather moot point. How many listeners can really distinguish

the superior quality of one first-class orchestra over another? For practical purposes, all the top orchestras in the United States are today of such a caliber that further improvement can be appreciated only by the most discriminating ears.

The citizens of Littleton will enthusiastically crowd their auditorium as long as they are convinced (partly by the critic) that their orchestra is better than it has ever been, no matter how it compares with the world's greatest. Whereas the burghers of Bigtown are all too easily shielded away from concerts by being told that their string section

does not measure up to that of the Philadelphia Orchestra, even if they have never heard the latter.

Prestige, like beauty, cannot be measured by accomplishment, but is a vague, elusive phenomenon resulting from many factors. Institutions such as orchestras are somewhat like human beings. They have their youth when much is forgiven in anticipation of what is yet to come; their adolescence when critical eyebrows start being raised; their maturity when they are expected to be tops, and their old age when they either live for decades on a solidly founded reputation

acquired during maturity, or decay rapidly.

The New York Philharmonic-Symphony reached its maturity in the middle Twenties and early Thirties. In fact, this maturity was brought to full bloom partly by its natural growth and partly by one superior conductor. It has never fully recuperated from the departure of Toscanini. Being the towering musical genius he is, it was his mission and privilege to perform a wealth of orchestral literature in a manner in which it had really never been heard before. Small wonder that during those years the Philharmonic was the focus of a degree of feverish excitement which New York had never experienced before in the field of symphonic music.

Let-Down

Such excitement, however, could not be maintained forever, no matter who was at the helm. After Toscanini, a let-down was inevitable and is neither the fault of the conductors involved nor the management responsible. The choice of Mitropoulos was, in my opinion, an excellent one. He is one of the most exciting musicians of our era, brilliant in the manipulation of precisely the kind of repertoire the Philharmonic should play. If he occasionally falls short on discipline, it is perhaps because he realizes that what's needed is not more precision, but more warmth, not more discipline, but more excitement.

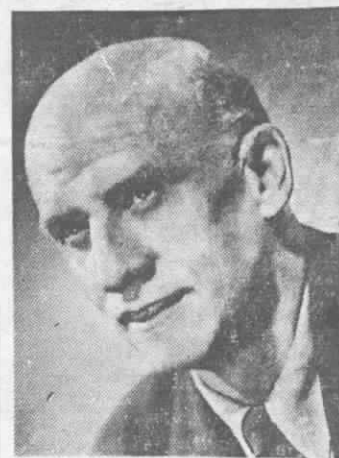
Maybe the solution to our orchestral problems is just as staggeringly simple as this: to put the smile back onto the audiences' faces, the warmth back into its hearts and the stars back in its eyes—even at the cost of a faulty sixteenth in the second fiddles or a blooper in the horns. Plus a realization on the part of our composers that it will take UNIVAC exactly seven minutes and thirty-seven seconds to arrive at every possible combination of the twelve-tone row, whereas, it will never quite achieve the right lift of the "Blue Danube Waltz."

WALTER DUGLOUX,
Los Angeles.

ΣΑΒΒΑΤΟΝ 19 ΜΑΪΟΥ ΕΘΝΟΣ

ΔΥΕΙ ΤΟ ΑΣΤΡΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ; ΜΕΓΑΛΗ ΕΠΙΘΕΣΙΣ ΕΝΑΝΤΙΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΠΙΘΑΝΟΣ ΔΙΑΔΟΧΟΣ ΤΟΥ Ο ΙΤΑΛΟΣ ΚΑΝΤΕΛΛΙ

NEA YOPKH. Μάιος. (Ιδιαιτέρως υπενθυμίζουμε) — Έξαπείλυν έδωκεν ούτως ή πρότερον μεγάλη επίθεση εναντίον του Δημήτρη Μιτροπούλου, του διασημού Έλληνος διευθυντού της Φιλαρμονικής της Νέας Υόρκης.



Ο Δημήτρης Μιτροπούλος

αγ' Υόρκης. Η επίθεση έγινε από ένα των διασημωτέρων Αμερικανών μουσικοκριτικών, τον κ. Χ. Τζαμπμαν, συνεργάτην τού κ. Κρήνη - Βήνις. Λόγω τού κυρίου τού κριτικού, τίθεται τώ ερώτημα: Άλλά γε, δύει τώ αστρον του Μιτροπούλου;

Ίδού τί γράφει ο κ. Τζαμπμαν: «Επειδή ο Δημήτρης Μιτροπούλος είναι μουσικός διευθυντής και πρώτος μιστρός της Φιλαρμονικής της Νέας Υόρκης, φέρει και τιν έλπίαν εις τήν μουσικήν. Είναι ένας σοβόρος, αφροισιμένος μουσικός, τρένων Έλληνας συμπαθείς δια τήν περπατήσιν του τέλους του Δεκάτου Έντου Αϊόνας. Έλκεται από την δραματικήν μουσικήν και υποπεί να ημετά δώση ενόσον πορτέον έναντιν εις τήν ακοατήριον. Με τήν Πίτσσαντ Στρώους, τόν Μάλετ, τόν Σούπερκ ή τόν Μπερόκ εις τήν Φιλαρμονικήν και με τόν Πουτσίνι εις τήν Μητροπολίτικην Όπεραν δύναται να προστάξω έξαιρετούς υπηρισίας.»

«Αί τοιούται, όμως, κοτζί τού έσφαριζόμενου εις τήν παλαιότεραν μουσικήν μουσικήν δόξαν εις αποτυχίαν δύναι, τώ έργα τής μουσικής αυτές έχουν ανάγκην μετρώς και λεπτότητας. Εν δαίμοις, ο κ. Μιτροπούλος δέν επιτυγχάνει εις ένα από τούτων. Τού υπερταρίου τής όρχήστρας. «Οι μουσικός διευθυντής είναι ηντακαμένος να διευθύνει ένα πλήθος κοντακτών και να καλύπτει τας πλέον διαφορετινάς έννοις ούτε αυτόν.»

κός περίοδους της Μουσικής Έσταρίας, δέν έινε ο πρώτος διευθυντής ο οποίος κατατίετο από τόν όγκον τού Έργου, πού απαιτεί ή δέσση τού.

«Επιπροσθέτως ο κ. Μιτροπούλος δέν κατορθώνει να μάς πείσει δια τας ικανότητας του ως καθηγητού — διδασκαλού — των μουσικών τής όρχήστρας. Δύναι μάλιστα, να τείη τώ ερώτημα αν επιδεικνύει καν ένδιαφέρον δια τήν επί τούτη έφορσιν των επί μερους μέλων τής.

«Εντέθεν προκύπτει, ότι ο κ. Μιτροπούλος ένδεχεται να μην έινε ο πλέον κατάλληλος δια τήν θέση τού Μουσικού Διευθυντού. Άσφαλώς βά ήτο ένας αξιόλογος φιλοξενούμενος μιστρός εις ώρισμένα έργα τού ρεπερτορίου.

«Αλλά, όμως, έσφατον έτος άναγκάσαι τώ συμβαλόν του. Προβήλας έχει τούς υποστηρικτάς και τούς θαυμαστάς του. Έινε, έξ άλλου, σάφες, ότι προσωπικώς έινε Ένας γλυκός και ευγενής άνθρωπος. Κατανοών, να συνεννοώνται με τήν Διοίκησιν τής Φιλαρμονικής. Δέν δημιουργούνται κρίσεις ως έκείναι πού έδημιουργούν κατά τήν εποχήν τού Τζοσκανίνι.»

Ο κ. Τζαμπμαν συνιστά ότως ή Φιλαρμονική χρησιμοποiei τού λοιπού περισσώτερος φιλοξενούμενους μιστρους και αναφέρει τώ όνόματα πολλών μεγάλων μιστρών



Ο Γκούντο Καντέλλι

τού Κόμου. Ο Έβιος άπακαλύπτει, ότι κατά τώ τελευταίον Έτη έινε σκεπής ότις ο Ιταλός μιστρός Γούντο Καντέλλι προετοιμάζεται δια τήν θέση τού Μιτροπούλου. Άλλά ο κ. Τζαμπμαν δέν φαίνεται να καλύπτει τας πλέον διαφορετινάς έννοις ούτε αυτόν.

Dimitri Mitropoulos
alla Scala

Non a caso Dimitri Mitropoulos, questo grandissimo direttore che sembra sempre ingannare e conquistare nuovi stati di perfezione, non a caso, dunque, Mitropoulos ha accostato nel programma di ieri sera «Pelleas e Mélisande» di Schoenberg e la «Sinfonia delle Alpi» di Strauss: con un po' di buona volontà, a sottillizzare sul calcolo fatto, vi si può scorgere un raffinato e indovinatissimo tentativo di sintetizzare in due soli lavori le sorti di una certa epoca, dell'Austria asburgica agli inizi del secolo, o più precisamente — della civiltà germanica in una sua determinata formulazione conservatrice e cieca ai propri destini. «Pelleas e Mélisande» è del 1902 (nasce contemporaneamente all'opera di Debussy) ma di quale diversa situazione è prova? E in esso converge il post-wagnerismo appena personalizzato da una già sentita aspirazione a coraggiose esplorazioni armoniche, ritmiche, strumentali: Strauss fa la parte del leone, in questo ribollire incessante di rimbombanze, di influenze, di suggestioni, è preso addirittura a prestito (e più di una volta) per quanto riguarda il materiale tematico. Schoenberg in realtà si muove ancora, qui, nella ricerca e nella illusione neoromantica della «mitteleuropa» alla vigilia della grande guerra, e i personaggi maeterlinckiani a cui si applica il trasfigura, il dilata, il contorce in un continuo cambiamento di immagini dove il «corpo» espressionista è un debole barlume di vita fra mani di colori, appunto, prevalentemente straussiani.

Poi, Schoenberg, si avvil per la sua strada, per la strada della crisi presa per la corna, sconta sul piano formale e di contenuto; Strauss invece, che aveva sovrastato alla sua nascita artistica, che per molti versi, almeno fino a «Elektra», lasciava credere un «révirement» espressionista, scelse definitivamente, attorno al 1910, l'illusoria via della conservazione musicale: esattamente come la società viennese aveva deciso di restare china al corvo inevitabile degli eventi storici. La «Sinfonia delle Alpi», del 1915, è in certo senso la più tipica testimonianza di questa chiusura falsamente idilliaca — in realtà vuota perfino nella sua aspirazione descrittivistica — come tipica delle aperture possibili della musica viennese agli inizi del secolo, è il «Pelleas» schoenbergiano: divenuto così, nell'economia della serata, la indicativa pretesa di un fallimento, non solo artistico, ma storico.

Un programma, dunque, che potremmo dire una perdita: requisitoria contro Strauss presentata tuttavia da Mitropoulos con tutto il piacere di trovarsi impegnato in partiture mastodontiche, vere e proprie arene per il vittuoso della bacchetta. In specie, non diremo dell'insopportabile cattivo gusto della «Sinfonia delle Alpi», ma piuttosto del vivo interesse che pur nell'eterogeneità stilistica presenta la composizione schoenbergiana. Formalmente vi si trovano già i prodromi della tonalità infranta, ed espressivamente vi rintracciamo l'introversione, le fughe ideologiche verso un intellettualismo che corre sul filo dell'allucinazione, il conflitto infine fra la confessione sentimentale e la ricerca formale, che giungerà intatto, e inappagato, anche, fino all'estrema prova del «Mosè e Aronne».

L'esecuzione, superlativa. Una orchestra scattante, volenterosa, condotta con grande stile e sensibilità. Successo travolgente. Così si è degnamente chiusa la stagione sinfonica scaligera.

L. P.

L'Unità 30-6

ALLA SCALA

Il «Pelleas», di Schoenberg
diretto da Mitropoulos

Scritto nel 1902, il poema sinfonico Pelleas et Mélisande di Arnold Schoenberg ha avuto, ieri sera, alla Scala, la sua prima esecuzione in Italia: una esecuzione magnifica coronata da un successo addirittura trionfale; una vera e propria rinascita su un silenzio durato più di mezzo secolo, che conferisce come sia necessario far cadere rapidamente tutte quelle barriere che escludono dai nostri programmi buona parte dei lavori più originali del nostro secolo. E' vero, tuttavia, che il Pelleas et Mélisande non ha nulla di quella aspra aggressività che caratterizza i lavori successivi del maestro viennese; e quell'epoca Schoenberg — come egli stesso dichiarò in una sua nota autobiografica — era soprattutto influenzato da Strauss (lo Strauss dei poemi sinfonici) di cui il Pelleas è quasi un figlio illegittimo. L'armamentario straussiano è qui infatti tutto, nella colossale orchestra che Schoenberg impiega; ma v'è anche qualcosa di più: vi è il senso della tragedia, intesa come sovrumana disperazione, che culminerà poi nelle opere dell'espressionismo tedesco nella sua forma estrema. Ispirandosi al poema di Maeterlinck — come contemporaneamente faceva Debussy — Schoenberg vi scopre qualcosa di più di una rinuncia scosolata: il suo è il dramma della rivolta, della lotta contro il destino, anche se per lui questa lotta è priva di speranza. Con la forza del genio, Schoenberg cioè prevede il tragico disfacimento di tutta un'epoca che egli rispecchia nel parallelo disfacimento delle forme classiche.

L'inizio di questo processo di dissoluzione formale è già qui evidentissimo, nella violenza degli accordi, nell'instabile intrecciarsi delle linee melodiche, nello impiego originale degli strumenti. V'è già nel Pelleas — per restare al paragone con Strauss — l'orchestra dell'Elektra con sei anni d'anticipo; e v'è già il senso del timbro «puro» (altro indizio di dissoluzione formale) preannunciato nella geniale capacità di isolare uno dopo l'altro tutti gli strumenti dell'orchestra, facendoli emergere man mano come solisti sopra la sterminata marea dell'insieme.

Diciamo anche che in questo gioco orchestrale s'è potuta ammirare in tutto il suo splendore la capacità dei nostri strumentisti, bravissimi oltre alla genialità con cui il maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos li ha diretti. Il successo è stato pari al merito e si è rinnovato dopo la sonora e oleografica Sinfonia delle Alpi di Riccardo Strauss che ha concluso la serata: l'ultima di questo ottimo ciclo di concerti.

Ter

Con il concerto Mitropoulos
conclusa la stagione alla Scala

Il ciclo estivo dei concerti scaligeri è stato chiuso dalla straordinaria personalità di Dimitri Mitropoulos, l'uomo dalla mano magica, colui che riesce a dare la pura sostanza di ogni musica passata attraverso il vaglio della sua intelligenza e della sua sensibilità.

Bisogna dire che Mitropoulos ieri sera ha voluto affrontare un programma strano e per proporzioni e per le musiche eseguite. Vi figuravano infatti due numeri soltanto, ma numeri di vastissima mole e rappresentanti il periodo di massima fioritura del poema sinfonico, già avviato al suo declino, e della scuola austriaca nel momento in cui respira gli estremi profumi — altri direbbero esaltazioni — dell'arte wagneriana. La prima parte del concerto era occupata dal poema sinfonico «Pelleas et Mélisande» di Arnold Schoenberg, il grande inventore o meglio codificatore della dodecafonia, e la seconda dalla cosiddetta «Sinfonia delle Alpi» il poema sinfonico pastorale di Richard Strauss.

Se la «Sinfonia delle Alpi» appare come l'estrema possibilità espressiva di Strauss nel suo clima di narratore, di evocatore di sensazioni, di grande istintivo e di eccezionale strumentatore, questo «Pelleas et Mélisande», che era alla sua prima esecuzione a Milano, rappresenta l'unico poema sinfonico di Schoenberg e l'ultima

produzione di questo discutibile ma grande musicista nella tradizione wagneriana romantica. In quest'opera si sentono già vive alcune aspirazioni polifoniche, alcuni tentativi a rompere il cerchio chiuso dell'armonia tradizionale, tentativi che cadono nell'onda sonora della grande orchestra che vive di emozioni cromatiche e timbriche e che tende ancora alla soluzione armonica tradizionale. Tuttavia, in questo poema sinfonico di uno Schoenberg non ancora trentenne, si sente la mano sicura e ferma del grande musicista, dell'uomo che affronta con grande chiarezza i valori architettonici dell'eloquio musicale e che aspira a qualche meta non ancora del tutto individuata. Bisogna però convenire che mentre Strauss nella chiometrica passeggiata alpestre ci racconta emozioni precise, sensazioni da tutti provate e ci rappresenta immagini vive fino al particolare di paesaggi montani, e che ogni cosa riesce a raccontare attraverso una tematica vigorosa e chiara, anche se non peregrina, Schoenberg molto promette, ma poco mantiene.

Una certa freddezza di invenzione è evidente nel suo stile; egli costruisce, disegna con solerte pensiero, sa dove vuole arrivare, ma lo slancio del suo cuore, quello slancio mirabile che si concretava in un tema, in un passaggio, in una situazione armonica geniale, difficilmente si può ravvisare nel suo pur serrato discorso.

Luigi Gianoli

LE PRIME A MILANO

Mitropoulos chiude la stagione alla Scala

Rideva, molto divertito, ieri sera il Maestro Mitropoulos, quando, alla fine del suo poderoso concerto, insistenti si fecero le grida di «Bis, bis...». E c'era effettivamente di che divertirsi a pensare di ripetere quel quarantacinque minuti di musica che formano la Sinfonia delle Alpi di Riccardo Strauss! Ma l'insistenza degli applausi, meglio delle ovazioni furono tali che alla fine qualcosa il maestro dovette concedere: imposto il silenzio, disse al pubblico: «Ebbene, vi riporterò sulla cima!» e riattaccò il brano che vorrebbe essere la musicale trasfigurazione della visione d'una cima. Un successo di tal genere veniva a coronare un concerto che, comunque, aveva un suo senso da un punto di vista programmatico e che metteva in luce le straordinarie capacità di questo direttore d'orchestra che è riuscito a rendere chiaro un polpettone turistico-descrittivo quale questa cosiddetta «sinfonia» delle Alpi, estremo decadimento d'un musicista che aveva colto una ventina d'anni prima gli ultimi guizzi della sua genialità postromantica e che qui boicchiava tra campanacci di vacche e rombi di tuono. Un'esecuzione così pulita, chiara, tale che, come osservava un amico, sembrava di leggere la parti-

tura, è una cosa rara e per istinto se non per scienza tutto il pubblico l'ha inteso, applaudendo freneticamente.

Del resto applausi erano andati, non meno clamorosi, al primo brano del programma, un altro poema sinfonico: Pelleas et Mélisande di Schoenberg, che si eseguiva per la prima volta in Italia a ben cinquantatré anni dalla sua composizione! Estremamente in ritardo dunque, ma non meno estremamente interessante, così come sempre sono interessanti le prospettive che permettono di mettere in luce i punti di partenza di un artista, di valutarne i moti degli sviluppi, di considerare insomma il perché del loro successivo cammino. Quello di Schoenberg è il lavoro giovanile d'un musicista (non aveva ancora trent'anni) che cerca la sua strada; non la trovò qui, ma questo lavoro fa capire perché scelse di poi quella che scelse, perché indicò al più giovani quella strada che oggi moltissimi seguono. Anche per questo va un applauso al maestro Mitropoulos: per aver presentato un programma, come dicevamo, con un suo senso preciso, panoramico d'una condizione della musica che, come la storia di mostro, era insostenibile.

Una serata insomma che ha

chiuso in bellezza la stagione scaligera; anche per questo forse gli applausi erano così intensi: volevano essere il cordiale arrivederci del pubblico milanese all'ottima orchestra della Scala.

CORRIERE DELLA SERA

CORRIERE DEG

ALLA SCALA

Il concerto Mitropoulos
a chiusura della stagione

Concerto «sul generis», però significativamente, nella disposizione programmatica e geniale nella interpretazione di Dimitri Mitropoulos, che ha voluto chiudere la stagione orchestrale della Scala nei nomi di Arnold Schoenberg e Richard Strauss, cioè dei due massimi esponenti nordici del «symphonische Dichtung», o poema sinfonico, di cui aveva gettato il seme letterario Liszt.

Pelleas und Mélisande fa parte del secondo periodo della produzione di Schoenberg, un periodo di transizione, detto anche post-romantico. Viene subito dopo il Sestetto per archi intitolato Verklärte Nacht (Notte trasfigurata); ma, mentre nel Sestetto è ancora manifesto per molti tratti il genuino cromatismo wagneriano, il Pelleas, che pure non ignora Wagner come non ignora Strauss, offre già l'impronta originale e abbastanza compiuta che condurrà gradatamente Schoenberg alle crudeltà del linguaggio polifonale e poi ai rigori della codificata dodecafonia. In Pelleas la dissonanza appare infatti isolata, come sciolta da ogni rapporto sensibilmente accessibile col tono fondamentale. E se v'ha ancora in esso una certa tendenza allo stile impressionistico, agevolato anche dal nutrimento organico strumentale, assai diversa da quella dell'omonima opera lirica debussiana, per non dire della squisita Suite orchestrale ispirata a Fauré dallo stesso dramma di Maeterlinck, ne è tuttavia l'atmosfera sonora, poiché il valore proprio d'ogni accordo, d'ogni segmento polifonico e d'ogni gioco timbrico spicca con evidenza da un processo autocritico e strettamente logico delle voci, allineate in rigida costruzione contrappuntistica. L'arte irruente di questo giovane Schoenberg, insomma, non conosceva la fine sensualità debussiana, tutta richiami sotterranei e nervi scoperti, e appena rispecchiava, per allora, le complesse

architetture drammatiche dell'amico e protettore Gustav Mahler.

Di Strauss, nella seconda parte del programma, è risuonata Una sinfonia delle Alpi, pagina che rende attoniti, quasi delusi gli ammiratori degli impeti passionali e delle eccitanti bizzarrie dialettiche dell'autore di un Tili o d'un Don Giovanni. Non è il capolavoro sinfonico del più tipico ed esorbitante Strauss. Ma l'indirizzo pomposo, quasi oleografico delle evocazioni, e il carattere descrittivo e squillante degli abbandoni rendono specialmente gradevole Eine Alpensymphonie, che il Mitropoulos ha concepito, e l'orchestra realizzata con alta sapienza tecnica e con vigoria forse degna di miglior causa. S'intende che l'esecuzione più impressionante per la magnificenza dei vibranti risultati ottenuti in orchestra è stata ieri sera quella del Pelleas, che ha particolarmente scatenato le acclamazioni del pubblico.

f. a.

L'ITALIA

MUSICA

Concerto Mitropoulos

di BENIAMINO DAL FABBRO

CHIUSURA della serie dei «concerti di primavera» e, insieme, dell'anno musicale, ieri sera, alla Scala, un mai visto e mai ascoltato spiegamento di compagnie strumentali, particolarmente rinforzate nei fiati, con numerosi leggi aggiunti di corni, trombe, tromboni, fagotti e bassi-tuba: un vero esercito sinfonico, che avrebbe fatto la gioia di un Berlioz, e che è stato guidato, in stile da grande condottiero, da Dimitri Mitropoulos, a cui anche quest'anno è stato affidato l'incarico del finale accordo scaligero. In programma, due sole opere sinfoniche, ma tali da richiedere tanti strabocchevoli mezzi e da occupare tutta una serata:

Pelleas et Mélisande op. 5 di Arnold Schoenberg e Eine Alpensymphonie op. 64 di Richard Strauss.

Composti rispettivamente nel 1903 e nel 1915, i due poemi sinfonici hanno offerto agli amatori dell'orgia sonora, una solenne e monumentale imbandizione, un emporio insuperato e succulento; ma agli ascoltatori avvertiti questo programma, tutt'altro che semplicistico e brutale come può apparire, ha dato una viva ed eloquente lezione, per mezzo di esempi, di storia della musica e d'estetica, in uno dei loro capitoli più controversi e determinanti, in rapporto all'arte del nostro secolo. Il poema di Schoenberg (ispirato allo stesso dramma di Maurice Maeterlinck da cui Debussy, proprio in quegli anni, ebbe a ricavare il suo «dramma lirico in cinque atti e dodici quadri») segna, da un lato, il distacco del futuro musicista dodecafónico dal linguaggio wagneriano, dilatato sino a un massimo di violenza cromatica, e dall'altro lato una caratterizzazione dell'espressionismo tedesco in contrapposito con l'impressionismo francese di Debussy; il tardo poema di Strauss, invece, ribadisce la situazione di epigono del compositore, ancora innamorato di ciclopici accordi consonanti, della fluente lava sinfonica in se stessa, di tutte le risorse più abusate dello stan-

co, esausto dissostato tonalismo. In Pelleas et Mélisande la straripante orchestra impianta crudeli, tragiche strutture, grida, urla, si divincola, percorre da un capo all'altro l'intero spazio sonoro, diventato un carcere d'echi in cui Schoenberg si aggira tentando con innesti di contrappunto, di porre un ordine nel caos scatenato; con la Sinfonia delle Alpi Strauss allestisce un chilometrico «cinerama» auditivo, per mezzo di una colossale orchestra che ci porta, sani e salvi, su ghiacciai, picchi, ghiottoni, mandrie scampananti, e poi, attraverso l'uragano, nel bel mezzo dell'arcobaleno, oltre la cascata iridescente. Sarebbe toccato a Schoenberg di appropiare dal disordine tonale all'ordine dodecafónico, e a Strauss d'involgersi sempre più, sino a un ricongiungimento delle opere senili a quelle della giovinezza, composte, si direbbe, in una stanza attigua a quella in cui lavorava Wagner; come sarebbe toccato alle ipertrofiche orchestre di Strauss, Mahler e Bruckner, di essere sostituite dai magri, essenziali complessi dei musicisti contemporanei.

Si deve soprattutto alla superiore arte direttoriale di Dimitri Mitropoulos e all'appassionata, virtuosistica collaborazione dell'orchestra della Scala, a cui, in occasione di questo ultimo e fortunato concerto, rivolgiamo il nostro saluto e il nostro augurio, se i due importanti lavori sinfonici, poco conosciuti (quello di Schoenberg si eseguiva per la prima volta in Italia), sono apparsi in tutta la loro magniloquenza e imponente sonorità: a tutti una lode ammirata, che il pubblico ha espresso con interminabili applausi e con grida di entusiasmo.

IL GIORNO

DIE FESTSPIELSTADT 1956

»Don Giovanni« musikalisch imponierend

Die Inszenierung in der Felsenreitschule noch immer problematisch

Es war zwar wahrscheinlich nur „technischen“ Gründen zuzuschreiben, daß im heurigen Festspiel-repertoire „Don Giovanni“ unmittelbar auf „Figaros Hochzeit“ folgte; die Nachbarschaft der beiden Meisterwerke hatte aber auch ihren guten künstlerischen Sinn. Wenn es Mozart im „Figaro“ zum ersten Mal gelungen war, in allen Figuren seines Bühnenspiels wirkliche Menschen agieren zu lassen und nicht bloß typische Verkörperungen bestimmter seelischer Grundhaltungen, so erreichte er in dem ein Jahr später entstandenen „Don Giovanni“ die Erhöhung dieser Figuren ins Überwirkliche und Mythische. Es gehört aber zum großartigsten der von Mozart im „Don Giovanni“ vollbrachten Schaffensleistungen, daß diese Erhöhung unter Wahrung der vollen Menschlichkeit der Gestalten erfolgte. Sie stehen, dank des vorzüglichen Librettos von Lorenzo Da Ponte und der musikalischen Charakterisierungskunst Mozarts, in der gleichen Lebensfülle vor uns wie im „Figaro“; sie sind aber gleichzeitig von den Mysterien des Überwirklichen umwaltet, und diese Überlagerung zweier Welten bedingt die besonderen Schwierigkeiten, denen jede Inszenierung des „Don Giovanni“ zu begegnen hat.

In unserem Falle werden diese Schwierigkeiten noch durch die räumlichen Besonderheiten der Felsenreitschule erhöht. Wir haben diese anlässlich des ersten Erscheinens des Werkes in diesem szenischen Rahmen im Jahre 1953 hier ausführlich gewürdigt und wollen auf sie daher heute ebenso wenig zurückkommen, wie auf die sehr zahlreichen Darstellungen und Deutungen, die vom „Don-Juan-Mythos“ bisher gegeben wurden und die allein schon ein paar Bücherbretter füllen können. Wir möchten aber unserem aufrichtigen Bedauern darüber Ausdruck geben, daß die Einwendungen, die wir gegen die damals von Herbert Graf geleistete Inszenierung des „Don Giovanni“ erhoben, bei der Wiederaufnahme des Werkes durch den gleichen Regisseur kaum wesentlich berücksichtigt wurden. Ein solches Ignorieren der öffentlichen Meinung stellt den Sinn einer der Kunstwerke und ihrer Darstellung dienenden Kritik überhaupt in Frage. — Die meisten der zeitgenössischen Regisseure werden in ihrer Selbstherrlichkeit einen solchen Sinn zwar gar nicht anerkennen; in der Erfüllung unserer Aufgabe gegenüber unserer Leserschaft halten wir uns aber dennoch für verpflichtet, werkwidrige Inszenierungsmaßnahmen öffentlich entgegenzutreten. Wir hoffen uns genügend moralischen Kredit erworben zu haben, daß unsere Ausführungen nicht als Ausfluß gekränkter persönlicher Eitelkeit aufgefaßt werden, sondern als von dem aufrichtigen Bestreben getragen, den künstlerischen Belangen der Salzburger Festspiele in aller Bescheidenheit zu dienen.

Unsere prinzipiellen Einwendungen richten sich gegen zwei Gattungen von Inszenierungsmaßnahmen: erstens gegen solche, die die musikalische Substanz antasten, und zweitens gegen solche, die die allgemeine Faßlichkeit der Bühnenvorgänge beeinträchtigen. Für beide Gattungen liefert uns die gegenwärtige „Don Giovanni“-Aufführung leider mehrere Beispiele; wir erwähnen im folgenden nur die gravierendsten, bei denen sich beide Gattungen fatalerweise noch vermischen und gegen-



TANZSCENE AUS DEM ERSTEN AKT DES „DON GIOVANNI“
Zerlina (Rita Streich) und Don Giovanni (Cesare Siepi). Photo: Schreiber

seitig steigern. Betrachten wir zunächst das erste Finale: Die Anfangsszenen haben Mozart zu einer ausgesprochenen „Gartenmusik“ inspiriert; die schwülen, verführerischen Töne, die Don Giovanni neuerlich Zerlina gegenüber anschlägt, sind aber in dem „Steinernen Meer“ der Felsenreitschule ganz deplaciert. Der Übergang von den Außen- zu den Innenräumen, den auch die Musik deutlich widerspiegelt, wird szenisch überhaupt nicht ausgedrückt. Das angeblich auf einem Mysteriengedanken der Barockzeit basierende Erscheinen eines Mönchs in der obersten Loggienreihe hätte nur dann einen Sinn, wenn auch in der Musik gleichzeitig Analoges vernnehmbar wäre; da dies absolut nicht der Fall ist, bleibt es ein rein äußerlicher Effekt, der für den uneingeweihten Zuschauer unverständlich und vom Wesentlichen ablenkend ist.

Im zweiten Akt steht die Weite der Landschaft, in der sich das Sextett abwickelt, in entschiedenem Widerspruch zu dem angstvollen Drange mancher Partien der Musik, bei denen Mozart bestimmt an die Enge und Ausweglosigkeit des Gewölbes gedacht hat, das der Librettist für diese Szene im Auge hatte. — Im zweiten Finale stört uns vor allem die überflüssigen Tanzevolutionen zu Beginn und das spätere Erscheinen des Chorpersons in den obersten Loggien, das die von den Mitgliedern des Balletts brillant vollzogene Exekution des Don Gio-

vanni mit einem für den makabren Anlaß vorzüglich geeigneten Vokalsatz begleitet. — Auf weitere Einzelheiten, die uns chokierten, wollen wir jetzt nicht näher eingehen, sondern lieber mit Vergnügen feststellen, daß Graf auch diesmal wieder eine Reihe sehr schöner Gruppierungen (Auftreten der Bauern und Ballszene im ersten Akt, Eindringen des Volkes nach der Höllenfahrt

dem steigenden symphonischen Aufbau der sich in den beiden Finali bogenartig emporwölbenden Großformen. Bei aller improvisatorischen Freiheit, die ihm sein erstaunliches Auswendigdisziplinieren gestattet, wußte Mitropoulos dennoch den sich daraus ergebenden Gefahren geschickt zu entgehen und die hier unbedingt nötige Stabilität der Grundmetren zu wahren. In den von mystischen Schauern durchwühlten Komtur-Szenen erreichte er die legitimen Höhepunkte seiner ersten Salzburger Operngestaltung.

Erhebliche Veränderungen wies auch das Sängersensemble auf. Dem wieder Dämonie und Eleganz zu bezaubernder Wirkung vereinigenden Don Giovanni von Cesare Siepi trat mit Fernando Corena ein ebenbürtiger Leporello an die Seite, der in der niederen Sphäre ein humoristisches Ebenbild seines sauberen Herrn darstellte, dem er selbst mit pfliffigem Rasonieren gehörig zusetzte. Beide waren in Gesang und Spiel von vollendeter Ausdruckskraft und Natürlichkeit. Ähnliches ist auch dem von Rita Streich (Zerlina) und Walter Berry (Masetto) verkörperten munteren Bauernpaar nachzurühnen. — Im aristokratischen Bereich war es dem Regisseur nicht gelungen, dem Don Giovanni ein entsprechend lebensvolles weibliches Gegenspiel zu präsentieren. Dafür ist bezeichnend, daß die beiden den ganzen Abend hindurch herrlich singenden Damen — Lisa Della Casa als Donna Elvira und Elisabeth Grümmer als Donna Anna — ihre stärksten dramatischen Momente in Monologen, in den Accompagnato-Rezitativen des zweiten Aktes hatten. — Leopold Simoneau, der neue Don Ottavio, ist mit einer prächtigen lyrischen Tenorstimme ausgestattet; gewisse Manieriertheiten des Vortrags beeinträchtigen aber seine schöne Gesangsleistung wesentlich; sein Spiel ging noch über die Grenzen der dem Don Ottavio ohnehin zugebilligten Passivität. — Gottlob Frick erfüllte als Komtur seine schwierigen Vater- und Gespensterpflichten mit vorbildlicher Würde und markigem Gesang. — Da Orchester, Chor und Ballett bereits rühmend erwähnt wurden, seien nur noch die schönen, von Rolf Gérard geschaffenen Kostüme gebührend gelobt.

Zum Schlusse muß, bei aller Anerkennung des auch diesmal reichlich dargebotenen Schönen und Interessanten, entschieden hervorgehoben werden, daß der ideale, Musik und Szene sinnvoll vereinende Stil des Salzburger „Don Giovanni“ noch immer ein Wunschtraum bleibt. Möge er in naher Zukunft zur Wirklichkeit werden!

Dr. Willi Reich

Kunst und Kultur

„Don Giovanni“ in der Felsenreitschule

Von unserem zu den Salzburger Festspielen entsandten Sonderberichterstatter

Salzburg, 25. Juli

Über den „Don Giovanni“ sind im 19. und im noch redseligeren 20. Jahrhundert Bibliotheken geschrieben worden. Welche Absichten und Gedanken sind nicht Daponte und Mozart seit E. Th. A. Hoffmanns Novelle unterstellt und durch Byron, Grabbe und Kierkegaard noch unterstrichen worden! Vor kurzem erst hat man in der Komturepisode eine Nachwirkung der Trauer Mozarts um seinen Anfang 1787 verstorbenen Vater erblicken wollen — weit eher könnte man mit Lert von einer geistigen Verfassung Mozarts reden, die ihn, unter dem Eindruck des Todes naher Freunde (wie Hatzfeld und Sigmund Barriani) und der Abreise seiner Freundin Nandy Storace, zu emotionaler Expansion drängte. Ja, im Festspielalmanach wird sogar behauptet, Darius Milhaud habe in der großen Szene des Steinernen Gastes eine zentrale Episode musikalischer Zwölftönigkeit aufgedeckt, eine Auffächerung des ganzen Tonraumes in höchster Knappheit. Mozart, der geniale Erfinder, der Schöpfer des süßen, erregenden und beglückenden Wunders der Melodie als Ahnherr der Dodekaphoniker, als Vorläufer der am Schreittisch mit Diagrammen konstruierten Zerebralmusik!

Bleiben wir doch dabei, daß Daponte und Mozart nichts anderes wollten, als dem Manager Bondini für Prag eine für seine kleine Bühne geeignete neue Buffa zu liefern, die dem so erfolgreichen „Figaro“ ähnlich und doch neu und originell sein sollte. Dapontes theatrales Geschick, seine im Stil der Epoche unbekümmerte Entlehnung vieler wirksamer Momente aus älteren Fassungen der Sage, vor allem aus Molière, Goldoni und der eben in Wien bekannt gewordenen Oper Bertati-Gazzanigas schufen Mozart ein ausgezeichnetes, nur im zweiten Akt durch Einschübe und Retardationen im Tempo verlangsamtes Buch, das offenbar ebenso wie „Figaro“ ursprünglich vieraktig angelegt war. Daß Mozarts Genius daraus ein einmaliges Geniewerk schuf, ist eine göttliche Gnade, wie sie in Jahrhunderten nicht wiederkehrt.

Die Oper erschien nach dem Krieg zuerst 1950 im Festspielhaus und wurde dann, ähnlich wie „Idomeneo“ und „Zauberflöte“ auf die Freilichtbühne der Felsenreitschule verpflanzt, keineswegs zu ihrem Vorteil. Wir haben 1953 und 1954 ausführlich unsere Ablehnung dieser Idee begründet und wollen uns nicht wiederholen. Die viel zu breite Bühne, nur teilweise wirklich ausgenutzt, schädigt die Klangbeziehungen der Singstimme zum Orchester, entbehrt der notwendigen szenischen Behelfe und drängt die vom Librettisten geforderten elf Schauplätze zwangsläufig auf einige wenige, ineinander übergehende zusammen. Die Regie wird dadurch vor für sie kaum zu lösende Schwierigkeiten gestellt, die feineren Schattierungen des Orchesterkolorits verblassen, und tritt, wie diesmal, ein ausgiebiger Salzburger Schnürlregen dazu, so wird das Cembalo ganz, das Holz beinahe unhörbar, und es bleibt staunenswert, daß die Sänger überhaupt den Kontakt mit dem Orchester aufrecht erhalten können. Die geniale Idee der Reinhardtischen „Faust“-Stadt ließ sich eben auf die ganz anderen Gesetzen gehorchende Oper nicht übertragen, und ein Teil der Kritik hat immer wieder auf das ganz Unbefriedigende dieser szenischen Lösung hingewiesen. Aber Metternichs Wort, in Österreich werde nichts geändert, scheint — bisher — für Salzburg noch immer zu gelten. Und so wurde der Experimentierlust und einem verfehlten Prinzip zuliebe die Wirkung verringert.

Herbert Grafs kluge, lebendige Regie tut ihr Äußerstes, um hier ausgleichend, korrigierend zu wirken. Die makabren Sarkophage, an denen Don Giovanni seinen Weinkelch zerschlagen muß, die Grabsteine, die sich gleich neben dem Eingang zu Don Giovanni Kasino erheben, sind beseitigt, der „dissoluto“ muß nicht mehr im zweiten Finale in die Zentrale, die Bühne beherrschende Gruftkapelle hinaufsteigen, die Statue kommt, wie es Daponte wollte, in den Speisesaal durch dessen Haupteingang — leider ohne auf demselben Weg abzugehen.

Flüssiger, lebendiger sind auch die Volksszenen, vor allem die des ersten Finales; die unmöglichen Alguazils in Goyatracht sind verschwunden oder, besser gesagt, zeitgemäß uniformiert. Sie könnten ganz wegbrechen, denn spanische Granden pflegten ihre Differenzen mit dem Degen, nicht durch die heilige Hermándad auszusutzen. Die vier leichten Dämchen, die Don Juan auch bei seinen Tafelfreuden Gesellschaft leisten, um das „Viva le femine, viva il buon vino“ recht augenscheinlich zu machen, mag man in Kauf nehmen. Verfehlt aber ist es, wenn Elvira nach links abgeht, statt durch den Saaleingang, und ihren Schreckensschrei ausstößt, ohne dem Steinernen Gast überhaupt begegnet zu sein. Auch Leporello bekommt Angst, ehe er noch, von Don Giovanni mit dem blanken Degen dazu gezwungen, die Tür öffnet. Die Regie läßt im zweiten Akt Ottavio und Anna aus den Gruftkaden auftreten, in die sich auch Leporello verirrt hat. Aber nach Daponte soll diese Szene und das anschließende Sextett im Atrio des Gouverneurpalastes spielen, in das sich Elvira und Leporello flüchten, und das ganze, gar nicht deil-

ziöse Quiproquo ist nur durch die völlige Unzulänglichkeit der Freilichtbühne zur Verwirklichung der Absichten Dapontes zu erklären.

Auch die Beleuchtung scheint uns manchmal nicht zweckentsprechend. So wirkt es unglaublich, wenn Leporello während der Duellszene nicht im Dunkel, sondern im Scheinwerferlicht unter dem Balkon von Elvira Posada steht, wenn im zweiten Akt die Bauern bei viel zu hellem Licht Don Giovanni in den Kleidern Leporellos nicht erkennen! (Auf der nur durch Öllampen erleuchteten Bühne Mozarts war derlei durchaus glaubhaft.) Und der in den Saal tretende Steinernen Gast müßte in ganz fahlem, mattem Licht erscheinen. Ein dreidimensionales Gespenst wirkt eher skurril. Über die unnötige und nur dem Effekt dienende Einbeziehung der oberen Galerien in das Geschehen mit Mönchsprozessionen, Lakaien und Laternenträger haben wir schon an dieser Stelle gesprochen. Schön und stilvoll die Kostüme Rolf Gerards.

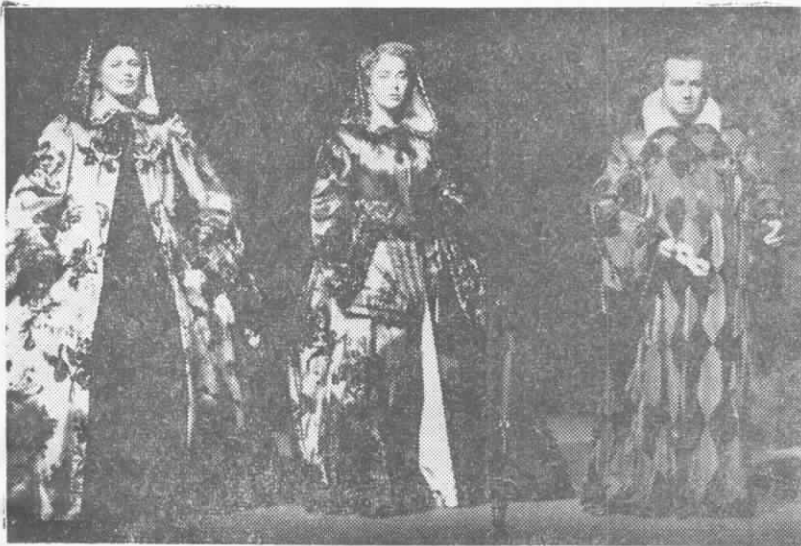
Ohne Einschränkung zu loben das Musikalische. Cesare Siepi's tenoral timbrierter, satter Bariton, seine südliche Beweglichkeit und Gentilezza geben dem großen Verführer Relief und Glanz. Daß er die Champagner-Arie in viel zu langsamem Tempo und auf freiem Platz singen muß („Selbst der Garten ist für dieses sexuelle Brio zu wenig geschlossen“, sagt Lert), ist nicht seine Schuld. Leporello war diesmal Fernando Corena, ein gewandter Darsteller mit einem vollsaftigen, hellen Bariton, aber ein wenig trocken. Leporello ist doch ein Nachkomme Harlekins, des feigen, gefräßigen, schlauen Dieners der Stegreifkomödie. Den betrogenen Bräutigam Ottavio macht Leopold Simoneau beinahe sympathisch. Er ist ein begnadeter Mozart-Sänger, ein echter Belcantist. Ein tragendes Flauto, ein schön geschwungenes Legato und prächtige Phrasierung adeln seine beiden Arien und lassen vergessen, daß „Dalla sua pace“ ein dramatisch unerklärliches, an falscher Stelle eingelegtes, obwohl herrliches Stück Musik ist. Walter Berrys Masetto hat Kraft und Persönlichkeit. In seinem „Ho Capito, Signore“ glimmt und wetterleuchtet es bedrohlich. Gottlob Frick war ein stimmig-waltiger, vornehmer Komtur.

Ganz ausgezeichnet auch die Frauen. Vor allem Lisa della Casa, die Wandlungsfähige, die zuletzt in Wien die Anna sang und nun die Elvira großartig und mit dramatischer Unparteilichkeit interpretiert. Sie ist die wahre Gegenspielerin Don Giovanni's, tragisch, zielbewußt, aber schwach, wenn es um ihre Liebe zu ihm geht. Elisabeth Grümmer gibt die Anna so, wie Lert sie sieht: als ein junges, törichtes, unerfahrenes Mädchen, die Don Juan knapp entgeht, wenn man nicht mit Einsteinn annimmt, daß sie seine Geliebte war. Sie singt die schwierige Partie herrlich, unpathetisch, ist immer liebende Frau, keine Rachegöttin. Rita Streich faßt ihre reizvolle, gut gesungene und lebendig gespielte Zerlina als süße, kleine spanische Flitschen auf, die bedenkenlos von einem Mann zum andern eilt und noch in den Armen ihres Bräutigams diesem schon untreu wird.

Dimitri Mitropoulos leitete die Ausführung mit der Umsicht und Überlegenheit eines großen Dirigenten, aber sein Herz gehört anscheinend nicht Mozart, dessen Wärme und Innigkeit von ihm nicht ins Orchester überströmte. Wir haben in Wien manche Ausführung gehört, die in dieser Hinsicht der gestrigen den Rang ablief. Die Philharmoniker musizierten mit gewohnter Schönheit.

Im ganzen eine prachtvolle Aufführung, die den Salzburger Festspielen Ehre macht und mit Recht starken Beifall fand. Karajan wohnte ihr bei und mochte sich über manches Gedanken machen. Dürfen wir von ihm die Abkehr von der unseligen Freilichtbühne und von avantgardistischen Experimenten, Rückkehr zur Magna Charta der Spiele hoffen, wie Hofmannsthal und Strauß sie aufstellten? Wir hoffen es!

Dr. Hermann Ullrich



MASKENTERZETT AUS DEM FINALE DES ERSTEN AKTS
Donna Anna (Elisabeth Grümmer), Donna Elvira (Lisa Della Casa) und Don Ottavio (Leopold Simoneau). Photo: Ellinger

Demokratisches Volksblatt

Salzburger Festspiele 1956:

26. Juli 1956

„Don Giovanni“ - Fest der Stimmen

Die zweite Opernpremiere der diesjährigen Festspiele ließ in vieler Hinsicht Erinnerungen an den Triumph des Salzburger „Don Giovanni“ im Jahre 1954 wach werden. Wieder wurde das Drama Giocoso in der Felsenreitschule aufgeführt, jenem einzigartigen Schauplatz der Festspiele, der gerade bei dieser Oper Mozarts Bestimmungen und Beziehungen offenbar werden läßt, die einem sonst nur selten ganz klar werden. Auch an der eindrucksvollen Simultanbühne Clemens Holzmeisters, welche aus der „Faust-Stadt“ eine „Don-Giovanni-Stadt“ werden ließ, hat sich nichts geändert. Nach wie vor bietet sich dem Zuschauer von links nach rechts gesehen folgendes Bild dar: Der Palast des Komturs und das Haus der Donna Elvira, die sich wunderbar in das pittoreske Winkelwerk einer alten spanischen Provinzstadt einfügen. In der Mitte sodann der Friedhof mit einer einfach gefächerten Kirchenfassade und entsprechendem Glockenstuhl und schließlich, die ganze rechte Seite einnehmend, das Schloß des Don Giovanni, welches von Clemens Holzmeister so glücklich gestaltet wurde, daß es je nach Bedarf die Illusion von Palast, Park, Interieur oder Ballsaal vermittelt.

Ebenso lag die Inszenierung wieder in den bewährten Händen von Herbert Graf, der diesmal zum Vorteil der ganzen Aufführung die seinerzeit zu sehr betonte Friedhofspathetik stark eindämmte, den „steinernen Gast“ nun zur Tafel des Don Giovanni kommen ließ und in all den anderen Szenen

mit Erfolg um eine ungezwungene Lebendigkeit bemüht war. Der dritte Posten in dem Triumvirat von Bühnenbildern, Regisseur und Dirigent war heuer neu besetzt, und zwar mit Dimitri Mitropoulos, an Stelle des verewigten Wilhelm Furtwängler. Wie bei einem solchen Wechsel nicht anders zu erwarten, wurde der Aufführung dadurch in musikalischer Hinsicht ein ganz neuer Stem-

pel aufgedrückt, denn mit Dimitri Mitropoulos trat ja eine wesentlich anders geartete Persönlichkeit an die Spitze der Wiener Philharmoniker. Zwar schien es uns, als ob auch er, ähnlich wie sein großer Vorgänger, den mythischen und mystischen Zügen des „Don Giovanni“ näher stünde als den vom Librettisten Lorenzo da Ponte bewußt eingeflochtenen Elementen der Commedia dell'arte, doch war dies wohl die einzige Gemeinsamkeit. Ansonsten wartete Mitropoulos mit einer entschiedenen eigenen Auffassung auf, die sich in den Tempi von der Furt-



Salzburger Don Giovanni 1956: Dimitri Mitropoulos am Dirigentenpult. Photo: A. Madner

wänglers überraschenderweise zwar nicht wie Tag und Nacht, aber immerhin wie Dämmerung und Nacht unterschied. Das zeitliche Übermaß der Aufführung vor zwei Jahren wurde auf diese Weise etwas zurückgeschraubt — eine Maßnahme, von der vor allem die Sänger profitierten. Gerade sie waren von Furtwängler mitunter nämlich vor Aufgaben gestellt worden, die ganz einfach ihre physischen Kräfte überstiegen. Dank der Einfühlungsgabe von Mitropoulos konnte davon heuer keine Rede sein, obgleich auch er bemüht war, Einzelheiten dieser an zahllosen Schönheiten überreichen Partitur zutage treten zu lassen, die der durchschnittliche Opernbetrieb im allgemeinen zu entdecken sich nicht die Zeit nimmt.

Erwähnt seien hier nur das erste Duett mit dem Racheschwur, dessen eindringliche Wirkung Mitropoulos ähnlich wie seinerzeit Furtwängler durch eine kleine Zurückhaltung noch zu steigern versuchte, und das große Entree der Elvira, dem er durch sein ausgreifendes Zeitmaß jene Bedeutung zurückroberte, die ihm zweifellos zukommt. Selbst wenn nämlich die Figur der Donna Elvira ansonsten gewöhnlich im Schatten der von Mozart zu großen dramatischen Aktionen aufgerufenen Donna Anna steht, so stellt sie im Grunde doch eine gleichberechtigte Partnerin der Komturstochter dar, da ihre Liebe zu Don Giovanni ja demselben echten Gefühl entspringt wie die Zuneigung Donna Annas zu Don Ottavio.

Der hier bewiesenen Zurückhaltung setzte Mitropoulos leider nicht immer die notwendige Dynamik, sondern eine Statik gegenüber, die einem Oratorium besser ansgestanden wäre als einem Drama Giocoso. Wie langweilig klang beispielsweise doch die Registerarie des Leporello und wie klein brannte die Flamme in dem ansonsten so feurigen Champagnerlied des Don Giovanni. Schade darum, denn auf der anderen Seite erklimmte derselbe Mitropoulos mit den glänzend disponierten Wiener Philharmonikern und einem geradezu idealen Ensemble von Sängern und Sängerinnen zahlreiche Höhepunkte, die, angefangen von der Ouvertüre bis zu dem herrlichen Schlußsextett, wohl stets in bester Erinnerung bleiben werden.

Vom Ensemble der Sänger, das trotz des zeitweiligen auf das Rollad niederprasselnden Gewitterregens den Besuchern der Aufführung ein wahres Fest der Stimmen bereitet, muß zunächst Cesare Siepi genannt werden, der als Don Giovanni wie schon vor zwei Jahren wieder eine großartige Leistung bot. Er überzeugte nämlich nicht nur mit einer schönen, warmen und dabei doch männlichen Stimme, sondern auch durch eine glänzende Erscheinung (die durch das zweite seiner insgesamt fünf Kostüme allerdings ein wenig beeinträchtigt wurde), ein überaus lebendiges Spiel und was ihn zum Don Juan par excellence machte: durch eine wahre Skala von Verführungskünsten, denen kein Frauenherz zu widerstehen vermochte. Lisa Della Casa, welche die Rolle der Donna Elvira mit allen Vorzügen ihres bühnenwirksamen Aussehens und ihrer herrlichen Stimme ausstattete, konnte davon genau so ein Lied singen wie die reizende Rita Streich, die als Zerline eine untadelige Leistung bot. Bleibt von den Sängerinnen noch Elisabeth Grümmer zu nennen, welche die Donna Anna wiederum mit großer künstlerischer und technischer Überlegenheit sang, im Spiel aber noch immer jenen dra-

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ÖSTERREICHISCHE NEUE TAGESZEITUNG

„Don Giovanni“ — vom Regen gekühlt

Schöne Stimmen, aber wenig Stimmung in der Felsenreitschule — Mitropoulos dirigierte ein Oratorium, aber keine Oper

Von unserem in der Festspielstadt weilenden Kulturredakteur

Die Aufführung stand unter keinem glücklichen Stern. Der Regen, der den Tag über angehalten hatte, trommelte vom Beginn der Ouvertüre fast den ganzen Abend lang mit immer neuen heftigen Güssen auf das ausgespannte Schutzdach der Felsenreitschule, so daß nicht nur die feineren Planstellen und die Rezitative, sondern zuweilen halbe Arien, ja selbst das Chorfinale des ersten Aktes im Getörmel und Geplätscher unterging. Das drückte begreiflicherweise sehr auf die Stimmung des Abends und die Ambition der Sänger, die stellenweise den Souffleur und das Cembalo nicht mehr hörten und dadurch nicht nur die Sicherheit und den Kontakt mit dem Orchester, sondern offensichtlich auch die Lust am Algerien verloren.

Dazu kam, daß Dimitri Mitropoulos, offenbar mit den Tücken der Felsenreitschule oder vielleicht überhaupt mit den Gegebenheiten des Musiktheaters zu wenig vertraut, zu zähe Tempi vorlegte. Vielleicht hat Furtwängler, streng metronomisch gemessen, seinerzeit auch nicht rascher dirigiert, aber er hatte jenen weiten Atem, jene innere Dichte, die das statische Zeitmaß mit innerer Dramatik erfüllte. Mitropoulos aber ließ nicht nur das Mozartsche Brio vermissen, er löst auch die Mozart-Dramatik in Mozart-Epik auf: Er dirigiert keine Mozart-Oper, sondern ein Mozart-Oratorium. Freilich ein solches von edlem Zuschnitt. Daß ein außerordentlicher Musiker und eine starke künstlerische Persönlichkeit am Pult steht, weiß man nicht nur, man spürt es auch im Spielniveau der Wiener Philharmoniker, deren Instrumente, trotz Kälte und Feuchtigkeit, in voller Leuchtkraft erblühen.

Die szenische Gestaltung ist — mit einigen Veränderungen — vom Jahre 1953 übernommen. Rolf Gerard schuf neue farben- und formenreiche Kostüme, die repräsentativ (Elvira als Roben) und zuweilen etwas verspielt wirken. Clemens Holzmeister hat die Mitte seiner Simultanbühne, die den glücklichen Versuch darstellt, die Szene der barocken Architektur Salzburgs anzupassen und damit das Spiel aus dem Geist der Stadt heraus zu entwickeln, etwas umgebaut: die Friedhofgruppe wurde auf Balkonhöhe gehoben und damit der unteren allgemeinen Spielebene entrückt, so daß das Drama Giocoso nun nicht

mehr andauernd am Tod vorbeispielen muß. Dagegen muß nun der Geist des Komturs über eine stockhohe Treppe herabspazieren und verliert dadurch nicht nur seine statuarische Wucht, sondern auch seine Dämonie. Ein kleiner weißangestrichener Mann steht plötzlich mitten unter uns.

Auch die Grundzüge von Herbert Graf's überdeutlicher, handfester, selbst filmische Effekte nicht verschmähender Wirklichkeitsregie, wie sie die Weiträumigkeit der Freilichtbühne rechtfertigt, sind geblieben. Immer noch fällt Don Giovanni den steinernen Gast mit dem Messer an, immer noch zerren die tanzenden Lemuren der Hölle den Sünder unter mächtigem Schwefeldampf höchst persönlich in den glühenden Pfuhl. Hingegen läßt die Führung der Sänger manches zu wünschen. Es gibt Saloppheten auf der Bühne, an denen der Regen allein nicht schuld sein kann. Der Chor bewegt sich nicht immer sinnvoll.

Vor allem aber wurde versäumt, die neubesetzten Rollen darstellerisch ins Ensemble einzufügen. Fernando Corena, ein prächtiger Bariton und ein berühmter Falstaff, singt seinen Leporello erstaunlich farb- und humorlos. Rita Streich, eine stimmlich saubere und frische Zerline, haben wir als Blondchen schon weit launiger und vor allem ungehemmter agieren gesehen. Von dort wissen wir, daß sie auch naiv und herzlich sein kann. Lisa Della Casa ist überhaupt keine Donna Elvira; ihr Organ, ihr Wesen ist viel zu sanft, zu lyrisch für diese dramatische Partie. Wo es um aufgewühlte Leidenschaften geht, gibt sie pastorale Empfindung. Das sagt nichts gegen die wundervolle kultivierte Sängerin mit dem runden, glockenhaften Sopran, nichts gegen die anmutreiche, poetische Erscheinung, die es unverzüglich macht, daß Don Giovanni diese Geliebte verlassen hat. Ein klarer Gewinn ist der neue Don Ottavio, Leopold Simoneau

singt diese passive Rolle mit lockerem Ansatz, reinstem Belcanto-Schmelz und vollendeter Pianokultur. Auch Gottlob Frick ist gut auf seinem Platz. Sein schwarzer Baß gibt dem Komturs jenseitiges Gewicht.

Die übrige Besetzung ist unverändert: Cesare Siepi, der biegsame Don Giovanni, noch schlanker geworden, noch bestrickender im verführerischen Timbre seines dunklen Baritons, wirkte an diesem Abend etwas müde und abgespannt. Elisabeth Grümmer's weiches, blütenreiches Organ gibt der ehrenstolzen Donna einen ergreifenden Zauber. Walter Berry spielt und singt seinen grundsympathischen Masetto unbeeinträchtigt von Regenschauern und gibt ein Beispiel echter Ambition. — Auch das Publikum ließ sich durch die widrigen Umstände nicht beirren und feierte ein Fest schöner Stimmen wie es eben fiel. Alexander Witeschnik

Donnerstag, 26. Juli 1956

Süddeutsche Zeitung Nr. 178

In Salzburg „Don Giovanni“ unter Mitropoulos

Verflucht sei der Schnürregen! Mit diabolischer Hartnäckigkeit trommelte er gegen die Dachplane der Felsenreitschule und vergällte dem Dirigenten Dimitri Mitropoulos jede zarte Nuance. Was der Regen akustisch am Leben gelassen hatte, fiel der hektischen Beifallswut des Publikums zum Opfer. Die Nachspiele der Arien wurden mitteillos im Applaus erstickt, als seien sie lästige Anhangsel der Sängerleistungen. Das Ohr gewahrte daher wenig mehr als die Umriss einer Giovanni-Aufführung, die denkwürdig war in ihrer aristokratischen Gelassenheit, ihrer Dezenz des Gefühls und ihrer Grazie des musikalischen Feinschliffs. Der Kunstverständnis, geschult in der Lehre bei dem Mozartkenner Busoni, nahm das vulkanische Temperament des Ausdrucksmusiklers Mitropoulos an die Kandare. Die dämonische Klau steckte in Glacéhandschuhen, der auswendig geschwungene Taktstock wandelte sich zum Galanteriedegen, das Espressivo, die Grundtendenz des Dirigenten Mitropoulos, schritt auf leisen Soh-

len, in verhaltenen Zeitmaßen, in einem unaufdringlich nuancierten Piano (ein Kompliment den Wiener Philharmonikern), geführt von einem Instinkt für die Balance der Form, daß nicht einmal die Jenseitsklänge des Komturs (von Gottlob Frick mit Donnerstimme verkündet) gewalttätiges Pathos annahmen.

Zu dieser ätherisch-zerbrechlichen Mozart-Deutung paßten die Regie Herbert Graf's (Revue mit Metaphysik kombinieren) und die Giovanni-stadt Clemens Holzmeisters wie die Faust aufs Auge. Die Sänger, von Rolf Gerard aufs Pomposseste kostümiert, bewegten sich in Mitropoulos' Bannkreis: Der faszinierende Hühner Cesare Siepi, dessen Giovanni kein abgelebter Triebbold, sondern ein herrlicher Genießer ist, dem der Eros noch in den Fingerspitzen sitzt; Elisabeth Grümmer's Donna Anna, die das Herz bis in die Koloraturen schlagen läßt, Lisa della Casas mondän-schöne Elvira; Leopold Simoneau's Ottavio mit bezwingenden Pianissimo-Künsten; Rita Streich als hinreißend kehlertüftiges Stückchen Zerline. Dem Leporello Fernando Corenas fehlte es an Humor, nicht an Stimme. Walter Berry machte den Masetto zu einer Hauptrolle — Beweis, welch eine Nachwuchspotenz hier aufblüht. Der Lorbeer gebührt Mitropoulos, dem Meister des formgewordenen Gefühls, dem Intimus Mozarts, dem Dämoniker im Kavalierkostüm, dem Relikt einer Zeit, die letzte Geheimnisse spielerisch zu sagen verstand. Karl Schumann



Salzburger Don Giovanni 1956: Zerline, die Braut Masettos (Rita Streich), scheint den Künsten des großen Verführers (Cesare Siepi) zu erliegen. Photo: Hans Hagen.

matischen Ton vermissen ließ, den diese Rolle nun einmal verlangt.

Zweifellos die vollkommenste Leistung des Abends bot der erstmals für die Salzburger Festspiele gewonnene Tenor Leopold Simoneau, der in der Rolle des Don Ottavio sich als ein Künstler ganz großen Stils, als Meister in Tonbildung, Atemführung und Ausdrucksgebung bewährte. Herrlich seine Mozart-Kantilene, überzeugend aber auch die Tiefe des Gefühls und der Empfindung, die bei allem Belcanto doch immer wieder durchklang. Nicht ganz einverstanden waren wir mit der zweiten Neubesetzung gegenüber der letzten Aufführung unter Furtwängler, denn der Leporello Fernando Corenas bewegte sich meist doch mehr in den Bezirken Rossinis als in denen Mozarts. Walter Berry hingegen spielte und sang einen Masetto, an dem man seine helle Freude haben konnte. Klar und präzise im Gesang, erfrischend in seiner trotzig und dann wieder lebenswerten Burschenhaftigkeit, gewann er sich im Nu die Sympathien des Publikums. Als Komturs endlich ließ Gottlob Frick alle Register seiner gewaltigen Baßstimme vernehmen, wobei ihm besonders die Töne jener übernatürlichen Macht vortrefflich gelangen, die dem hemmungslosen Liebesdämon des Don Giovanni schließlich für immer Einhalt gebieten.

Die eindrucksvolle Aufführung, die in optischer Hinsicht noch durch die geschmackvollen Kostüme Rolf Gerards bereichert wurde, ist vom Premierenpublikum überaus beifällig aufgenommen worden. Neben den Solisten und dem gut einstudierten Chor der Wiener Staatsoper wurden vor allem Dimitri Mitropoulos und die Wiener Philharmoniker sehr herzlich gefeiert. Dr. Heinz Klier.

Felsenreitschule: „Don Giovanni“ in Nöten

Als Wilhelm Furtwängler vor zwei Jahren „Don Giovanni“ in der Felsenreitschule dirigierte, dominierte die Persönlichkeit des musikalischen Leiters derart, daß man unter dem Eindruck der großartigen Partiturausdeutung vielerlei Konzerte, was im Räumlichen und Regieischen dem Drama giocoso abträglich erschien. Nun, da das Schicksal das Gleichgewicht der musikalischen, szenischen und bühnenbaulichen Führung wieder hergestellt hat, kommt man aus den Bedenken gegen die Einheitsbühne zum mindesten im Falle des „Don Giovanni“ nicht heraus. Unentwegt muß die Phantasie zu Hilfe eilen, um die Bühnenvorgänge logisch auszudeuten, unentwegt stolpert der Verstand über Widersprüche, die gewisse Neuordnungen innerhalb der Szene nur noch verstärkt haben. Nichts gegen den Regisseur Herbert Graf, der in New York und Wien, in Italien und Amerika gezeigt hat, was er kann und eine neue Bestätigung seines Könnens nicht nötig hat. Nichts gegen Clemens Holzmeister, der seine reiche, unerschöpfliche

Künstlerphantasie immer zur Hand hat. Alles aber — in diesem Falle — gegen die Felsenreitschule. Sie ist und bleibt ein Idealfall für den Gluckschen „Orpheus“, wie er in unserer Erinnerung steht. Der „Don Giovanni“ mit seinen zwangsläufig wechselnden Schauplätzen ist hier fehl am Ort. Der akustisch unerträgliche Regen tat ein Übriges, die Stimmung zu drücken. Begreiflich, daß Sänger irritiert sind, die das Cembalo auf dem kurzen Weg vom Orchesterraum zur Bühne nicht mehr wahrnehmen können — alle Achtung vor der Musikalität, sozusagen haltlos, im leeren Raum, nicht nur den richtigen Ausdruck, sondern auch den rechten Ton zu finden. Kein Wunder, daß die meisten vom Dirigenten geplanten Nuancen verloren gehen, daß die Präzision leidet, wenn sich ein auf- und abbremsendes und -diminuierendes Regengeräusch dazwischen mischt. Es wird auch wieder schöne Abende in der Felsenreitschule geben. Aber die gestrige Premiere hat gezeigt, daß dieser Raum eine Sensationslösung für

das Publikum und eine Reservelösung für den Mozartfreund bleibt.

So kann diese „Don-Giovanni“-Premiere kaum gerecht beurteilt werden. Dimitri Mitropoulos ist ein bedeutender Dirigent. Was seiner Mozart-Interpretation fehlte, waren die wechselnden Farben, war die Freiheit innerhalb der Gebundenheit, war das Ausschwingenlassen innerhalb der festgefühten Arie, innerhalb des zuchtvoll und korrekt geführten Ensembles. Vielleicht trug daran einzig und allein das Wetter mit allen akustischen und stimmungsmäßigen Begleiterscheinungen die Schuld. Herbert Graf hat ein einziges von seiner Auffassung des Jahres 1954 revidiert. Eine relative Verbesserung ergab die Neuordnung der Friedhofsszene, eine absolute Verschlechterung der Auftritt des Komturs im Schlussbild. Clemens Holzmeister hat kleine Korrekturen vorgenommen, die an dem Bühnenbild-Konzept nichts Wesentliches geändert haben. Der Säulengang unter dem späteren Friedhof mußte freilich nicht unbedingt zum Lausplatz für Donna Elvira mißbraucht werden. Wenn wir schon bei Regiedetails sind: ein Lepporello darf sich innerhalb der „Register“-Arie vor Elvira nicht setzen. Die Kostüme Rolf Gerards sind anzuerkennen. Im Falle des Komturs der Donna Elvira trug er mehr der Schönheit seiner Trägerin als dem Stilmäßigen Rechnung. Die Wiener Philharmoniker taten ihr Bestes und verloren trotzdem gegen den Regenlärm, wenn es allzu sforzato prasselte, der Staatsoperchor hatte sich sehr beweglich, musikalisch und darstellerisch zu zeigen.

Cesare Siepi ist ein prächtiger Sänger. Was seinem Giovanni fehlt, ist der Hintergrund. Das Kosmopolitische der Gestalt. Der Symbolgehalt zur Realgestalt. Lisa della Casa leistete als Donna Elvira Außerordentliches. Sie hat nun einmal dieses dramatische Fach gewählt. Und außer Frau Schwarzkopf kennen wir keine Startsängerin, die den absoluten Anforderungen dieser Partie entspricht.

Herbert Schneider

NEUER KURIER

Mittwoch, 25. Juli 1956

THEATER · MUSIK · FILM · LITERATUR · BILD

Herbert Grafs neues Mozart-Musical

Gestern abend: „Don Giovanni“ in der Salzburger Felsenreitschule im Kampf gegen Wolkenbrüche

In Clemens Holzmeisters drei Jahre altem, nunmehr ein wenig umgebautem Sevilla in der Felsenreitschule kennen sich auch die Einheimischen nicht recht aus — das beweisen so manche falsche Abgänge und Auftritte, etliche Fassadenklettereien und was es sonst noch an Dingen gibt, die das Auge auf dieser Cinemascopebühne beschäftigen. Und das ist gar viel, denn das Nebeneinander der Schauplätze wird vom Spielleiter durch ein Durcheinander der Aktionen ergänzt.

Herbert Graf, der kenntnisreiche Theatermann mit dem untrüglichen Blick für starke Bildwirkungen, hat aus der Not eine Tugend zu machen versucht und diesmal konsequenter noch als vor drei Jahren mehr den Raum als das Werk inszeniert. Eine großzügige Show ist so entstanden, eine muntere Revue, ein richtiges Mozart-Musical, das gut und gerne „Kiss me, John!“ heißen könnte. Vielleicht — wer weiß es? — gewinnt hier ein US-Produzent die Anregung für einen Giovanni-Film. Errol Flynn ist ja ein guter Turner.

Was das Ganze mit „Don Giovanni“, mit Mozart, Geist und Stil zu tun hat? Wenden wir uns also den effektvollen Besonderheiten der Szene zu, dem singenden Star-Mannequin Elvira, der in stereotyper tragischer Geste und mit ebensolchem bösen Blick Giovanni sogar während des Duets mit Zerline unschuldig, was dieser verständlicherweise erboht, beim nächsten Abgang heimzählt, indem er Elvira's Palazzo als Durchhaus benützt. Motto: Der Weg ins Freie.

Oder gedenken wir der Licht- und Schattenspiele in den Arkaden und des jeglicher geistiger Motivierung entbehrenden Kinoeffekts mit den ebendort vaziierenden Kerzermönchen, die das erste Finale von oben her rein räumlich gesprochen — dekorieren. Oder des erbostesten Volkes, das die Bühne von allen Seiten in hellen Scheren belebt, daß man mit dem Schauen nicht nachkommt. Oder der sevilanischen Halbhübschen, die beim Mahl Giovanni, nachdem er sich durch Holzmeisters Architektur geturnt hat, ein wenig mitschnuppern dürfen. Und vergessen wir nicht den schweren Gang des Komturs! Als Toter, als steinernes Standbild, muß er, weil der Friedhof in den ersten Stock übersiedelt wurde, zu Giovanni's Tafel eine ganze Treppe lang die Bühne hinabsteigen wie weiland Don José auf dem Weg zu Carmen in die Schenke. Erstauflagerweise singt der rüstige Alte dann keine Blumenarie.

Musiziert und gesungen wird im Geiste Mozarts. Dimitri Mitropoulos' Deutung der Partitur ist tief und poetisch, die verschiedenen Ebenen des Geschehens klar kontrastierend, die Akzente aus dem Erfassen der musikalischen Ganzheit setzend. Leider hatten er, die subtil musizierenden Philharmoniker, Chöre und Solisten fast die ganze Vorstellung lang gegen das Trommelfeuer des auf die Decke niederprasselnden Regens anzukämpfen.

Von den Solisten sind drei wohl bekannt: der elegante, sprühende, sinnlich singende Cesare Siepi als Giovanni, dem man, wenn schon nicht den Tod, so doch ein Leben um der Frauen willen glaubt; der stimmlich und darstellerisch klug und plastisch charakterisierende Walter Berry als Masetto und Elisabeth Grümmer als Donna Anna. Eine herrliche Sängerin mit strömender Empfindung in

der fraulich timbrierten, selbst in dramatischen Akzenten weich und rund klingenden Stimme, eine Künstlerin, um die Wien Berlin beneiden darf.

Neu Fernando Corena als Leporello: kein profunder, mächtiger Baß, aber ein sonores Organ, das delikat behandelt wird. Humor, Delikatesse und Intelligenz zeichnen auch sein Spiel aus. Eine Offenbarung Leopold Simoneau als Ottavio: Mozart-Gesang von solcher Schönheit und Mühelosigkeit, solcher Kultur und Herzenswärme, zählt wahrhaftig zu den Festgeschenken. Nicht so leicht tat sich Lisa della Casa als Elvira: sie sah blendend aus, nicht nur dank der attraktiven Roben, sang aber zu affektiert und mußte ihre Mittel nicht selten forciert einsetzen. Ihre raffiniert entwickelte Gabe, das Einfache

effektiv zu machen, kam zudem durch die Ungunst der Akustik nur zu halber Wirkung. Rita Streich's Zerline war zu kolombenhafte, wirkte ansonsten grazios und liebreizend und stattete die Partie, die eigentlich eine in der Mittellage ergiebige lyrische Stimme erfordert, mit einigen Ziergesanglichen aus. Geboten düster, mit einem gewissen makabren Vibrato im Organ, der Komtur von Gottlob Frick.

Das Publikum kam, zumal es mit dem Hören nicht immer leicht war, vor allem aus dem Schauen nicht heraus. Von Mozart war weniger die Rede. Nach der grandiosen „Figaro“-Inszenierung kann auch die „Don-Giovanni“-Aufführung als ein Beispiel zitiert werden. Freilich nur als ein schlechtes.

Salzburger „Don Giovanni“ im Schnürlregen

Wenn der Oesterreichische Rundfunk am 4. August, um 19.30 Uhr, im 2. Programm wirklich, wie vorgesehen, die Salzburger Premiere des „Don Giovanni“ übertragen sollte, und nicht etwa die zweite Aufführung, dann wird den Hörern zu Mozarts Musik zuzuschlagen ein Stück unverfälschter Salzburger Atmosphäre mitgeliefert werden: Echter Schnürlregen, naturrein, der auf die Fläche der Felsenreitschule aufprallend, prasselnd, knatternd, zischend und rauschend die Oper vom tragischen Anfang bis zum heiteren Ende begleitet. Er setzte pünktlich bei den ersten Takten der Ouvertüre ein, unterbrach seine Tätigkeit während der Pause — im Foyer, im Gewirr deutscher, englischer, französischer und italienischer Sprachfetzen hätte man ihn ja doch nicht gehört —, machte sich aber bald nach Beginn des zweiten Aktes wieder lärmend bemerkbar, und zog sich bei den letzten Takten des Stückes, so wie es sich schickt, diskret zurück. Denn es wäre wohl ein schlechter Dienst am Kunden gewesen, Leute, die für die Plätze 250 Schilling gezahlt hatten, auf dem Weg zu ihren parkenden Autos zu durchnässen, gar nicht zu reden von dem kleinen Häuflein der weniger begüterten, die einen der billigsten Plätze zu 50 Schilling erstehen konnten und nun den Heimweg zu Fuß antraten.

Ja, diese Felsenreitschule! Sie war, wie schon der Name sagt, zum Reiten geschaffen worden, in einem ausgemieteten Steinbruch des Mönchsberges. Dann entdeckte das durchdringende, sich selten trügende Auge des

Regisseurs Max Reinhardt ihre Eignung fürs Theater. Dort errichtete Reinhardt für die Inszenierung von Goethes größter Schöpfung, die „Faust“-Stadt, deren mittelalterliches Winkelwerk sich trefflich in den ersten, düsteren Rahmen einfügte den Menschenhand der Natur abgerungen hatte, mit seiner Galerie von steinernen Loggien, mit den mächtigen Wipfeln der Bäume, die in den Raum hineinragten und dem kleinen Haus oben auf der Flanke des Berges, in dessen Fenstern bei Einbruch der Dunkelheit die Lichter aufblitzten. Doch nicht zu jedem Stück paßt dieser Rahmen. So eignet er sich nicht für die spanische Stadt Sevilla, in der „Don Giovanni“ spielt, nicht für diese Oper, die Mozart und sein Textdichter da Ponte sehr bewußt ein „Drama Giocoso“, ein fröhliches Drama nannten.

Der Stoff des Don Juan war, als Mozart ihn 1787 für seine Prager in Musik setzte, die ein Jahr zuvor den „Figaro“ mit überschweblicher Begeisterung aufgenommen hatten, schon mehr als anderthalb Jahrhunderte alt. Jede Generation hat ihm die ihrer Zeit gemäße Deutung gegeben. Für den spanischen Mönch Tirso de Molina, der die Geschichte zu Beginn des 17. Jahrhunderts als erster auf die Bühne brachte, war der zur Hölle fahrende Don Juan ein warnendes Beispiel bestraffter Gottlosigkeit.

Moliere sah in Don Juan den Kämpfer gegen Heuchelei und Frömmerei, und ließ seinen Helden untergehen, weil dieser, um sich der Gesellschaft anzupassen, selbst zum Heuchler und Frömmel wurde. Mozarts „Don Giovanni“ schließlich, der auf dem Höhepunkt des Kampfes gegen den Feudalismus, zwei Jahre vor dem Sturm auf die Pariser Bastille stand, war die Verkörperung des zügellosen

Feudalherren — mit all seinem feuersprühenden Geist, mit all seiner betörenden, faszinierenden Männlichkeit, ein Verbrecher, der vernichtet wird, weil er die Menschlichkeit mit Füßen tritt. Daher der fröhliche Charakter dieser Tragödie, die mit dem Triumph der Menschen über einen Herrenmenschen endet, und die eines fröhlichen szenischen Rahmens bedarf, einer verwandlungsfähigen Bühne, auf der sich nicht nur das eisse Grauen des Friedhofes, sondern auch die satte Gartenpracht südlicher Gärten, das Lichtmeer eines herrschaftlichen Schlosses und der blaue Sommerhimmel über den Straßen einer spanischen Stadt darstellen läßt.

Diese Illusion im Rahmen der Felsenreitschule zu erwecken, vermochte auch der Bühnenbildner Clemens Holzmeister nicht.

So war dem Regisseur Herbert Graf keine leichte Aufgabe gestellt worden. Er tat das Gute viel, vor allem in den prächtig bewegten Massenszenen und ganz besonders im Finale des ersten Aktes, wenn er die Bauern und Bäuerinnen auf Don Giovanni eindringen läßt. Er tat freilich auch das Gute zu viel, wenn er, um die riesige Bühne zu beleben, die Felegalerie mit vermumten Gestalten bevölkert — man weiß nicht, warum — oder beim letzten Mahl des Helden ein nicht vorgesehene Ballett organisiert. Auch daß Don Giovanni zur Hölle fährt, indem teuflische Figuren ihn vom Parterre der Bühne in den ersten Stock schupfen, um ihn dort verschwinden zu lassen, dürfte mehr eine Verlegenheitslösung als künstlerische Absicht gewesen sein. Jedenfalls glaube ich, daß Herbert Graf auf einer geeigneten Opernbühne, gemeinsam mit einem einfallsreichen Bühnenbildner, ein vorzüglicher Regisseur des „Don Giovanni“ wäre.

Ebenso glaube ich, daß auch die Musik der

Was Frau Casa gab, war eine vollgültige Gestalt, eine schöne, niemals angestrengte Stimme, der die Auffassung des Dirigenten sehr entgegenkam. Gottlob Fricks mächtiger Baß stand für den Komtur zur Verfügung. Elisabeth Grümmer, für deren Donna Anna die Feststellung gelten mag, daß sie mit den vorhandenen Stimmmitteln gestalterisch großartig gesungen, daß sie intensiv gespielt, nein gelebt wurde, hat sich diesmal überboten. Ein großer Gewinn für die Besetzung: Leopold Simoneau als Don Ottavio. Der lyrische Tenor schlechthin, ein Mozartsänger von Gottes Gnaden, ein hochintelligenter Künstler, der weiß, was er will. Karajan, Staatsoperndirigent und künstlerischer Oberleiter der Salzburger Festspiele, saß im Zuschauerraum. Was wir hörten, muß er, gerade er gehört haben. Welche nächste Aufgabe steht für Simoneau bereit? Fernando Corena als Leporello hat ausgezeichnet gesungen, gut gespielt. Was fehlte, war die notwendige Brücke von der Bühne zum Publikum. Rita Streich's Zerline hatte Profil. Sie hat sich mit der Rolle identifiziert und verlor auch die Ruhe nicht, als es in der zweiten Arie besonders stark losprasselte. Die Einheit von Darstellung und Gesang, von Charakter und Stimme ist einschränkungslos zu loben. Walter Berry schließlich ist der ideale Masetto, der vor machte, wie man Mozart singen und gleichzeitig einen wahren Menschen auf die Bühne stellen kann. Streichs und Berrys Mimik haben dem Verständnis des Publikums unentwegt nachgeholfen, wo etwa die Textkenntnis versagte.

Das Publikum hat mit Recht die Interpreten der genialen Oper ausgiebig und herzlich gefeiert. Was an diesem Abend an Selbstdisziplin, an Wagemut, an Ausgleichskraft geleistet wurde, kann nicht genügend in Worte gefaßt werden. Alle Achtung vor den Künstlern, die nicht eine Sekunde ihres Bühnenlebens vor der Witterungssituation, die letzten Endes ja auch ihre Gesundheit gefährdet, kapituliert haben. Anerkennung aber auch dem Publikum, das sich nicht verdrießlich machen ließ und je nach Sitzplatz die Illusion zu Hilfe rufen mußte, um akustisch ohne Unterbrechung genießen zu können!

Erik Werba



4 DONNERSTAG, 26. JULI 1956

Norbert Tschüll

Don Giovanni sitzt auf der Straße

Mozarts unterbliches Drama giocoso in der Salzburger Felsenreitschule

Als zweite Opernaufführung der diesjährigen Salzburger Festspiele war Mozarts „Don Giovanni“ in der Felsenreitschule zu sehen und zu hören. Clemens Holzmeisters Bühnengestaltung, die, ebenso wie Herbert Grafs Inszenierung, aus dem Jahre 1953 (Wiederholung 1954) stammt, ist stimmungsmäßig dem Raum, dieser prächtigen, zu romantischer Ausgestaltung verlockenden Naturkulisse besonderer Art, sehr angepaßt und wirkt dadurch atmosphärisch auch sehr dicht, obgleich man einige Einwände vorzubringen hat. Die Raumverteilung auf der linken Bühnenseite ist gelungen. Hingegen bleibt der Mittelteil, der wohl in die, rein architektonisch gesehen, ausgewogene Gesamtdisposition harmonisch eingefügt erscheint, allzusehr ohne dramatische Funktion. Don Juans Palais, rechts außen liegend, leidet unter Platzmangel, so daß schließlich der stolze Frauenführer genötigt ist, sein Abendessen an einem auf der Straße stehenden Tisch einzunehmen, nachdem er vorher auch schon die Champagnerarie hier gesungen hatte. Die Erscheinung des Komturs ist gezwungen. Stufen zu steigen, was allzu menschlich wirkt. Das wäre zu vermeiden, und der Regisseur hätte dagegen Einspruch erheben müssen. Leider aber ist auch Herbert Graf diesmal nicht immer sonderlich glücklich verfahren. Er sorgt zwar für zielstrebige Bewegung, spielt manche Szene vorteilhaft plastisch, vieles aber auch zu breit aus, wodurch die Buffoelemente verdeckt werden, die Gesamtdramatik etwas lau wird. Daß das erste Finale mit einem Volksauflauf endet, dessen Beginn merklich an den zweiten Akt der „Meistersinger“ (Prügelszene) anklingt, wäre sachlich und raummäßig noch insofern zu vertreten, als das Fest in Don Juans Haus hier mehr zu einem südlichen Volksfest auf offener Straße geworden ist. Doch scheint uns diese Entfesselung der Volkssee — eine

Deutung, die Mozart kaum im Auge hat — vor allem dem Streben nach Bühnenwirbel entsprungen, was die ominöse Lichterprozession in den Felsenarkaden bestätigen dürfte. Es wird mit im ersten Moment bestechenden Effekten gearbeitet, die allerdings einer sorgfältigen Überprüfung kaum standhalten können. Den Don Giovanni im Kreise einiger (zum Teil tanzen)der Galadirenen soupieren zu lassen, wäre an sich durchaus passend, wenn nicht dadurch die Figur Leporellos beiseite gedrückt würde. Weshalb es die Musikanten immer so eilig mit dem Zusammenpacken und Weggehen haben, begreifen wir nicht recht. Die Kostüme Rolf Gerards sind von erfreuender Lebhaftigkeit in Schnitt und Farbe und unterstützen die Illusion des Theaters.

In klanglicher Hinsicht schwebte gewiß ein Unstern über dieser Aufführung, indem den Großteil des Abends gewaltige Regengüsse auf die leichte Überdachung der Felsenreitschule trommelten und die Stimmen wie das Orchester im Rauschen des nassen Elements minutenlang oft völlig unterzugehen drohten. Aber selbst während der kurzen regenlosen Episoden konnte man mit der Realisierung der Partitur durch Dimitri Mitropoulos nicht recht einverstanden sein. Sein Musizieren hat nicht genügend Suggestivität, wie es diesem in grandioser Dramatik und tönender Dämonie zupassenden Organ entspräche. Der zwingende Zug zum weitgespannten Aufbau und die Entwicklungslinie fehlen. Das Giocoso-Ele-

ment blieb sehr blaß. Es kam zu keiner geschlossenen Orchesterwirkung, geschweige denn zu einem engen Zusammenwirken zwischen Orchester und Bühne (was nur zum geringen Teil aus den akustischen Grundbedingungen des Raumes abgeleitet werden kann). Unter den Gesangsolisten sind zwei besonders hervorzuheben: Lisa della Casa als Donna Elvira (beim Wiener Opernfest sang die vielseitige Künstlerin die Donna Anna), eine bezaubernd schöne Frau mit bezaubernd blühender, makellos geführter Stimme, die Musik und Drama mit dem Adel des Herzens beseelte, und Leopold Simoneau als Don Ottavio, ein Tenor, der im Rezitativ dem italienisch profilierten Ton dramatisches Volumen zu geben vermag und in den Arien süßen lyrischen Schmelz entfaltet, den Gesang mit schönem, schwebend leichtem Piano, beweglichen, reinen Florituren, vorbildlicher Phrasierung und Atemgebung ausstattet.

Don Giovanni war Cesare Siepi, eine geschmeidige, dramatisch kraftvolle, aktive Erscheinung, die sich allerdings zu wenig verführerisch gibt, ein wenig an den Don Juan Molières oder an einen aufklärerischen Freigeist überhaupt erinnert und erst durch das biegsame, füllige, substanzstarke, virtuos behandelte und vor allem die Farbigkeit einer reichlichen tiefen italienischen Männerstimme präsentierende Organ das markante Spiel — es trägt Zeichen intellektueller Überlegenheit, gibt dadurch mancher Szene fesselndes Pro-

fil und ist insbesondere am tragischen Schluß von starker, konzentrierter Wirkung — im eigentlichen Sinn dieser zwiespältigen Charaktergestalt auflockert, deren Dämonie, zwischen gegenwartsgebundener Eroberungslust und an die Tore des Jenseits drängender Taten stehend, doch über der geistig-philosophischen Seite die dynamisch-komödiantische Komponente nicht zu übersehen hat. Fernando Corena als Leporello entbehrt der Beweglichkeit, des pfiffigen Witzes, die dieser Commedia-dell'arte-Figur zu eigen sein sollten, und wirkte so bisweilen entweder allzu bieder-lustig oder recht langweilig. Seine wohlklingende, gepflegte Stimme war durch diese Darstellung natürlich belastet, so daß es etwa der Registerarie an Pointen mangelte. Elisabeth Grümmer's untadelige, wenn auch nicht sonderlich glanzvolle Donna Anna, der stimmungswaltige, überzeugende Komtur, Gottlob Fricks, die auffallend gefühlstiefe, aber zuwenig sorglos frische und einfache Zerline Rita Streichs (gesanglich von feinem Niveau) und der schlichte, sympathische Masetto Walter Berrys dienten ebenso wie Staatsoperndirigent und Orchester (Wiener Philharmoniker) dem unterblichen Werk des unterblichen Meisters, das seine Wirkung — und dies spricht ganz besonders für ihre grandiose Einmaligkeit — trotz der erwähnten Schwächen der Aufführung nicht verfehlte und, unterstützt von der Stimmungs- welt des felsenbegrenzten Raumes, das Publikum in Bann zog. Viel Beifall.

Marcel Rubin

30 Ιουλίου 1956

Η «ΒΡΑΔΥΝΗ»

ΘΡΙΑΜΒΟΣ ΤΟΥ Κ. ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ ΕΙΣ ΣΑΛΤΙΝΟΠΟΥΡΓΚ

«Ο μουσικός κριτικός της ἐφημερίδας «Εἰς Νέα τοῦ Σαλτινοπούργκ» κ. Οὐλίας Ράικ, δημοσίευσε ἐκτενὴ κριτικὴν εἰς τὴν 28 ἡμέρας τοῦ ἐφημερίδος τοῦ 28 ἡμέρας διὰ τὴν πρώτην παράστασιν τοῦ «Ντὸν Τζοβάννι», ἡ ἐπιτυχία τῆς ὁποίας ὑπερέβη ὁ ἀντιστάτος καὶ ἐξέπασσε κατὰ πολὺ τὴν ἐπιτυχίαν τῶν ὁποίων εἶχε σημειώσει τὸ 1954.

«Ο κ. Μητροπούλος, ὑπονοεῖται μὴ εἶναι κριτικὸς τῆς ἐφημερίδας, ἀλλ' ὁδηγῶσε τραγουδιστὰς καὶ ὀρχήστραν μὴ ἀσχηκτῶν μαστρίων καὶ μὴ δοξολογῶν μουσικῶν καὶ πάθος εἰς μὴ ἐκτέλεσι τῆς ὁποίας θὰ μείνῃ ἀξέσπαστος εἰς ὅσας παρεκλογέσθων τὴν παράστασιν. Καὶ σὺ δὲ δραματικὰ καὶ σὺ εὐθὺς μὲν τοῦ ἔργου ἡ ἐκτέλεσις ὑπὲρ ἀνεπαισθητοῦ ἐπιτυχίας καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἀσχηκτίαν ὅτι καὶ οἱ τραγουδισταὶ καὶ ἡ ὀρχήστρα ὑπὲρ λαμπροί. Ἡ βάσις, ὅμως τῆς πρωτοφανοῦς ἐπιτυχίας τῆς παραστάσεως ὑπὲρ ἐν ὁ δὲ διάσημος «Ἕλληνας μαστράτος Μητροπούλος».

Wiener Zeitung Nr. 172

Donnerstag, 26. Juli 1956

'Don Giovanni' in Salzburg

By Rudolf Klein

Salzburg
Over Salzburg today waves the banner of the Mozart year. It was 200 years ago that this genius was born in the little city. And it is only natural that the jubilee should be celebrated with all possible splendor.

"Don Giovanni" was given as it was two years ago, not in the Festspielhaus, but in the Felsenreitschule (Rocky Riding School). This is a dusky courtyard with a raised podium, which clings to the perpendicular rocky wall of the mount jutting up in the middle of the city.

Set against this wall, the "Faust"-city of Max Reinhardt, founder of the Salzburg Festival, caused a great sensation in its time. An entire city of the Middle Ages was erected in order to perform Goethe's "Faust."

After the pattern of this mounting the Austrian architect, Clemens Holzmeister, built a "Don Giovanni"-city. There before us is the architecture of a Spanish city, with the churchyard in the center, with simple dwellings on the left and Don Giovanni's palace on the right.

An Imposing Show

This type of setting certainly becomes problematic in the scenes which take place within doors. For instance, Don Giovanni has to have his supper in the open market place. However, within this framework the New York director, Herbert Graf, succeeded in unrolling an imposing show. To be sure, it may not have been exactly in accord with Mozartian music, but for Salzburg it represented an unusual attraction. The costumes from Rolf Gérard, head of the wardrobe department of the Metropolitan Opera, contributed a great deal to the beautiful visual effects.

The conductor of this performance was Dimitri Mitropoulos. He was, at least in the premiere, not very fortunate. For during the entire performance a heavy rain drummed on the canvas roof which spanned the Felsenreitschule, and made such a noise that the delicate

passages in the music were drowned out.

Since Mitropoulos had drafted his interpretation along quite restrained, predominantly lyrical and chamber music lines—an interpretation which the critics, despite their recognition of his outstanding qualities, also chalked up against him—much of the effect of the music was lost in nature's uproar.

The singers, too, had every reason to complain. However, Cesare Siepi in the title role was greatly applauded for his splendid artistry, while Fernando Corena as Leporello seemed, in view of the general interpretation of this part in Austria, somewhat humorless. The French tenor, George Simoneau, was highly acclaimed.

Mitropoulos, we may say, had given an interview which attracted much attention in Salzburg, in which he spoke without reserve about his difficult position in New York. He was so offended by the critics there that he may possibly leave that city altogether and come to Europe. Herbert von Karajan, the new director of the Vienna Staatsoper, promptly offered him a contract with that organization.

The most beautiful performance of this Mozart year was conducted by the former director of the Vienna Opera, Karl Böhm. His rendition of "The Marriage of Figaro" was the high point of the festival, thanks to the outstanding playing of the Vienna Philharmonic, which will make a tour of the United States in November, and the surpassing vocal performances of Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Irmgard Seefried, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, and Erich Kunz.

Tribune de L'Europe

CLASSIQUE

Je serais bien en mal d'accorder une paternité spirituelle quelconque au chef prestigieux qui, après avoir conquis les Amériques, est en train, depuis plusieurs années, de gagner l'adhésion de tous nos centres musicaux européens les plus réputés.

On peut, en effet, parmi certains maîtres de la baguette, relever une esthétique semblable qui nous autorise, par exemple, à ranger sous la même bannière, les manières pourtant si diverses d'un Wilhelm Furtwängler, d'un Carl Schuricht ou d'un Bruno Walter. Dans le cas de Dimitri Mitropoulos, on paraît être en présence d'un art relevant d'une gestation spontanée, tant l'incroyable maîtrise de ce chef semble échapper à toute filiation et à toute comparaison possibles. Sans qu'il s'agisse là d'un critère irréfutable, on se doit d'abord tout d'abord d'inscrire au bénéfice d'illustres, une mémoire dont les possibilités semblent un défi jeté aux possibilités humaines... Vexé-t-on un exemple? Dimitri Mitropoulos se vit confier, l'an dernier, la création d'un très vaste ouvrage de Darius Milhaud comportant la contribution du grand orchestre symphonique, d'un chœur, et de huit solistes détenant chacun sa part propre. Dès la première répétition, Dimitri Mitropoulos apparut au podium de direction, sans partition aucune, et donnant toutes ses indications en mentionnant à quelle mesure exacte se trouvaient la note ou la nuance à rectifier...

Mais, « l'extraordinaire », chez Dimitri Mitropoulos, ne se limite pas à ce genre d'exploit: ce musicien « hors format » est parfaitement capable d'exécuter « au piano » un ouvrage tel que le « 3e Concerto » de Prokofiev, tout en dirigeant l'orchestre, en demeurant à son siège de soliste.

Ceux-là qui, sur les ondes autrichiennes, eurent le privilège récemment d'entendre le « Requiem » de Berlioz conduit par Dimitri Mitropoulos, ne me contrediront point. Cette audition, qui marquait un hommage à la mémoire de Wilhelm Furtwängler, ne pouvait revêtir, sur le plan de l'émotion et de la qualité, une signification plus digne de la haute personnalité qui en était le prétexte.

Die Posaunen von Salzburg

Mitropoulos dirigiert das „Requiem“ von Berlioz — Fanfaren widerhallen an den Felswänden des Mönchsberges

Salzburg, Festspielstadt auch ohne Feste, feiert täglich geschmückt von der Natur, hat den Höhepunkt seiner Jubiläumsfeier zu Ehren des Weltbeglückers Mozart erreicht. George Selli dirigierte bereits die Jupiter-, Karl Böhm die Haffner-Symphonie, Milstein, Schneiderhan, Grumiaux, Mainardi, die Seefried und Schwarzkopf, Siepi und Fischer-Dieskau konzertierten schon, Andra, Arrau, Casadesu, Reiner, Kubelik, Janigro und Rita Streich werden noch folgen, und gewaltig klingt das Ergebnis nach, als der 80jährige Bruno Walter den Manen Mozarts mit einer Aufführung seines „Requiem“ huldigte.

Jetzt steht Salzburg im Banne eines Dirigenten, dessen Name im Festspielprogramm noch verhältnismäßig neu ist, und der sich sofort in die erste Reihe spielte, der Amerikaner griechischer Abstammung Dimitri Mitropoulos. Er ist der Welt Espressivmusiker Nr. 1, ein Fanatiker des Ausdrucks und der dynamischen Besessenheit, und er wählte für sein Konzert eines der ungewöhnlichsten Werke der Musikliteratur, das „Requiem“ von Berlioz.

Diese Totenmesse lebt in unserer Vorstellung als die Messe des erdrückenden Klangaufwandes und der phantastischen Schilderung bizarr apokalyptischer Visionen. „Die Toten verlassen ihre Gräber“, so schreibt Berlioz. „Die entsetzten Lebenden stoßen gellende Angstschreie aus... die Welten stürzen zusammen... die Engel posaunen durch die Wolken... Alle hier aufgetretenen Mittel sollen vollständig neu sein. Außer zwei Orchestern werden noch vier Gruppen von Blechbläsern in den vier Ecken des Aufführungsraumes aufgestellt sein.“ Bei der ersten Aufführung im Pariser Invalidendom unter Berlioz' persönlicher Leitung mußten Ohnmächtige aus der Kirche getragen werden.

In Salzburg gibt die Felsenreitschule der Totenmesse — die Aufführung ist dem Gedankten Furtwängler gewidmet — die monumentale Fülle des riesenhaften Raumes. Die

gewaltige Breite der Bühne nimmt der 100 Mann starke Klangkörper der Wiener Philharmoniker ein, flankiert rechts und links von den auf erhöhten Podesten sitzenden Paukern und Schlagzeugern, im Hintergrund das mächtige Halbrund des ebenfalls hundert Mann starken Opernorchesters. Dazu in den Loggien des Mönchsberges vier Nebenorchester der Blechbläser, zugewandt den vier Himmelsrichtungen.

Mitropoulos dirigiert auswendig, ohne Pult, modelliert mit einer exzessiven Zeichnung den Klang, lenkt mit den beschwichtigenden Gesten der Finger, der Arme, des Kopfes, manchmal auch durch symbolische Bewegung des ganzen Körpers, der ein ein-

ziges Nervenbündel zu sein scheint, den Ausdruck und die aufs feinste differenzierte Dynamik. Prachtvoll spielen die Wiener Philharmoniker, grandios türmen sich die Klänge im „Tuba mirum“ auf, wo die Fanfaren der vier Posaunen-Orchester riesenhaft durch den Raum tönen und furchterregend an den Felswänden des Mönchsberges widerhallen. Wunderbar, wie der Wiener Opernchor singt, mit einer Weichheit und Biegsamkeit des Tones, als handele es sich um hundert Solisten. Ausdrucksvoll die Sopranen und Altstimmen, Klangstark das Fundament der Bässe, und besonders schön die hellstimmenden Tenöre. Leopold Simoneau singt das einzige Solo des Werkes mit einer ätherischen Reine, mühelos in den höchsten Tenorregionen schwebenden Stimme.

Wo Berlioz im „Tuba mirum“ vier Orchester von Blechbläsern benötigt, kommt Mozart in seinem „Requiem“ mit einer einzigen Posaune aus. Gewiß, die materielle Unermeßlichkeit Berlioz' ist nicht frei von theatralischer Pracht und Phantasie, aber in einer so hinreißenden Aufführung wird auch sie zum gewaltigen musikalischen Erlebnis.

Indem wir vorausschicken, daß das mit allen Reserven mobilisierte Orchester der Wiener Philharmoniker, der Chor der Wiener Staatsoper und der Tenorist Leopold Simoneau über aller Kritik stehende musikalische Leistungen vollbrachten, möchten wir nur noch einige besonders eindrucksvolle Momente der denkwürdigen Aufführung hervorheben: Am Schluß des „Kyrie“ die in dumpfem Gemurmel verhauchenden Rufe des Chors und das jährliche Aufzucken; die förmliche gespenstische Steigerung im zweiten Teil des „Dies irae“ (bei den Worten „Quantus tremor est futurus“) — eine höllische Vision, der Mitropoulos das verzweifelte „judicatis responsa“ als scharfen Kontrast entgegensetzte; die weitere gewaltige Steigerung im „Rex tremendae“ (bei den Worten „Confutatis maledictus“, die der Komponist durch den leisen Einschub des Namens Jesu wiederholt sanft aufhellte); die Gestaltung des einformig auf zwei Noten deklamierten „Domine Jesu“, mit dem Berlioz den Gesang der Seelen im Fegefeuer symbolisieren wollte, zu einer heroischen Szene im Geiste Glucks; das eine Vorahnung der himmlischen Seligkeit gebende „Sanctus“; und schließlich das in tief durchdrachter Variation des „Kyrie“ wieder aufnehmende „Agnus Dei“. Schon diese wenigen Bemerkungen lassen wohl klar erkennen, wie überzeugend die Klangsymbolik und die geistige und musikalische Fülle der Gestalten des Werkes vom Dirigenten und seinen Helfern in unserer Aufführung den Hörern nahegebracht wurden. Dieses wohl Gelingen, die großartige Realisation des Zusammenwirkens des Hauptorchesters und der vier Bläsergruppen und der ideale Vokalklang bedingten die Einzigartigkeit unserer Aufführung, die auch in jeder Beziehung würdig war, als Gedächtnisfeier für Wilhelm Furtwängler zu gelten.

Aber noch in einem anderen Belange erschien uns die Wiedergabe des selten aufgeführten und in Salzburg wahrscheinlich noch nie erklangenen Werkes gerade in den heurigen Festspielen höchst wichtig: In den früheren Jahren schuf die Uraufführung eines zeitgenössischen Opernwerkes in der zweiten Hälfte der Festspiele einen neuen künstlerischen Höhepunkt, der jeweils — unabhängig vom absoluten künstlerischen Wert der Novität — das Interesse der internationalen Musikwelt auf Salzburg und seine Festspiele lenkte. Da im Mozartjahr eine solche Weltpremiere natürlich nicht durchführbar war, konnte die kühne und originelle Aufführung des Requiem von Berlioz in gewissem Sinne deren Funktion übernehmen. Jedenfalls hat uns diese grandiose „Premiere“ in unserer Überzeugung wesentlich bestärkt, daß die Pflege der zeitgenössischen, neue Wege suchenden Musik, insbesondere der modernen Oper, für die Salzburger Festspiele eine unbedingte Notwendigkeit ist. Hoffentlich findet diese Überzeugung im künftigen Spielplan der Festspiele weiter Befruchtung!

Dr. Willi Reich

Ein Requiem als Beute

Monumentale geistliche Musik in der Felsenreitschule

„Der Requiem-Text war für mich eine seit langem begehrte Beute, die man mir endlich auslieferte und auf die ich mich mit wahrer Leidenschaft stürzte. Mein Kopf drohte zu verspringen unter der Gewalt meiner aufbrausenden Gedanken.“ Mit diesen Worten schilderte Hector Berlioz im Abstand von dreißig Jahren den Augenblick, in dem er vom Grafen Gasparin, dem damaligen Minister der Schönen Künste in Frankreich 1836 den Auftrag empfing, ein Requiem zu komponieren. Der Minister hatte mit diesem Auftrag den doppelten Zweck im Sinn: den von ihm als ernst strebenden Künstler und hochgeschätzten Musiker Berlioz materiell zu unterstützen und auch etwas zur allgemeinen Förderung der geistlichen Musik in Frankreich beizutragen.

Berlioz erhielt durch den Auftrag die lang ersehnte Möglichkeit, sein in den größten musikalischen Dimensionen schwebendes kompositorisches Denken endlich uneingeschränkt in tönende Wirklichkeit verwandeln zu können. Im Rückblick erschien ihm das, was er tat, als etwas „das niemand vorher oder nachher gewagt“ habe. Sein Wagnis bezog sich sowohl auf eine noch nie dagewesene geistliche Auslegung des Requiem-Textes als auch auf einen noch nie dagewesenen Aufwand an musikalischen Mitteln. Seiner Phantasie schwebte zunächst eine des großen Napoleon würdige Trauerfeier vor, um die seine schöpferischen Gedanken schon seit früher Jugend kreisten. Als „intrigen seinen ursprünglichen Plan zunichte machten“, mußte er sich damit begnügen, sein Werk am 5. Dezember 1837 im Invalidendom zu Paris bei einer von der Regierung zu Ehren der in Tunis gefallenen Soldaten, insbesondere des Generals Darnémond, uraufgeführt zu sehen. Die tiefe Herzensangelegenheit, die das Requiem für

Berlioz bedeutete, und der hohe Rang, den er ihm in seinem Gesamtwerk anwies, sind aber aus seinen folgenden, kurz vor seinem Tode gesprochenen Worten ersichtlich: „Wenn man mir drohen würde, alle meine Werke bis auf eines zu vernichten, so wäre es das Requiem, für das ich um Gnade bitten würde.“

Da Berlioz im allgemeinen alles andere als ein religiöser Geist war, ist der Grund für die außerordentliche Wertschätzung, die er dem Requiem entgegenbrachte, vor allem in der kompositorischen Kraftleistung zu suchen, die er mit seiner Schöpfung vollbrachte. Da dem Autor der „Symphonie fantastique“ und ihres Hexensabbat-Finales die Schrecken des Jüngsten Tages begreiflicher Weise viel „sympathischer“ waren als das demütige Flehen um den ewigen Frieden, lag es für ihn nahe, den Kundgebungen der überweltlichen Mächte auch über der Welt des üblichen Musizierens stehenden Ausdruck zu geben: Aus „allen vier Himmelsrichtungen“ sollten die Posaunen des Jüngsten Gerichts über die traditionelle Chor- und Orchestergemeinde hereinbrechen, und der Donner der sechzehn Pauken sollte „ein musikalisches Erdbeben“ sein, das alles zu verschlingen droht. — Auch die Dynamik einiger wichtiger Chorstellen sollte Sänger und Hörer vor völlig ungewohnte Situationen stellen: so zum Beispiel das „Dies irae“ mit seinem ganz unerwarteten Pianissimo-Beginn, das ganz dramatisch im Sinne einer stürmischen Forderung an den Lieben Gott gestaltete „Recordare“, und das als zarte Tenorarie mit Begleitung des Frauenchors angelegte „Sanctus“. — In der musikalischen Erfindung überwiegt der Drang nach unmittelbarer packender Al fresco-Wirkung weitaus das Streben nach stilistischer Einheit. Man findet im Requiem vielmehr fast alle musika-

lischen Stile, die Berlioz überhaupt erreichbar waren, in bunter Folge vertreten: vom streng polyphonen A-cappella-Satz im „Quaerens me“ bis zum penetranten italienischen Opernchor im „Lacrymosa“, klangliche Eingebungen von innigster Gefühlstiefe und äußerster Erhabenheit stehen neben Wendungen von erschreckender Selchtheit und Breitspurigkeit. Und doch geht von der Komposition als Ganzem eine erschütternde Wirkung aus, der sich kein unbefangener Hörer entziehen kann.

Solche Wirkung setzt allerdings einen Perfektionsgrad der Darbietung voraus, der nur sehr selten erzielbar ist. In dieser Beziehung stand unsere Aufführung unter einem sehr glücklichen Stern. Die Weiträumigkeit der Felsenreitschule hatte eine künstlerisch zweckmäßige und akustisch sehr günstige Anordnung der verschiedenen Klangkörper ermöglicht, die in Kirchen oder Konzertsälen kaum je erreicht werden kann: Das von dem steinernen Becken zur Bühne ansteigende, von den Pauken gekrönte Orchester umrahmte den amphitheatralisch aufgebauten Chor, vor dem der Thronessel für den Solisten in der Mitte stand; die je zwei in den Enden der obersten Loggienreihe und in Seitennischen symmetrisch angebrachten vier Posaunen- und Trompetengruppen vollendeten die eines Michelangelo der Klangdisposition würdige Aufstellung. All das bildete aber erst das „Material“ der gewaltigen Klangmasse, die die entscheidenden Impulse von dem Dirigenten Dimitri Mitropoulos empfing, der im Brennpunkt des Orchesters stehend, geistig allgegenwärtig, das Riesenspektakel ohne Zuhilfenahme der Partitur, allein aus Kopf und Herz mit leidenschaftlich flammender Zeichengebung zum Erklängen brachte.

Salzburger Nachrichten 14-8-56

Wien, Freitag

Die Presse

17. August

Theater und Kunst

Salzburger Festspiele

Berlioz-Requiem in der Felsenreitschule

Eigenbericht der „Presse“

Salzburg, 16. August

Wie in der guten alten Zeit brachte der Feiertag zur Monatsmitte das große, festliche Orchesterkonzert. Die Veranstaltung erhielt diesmal erhöhte Weihe, weil sie dem Andenken an Wilhelm Furtwängler gewidmet war, an den großen Künstler, dessen belebende und wahrhaft schöpferische Persönlichkeit so eng mit der Nachkriegsära der Festspiele verbunden ist. Dimitri Mitropoulos, der Dirigent des Konzertes, wandte sich zu Beginn an die Zuhörer und forderte sie persönlich auf, den Augenblick des Gedenkens stehend zu begehen...

Aber auch sonst wurde mit dieser großen und denkwürdigen Veranstaltung der gewohnte Rahmen verlassen. Das Konzertpodium wurde in die Felsenreitschule verlegt und als Programm kein erprobtes Erfolgsstück, sondern ein so selten gespieltes Werk wie das Requiem von Hector Berlioz gewählt. Alle Achtung vor dem Künstler, der so künstlerisch denkt und handelt!

Und wahrhaftig, Berlioz selbst hätte an dieser großartigen Vorführung seines fesselnden und ebenfalls großartigen Werkes seine helle Freude gehabt. Der eigentümliche, geheimnisvoll unwirtliche Raum der Felsenreitschule mit seiner Phantastik und seiner Theatralik wäre ganz nach seinem Sinn gewesen. Das Orchester sah man aus dem ihm zugewiesenen Orchesterraum förmlich herausquellen, sich rechts und links ausbreiten und die tribünenartigen Aufbauten zu beiden Seiten überfluten. Für den Chor war eine Estrade errichtet, auf der sich die Sänger und Sängerinnen, in feierlicher Prozession einziehend, placierten. Dem Solisten endlich — die Komposition sieht bloß ein Tenorsolo vor — wurde ein breiter und bequemer Thronessel in der Mitte des Podiums zugewiesen. Schon der äußere Anblick bot ein imponierendes Bild.

Die größte Befriedigung aber hätte Berlioz durch die hohe künstlerische Qualität der Aufführung empfangen, die seinem originellen und hochinteressanten Werk zuteil wurde. Er hätte sich von einem Dirigenten erkannt, verstanden und geliebt gesehen, der sich hingebungsvoll in den Stil und den Charakter seiner Komposition eingelebt hat, der die mitunter scheinbare spröde Musik weich und geschmeidig wirken läßt, und der mit den vielen köstlichen und pittoresken Instrumentationseffekten auch die musikalisch seelischen Effekte zum Erklängen bringt. Durch Dimitri Mitropoulos erhielt das Werk eine Fülle feiner, geistiger und edler Züge, die uns eben auch das Werk nahebrachten. So empfing man das Werk mit offenem und gläubigem Sinn, nicht als denkwürdiges Kuriosum, das einen Ehrenplatz in der Musikgeschichte einnimmt, nicht als eine Schöpfung, die im allgemeinen mehr respektiert als gepflegt wird, sondern als das lebendige und höchst attraktive Musikwerk, das es ist, und das in seiner Art aus dem kirchlichen Text den Stoff für eine phantastische Kirchenmusik schöpft.

Höchste Anerkennung verdienen weiters unsere Philharmoniker, die mit dem rechten Berlioz-Raffinement die vielen Klangeffekte zur Geltung brachten, die gewaltigen Fanfaren, die zum jüngsten Gericht rufen, die köstlichen Kombinationen höchster und tiefster Klangphänomene oder die pikanten Glanzlichter und Geräuschtupfer, wie sie etwa der Beckenschläger mit seinem schimmernden Instrument erzeugt. Höchste Anerkennung ebenso für unser Opernchor, der von Richard Robmayr aus kundigste und verlässlichste einstudiert, nun mit voller Künstlerlust und Liebe den Intentionen des genialen Dirigenten folgte. Höchste Anerkennung schließlich für Leopold Simoneau, der das Tenorsolo mit überaus weicher, verbender, einschmeichelnder und meisterlich geführter Stimme sang, und er es durchaus verdiente, den Platz in der Mitte, im Thronessel einzunehmen. Kr.

Süddeutsche Zeitung Nr. 198

In Salzburg Berlioz in der Felsenreitschule

Das „Requiem“ von Hector Berlioz gehört zu den Monstrositäten der Musik: ein bombastisches Werk, die Orgie eines entfesselten Musikers, der manchmal ganze Hundertschaften braucht, um einen Dreiklang zu intonieren. Voller Stolz berichtete der Komponist, daß einer der Choristen einen Nervenschock bekommen habe, als die grandiose Vision des Jüngsten Gerichts im Fortissimo von fünf Orchestern und acht Paar Pauken auf ihn einstürzte.

Ein solches Werk in Salzburg, der Mozartstadt? Man mußte geradezu den Verdacht haben, es sei den Programmgehaltern um eine simple Sensation gegangen: Kommen Sie, hören Sie, staunen Sie. Ein Chor von nahezu hundert Mann — der Wiener Staatsoperchor — vor allem aber die weltberühmten, einmaligen Wiener Philharmoniker in voller Stärke von über hundertundzwanzig Mann werden Ihnen das Monstre-Requiem von Hector Berlioz in die Ohren donnern!

Aber etwas Unwahrscheinliches geschah: das gespenstische Viereck der Felsenreitschule, diese steinerne Gruft öffnete sich dem Werk, nahm ihm jede Fatalität. Als aus den Felsenloggen von oben und unten, von links und von rechts die Posaunen zum Jüngsten Gericht riefen, als sich der zehnfache Paukenwirbel an den steinernen Wänden brach, da war aus einer bloßen gigantomanischen Sensation fast eine Offenbarung geworden.

Allerdings: nur ein Musiker wie Dimitri Mitropoulos konnte diese Verwandlung erzwingen. Nicht das Gigantische, das Effektvolle hat ihn spürbar an diesem Werk gereizt, sondern die zum Teil geradezu bestürzende Modernität dieser Orchestersprache. Daß Berlioz für Liszt und Wagner und damit für Bruckner, Mahler und Richard Strauß das große Vorbild war, ist längst bekannt. Daß gewisse Eigentümlichkeiten seiner Orchesterbehandlung bis hin zur späten Messe Strawinsky führen, das machte diese

kaum retuschierte Aufführung immer wieder verblüffend deutlich.

Mitropoulos, einer der ganz Großen, der mit jener Kühle der Leidenschaft gestaltet, die ihn immer davor bewahrt, von der Tonflut mitgerissen zu werden, vollbrachte im Technischen im Geistigen etwas Einmaliges. Er machte aus Berlioz einen Delacroix, aus einer scheinbaren Abnormität einen tönenden Kosmos. Und so gesehen, war diese Ausgrabung eine wirkliche „Sensation“.

From AUG 1 1956

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

Greek Group to Celebrate

The Pan Arcadian Federation of America, representing more than 200,000 Americans of Greek origin or descent, will mark its silver anniversary today through Sunday at its annual convention at the Statler Hotel. Eight hundred delegates from throughout the country are scheduled to attend. Gold medal awards will be presented to Ivy Baker Priest, Treasurer of the United States, and Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony.

Mystiker und Gipfelstürmer

Dr. Hehr

ΜΕ ΣΟΛΙΣΤ ΤΟΥ ΦΟΡΤΕΡ ΚΑΙ ΑΝΤΕΛΕΥΣ.



Ὁ Μπαρόπουλος

KULTUR IN DER ZEIT

Mitropoulos dirigierte Berlioz' Requiem

Das erste Festkonzert zum 77. Deutschen Katholikentag

Als erstes Konzert der neuen Saison veranstaltete der Westdeutsche Rundfunk ein Festkonzert aus Anlaß des 77. Deutschen Katholikentages, und mit der „Grande Messe des Morts“ von Hector Berlioz, einem Werk, das des großen Aufwands wegen, den es erfordert, allzu selten erklingt, war eine ebenso würdige wie verdienstvolle Wahl getroffen worden. Hier war an einem großartigen Beispiel wieder einmal zu lernen, wie der heute vielen musikalischen Kreisen als antiquiert geltende „Kolossalstil“ zu seiner Zeit — die übrigens bis zu Mahler reicht — doch eine absolut authentische Ausdrucksweise gewesen ist, die auch modernen Ohren noch immer das Tiefste, dessen solche Komponisten mächtig waren, zu sagen vermag. In entscheidenden Sachverhalten ist Berlioz' Requiem sogar fast ein „modernes“ Werk: nicht nur in der oft genug gelobten, gänzlich neuen Wege weisenden Orchestration, die dieser Meister entwickelte, sondern ebenso in der erst aus dem 19. Jahrhundert stammenden rhythmischen Strukturen, in harmonischen Kühnheiten und gewissen melodischen Bildungen, in kontrapunktischen Konstellationen, nicht zuletzt in der als kompositorische Dimension völlig emanzipierten und bis zu den Extremen der möglichen Skala getriebenen Dynamik. Unbeschreiblich mühte es sich, dieses Werk einmal „stereophon“ — mit den von Berlioz original verlangten, in den vier Himmelsrichtungen im Raum aufzustellenden Nebenorchestern — zu hören, was heute wohl freilich nirgends im Bereich der praktischen Möglichkeiten liegt.



Dimitri Mitropoulos
Zeichnung: P. O. Guszalewicz

mittlung des komponierten Sinnes. Man hat selten etwas Eindrucksvolleres erlebt als dieses „Dies irae“ mit der alles Vorstellbare schier übersteigenden Schreckensvision des „Tuba mirum“, diesen wogenden Klangmassen, und dem unheimlich ins Pianissimo verschwindenden Schluß des Satzes, selten etwas Berückenderes als dieses „Sanctus“ mit dem Tenor Nicolai Gedda, dessen vollkommen gelöste Expressivität dem Charakter dieses wundervollen Stücks Musik ebenso gerecht wurde, wie sie sich — im Hinblick aufs ganze Werk — gegen die vorangegangene Turbulenz der Chöre als Ereignis zu behaupten wußte. Meisterstücke empfindsamer und genauer Ausdeutung hat Mitropoulos zumal auch mit so delikaten Geweben wie dem „Lacrymosa“ oder der zur äußersten Spannung sich entwickelnden ungemein subtilen Monotonie des „Domine Jesu“ geboten.

Die Aufführung des Werks war ein Ereignis, das tiefste Ergriffenheit hinterließ, aus der sich erst zögernd der Beifall für den Dirigenten, den Solisten, die Chöre und das Kölner Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchester löste. Ihrer aller Leistung — und auf den Chören und dem Orchester, deren Los es ist, in der Anonymität zu verbleiben, muß man in diesem Falle ganz besonders insistieren — war vorbildlich gewesen. Zum Schluß nur noch eine kleine Anregung: Wäre bei abendfüllenden Werken, die so sehr komponierte Einheit sind wie dieses, nicht im Interesse der formalen Geschlossenheit auf die übliche Pause besser zu verzichten? hkm

Für die Aufführung unter Dimitri Mitropoulos waren der Hamburger und der Kölner Rundfunkchor (Einstudierung: Max Thurn und Bernhard Zimmermann) gemeinsam aufgeboten worden. Die Wiedergabe vermittelte einen gewaltigen Eindruck. Es ist Mitropoulos im höchsten Grade die suggestive Geste gegeben, aber er macht von ihr sparsamsten Gebrauch. Gerade die Beschränkung aufs Notwendigste — aufs wirklich Notwendigste — charakterisiert die Souveränität dieses grundsätzlich auswendig dirigierenden Interpreten, der sich die ökonomische Gestaltung — noch des Exzesses — leisten kann. Es fehlt ja gerade diesem Werk nicht an Exzessen aller Art: jede Dimension treibt Berlioz an die Grenzen des Möglichen, aber gleichzeitig ist diese Riesensymphonie beispiellos geplant und durchdacht, und diese beiden Aspekte, deren der eine die Fassung des anderen ist, hat Mitropoulos gleichsam sich aneinander erheben lassen und restlos verwirklicht: als Totalität der Konzeption.

Wenig tut es hier zur Sache, wenn gelegentlich einmal etwas nicht ganz präzise kam, denn das Entscheidende dieser Aufführung war eine Präzision in strengem Sinne: die Präzision der Ueber-

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 28.8.1956

Monumentale Totenfeier

Berlioz' Requiem im Chorkonzert des WDR

Als das „Tuba mirum“ erscholl, stellte sich ein ungewohnter Höreindruck ein: Die aus verschiedenen Richtungen von den Rändern des Hauptorchesters her tönenden Sondergruppen der Blechbläser formten echohaft plastisch einen Klangraum von düsterer, unermesslicher Tiefe, in dem sich die Toten in Hekatomben zu türmen schienen. Fluchtig wurde man an die Aufführung elektronischer Kompositionen im vergangenen Frühjahr erinnert, die sich einer Reihe rings im Saal verteilter Schallquellen bedienten. Aber Berlioz' Angriff auf den Hörer bleibt frontal. Es ist ein Angriff zuerst auf die Sinne, weniger eine mystische Umzingelung der Seelen. In den gewaltigen Dramenfresken des Weltgerichts und der Auferstehung lebt das Pathos der riesigen Freiluftfeiern napoleonischer Zeit, der großen antike Gout des Empires; man braucht, um das zu begreifen, nicht erst den äußeren Anlaß der Komposition zu kennen: die Beisetzung des Generals Damrémont im Pariser Invalidendom im Jahre 1837.

Berlioz forderte für seine Totenmesse außer der stark besetzten orchestralen Kerntruppe vier besondere Batterien mit zusammen sechzehn Trompeten und sechzehn Posaunen, dazu einen gemischten Chor von 600 Kehlen. Eine kolossale Totenfeier also, fern dem liturgischen

Brauch und dem klassischen Maß der Kirchenkompositionen. Cherubins. Dennoch ist dieser genialische Hang zum Ungeheuren nicht der ganze Berlioz. Plötzlich öffnet sich hinter der niederdrückenden Szenerie der Klangmassive der Weg in eine zartere Welt der Musik. Der Satz wird dünn und spröde, mönchische Askese herrscht im psalmisierenden Kyrie, das Melodische trägt archaisierende Züge oder blüht auf zu vollen lyrischen Farben und südländischem Wohlklang wie im „Lacrymosa“, verdrängt sich zu einer reinen geistigen Glut, wie sie das wunderbare Tenorsolo des „Sanctus“ durchweht.

Der Eindruck des Ganzen, das schwer in den Rang einer innerlich packenden Würde zu erheben ist, bleibt zwiespältig, das klangliche Unmaß dem modernen Ohr verdächtig. Auch die imponierende Darstellung, die der Westdeutsche Rundfunk im ersten Chorkonzert als Beitrag zum Katholikentag bot, konnte daran nichts ändern. Der Aufführungsapparat war in allen Teilen auf zulässige Weise reduziert, der Klang der vier Nebenorchestern, von denen zwei hoch auf den Treppen des Funkhauspodiums seitlich der Orgel und zwei an den äußersten Flügeln der Rampe platziert waren, trotzdem so gewaltig, daß Charakteristik und Bildhaftigkeit in der Masse des Schalls oft versank.

Mittag, Düsseldorf, 28.8.1956

Dröhnendes Requiem im Funkhaus

Aufführung der „Großen Totenmesse“ von Berlioz zum Katholikentag in Köln

Der unablässige, gewaltige Musik-Verbrauch des Rundfunks vermag Werke, die im normalen Konzertleben nur selten zur Aufführung kommen, zu sporadischen Wiedererweckungen zu verhelfen, wie es soeben dem Berlioz'schen „Requiem“ im ersten Chorkonzert des WDR in Köln geschah. Der Komponist schreibt für die Aufführung nicht weniger als 50 Blechbläser vor, eine entsprechende übrige technische Garnierung und dazu 600 Sänger. Indem man vor solchem Monsterapparat in die Knie ging, sah man sich genötigt, neben dem Kölner auch den Hamburger Chor zu bemühen, und kam doch nur auf etwa 110 Sänger und eine ähnliche Zahl von Musikern. Man mag daraus ersehen, daß selbst ein so dehnungsfähiger Apparat wie der Rundfunk sich Grenzen setzt. Berlioz hat sich übrigens nichts volens mit solcher Begrenzung der Mittel einverstanden erklärt — ein größerer musikerzeugender Apparat wäre auch im großen Konzertsaal des Funks nicht unterzubringen gewesen.

Berlioz ist zu seinen Lebzeiten (1803/69) in Deutschland mehr beachtet worden als in seinem eigenen Lande. Er führte die „Programmmusik“ zu ihrer konsequentesten Ausprägung. Eine visuelle Vorstellung vom Handlungsablauf war seine musikalische „Idee“, die sich kühnster kompositorischer und technischer Mittel in absoluter Vereinzelung wie monstruöser Häufung bediente. Er gedachte damit sogar Beethovens „Missa solennis“ zu übertrumpfen. Immerhin befruchtete er Liszt, sicherlich Wagner, und Richard Strauß versah seine „Instrumentationslehre“ mit Zusätzen. Robert Schumann endlich glaubte sogar die „Klaue des Löwen“ zu entdecken.

ken. Aber es gab vollendete Einzelheiten. Das Kölner Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchester und die von Max Thurn und Bernhard Zimmermann vorbereiteten Rundfunkchöre aus Hamburg und Köln entfalteten an Macht und Pracht bis zuletzt wahrhaft Bewundernswertes; tiefere Wirkung tat die Intensität ihres Ausdrucks in den verhaltenen Sätzen. Es gab ein Offertorium von geheimnisvoller Großartigkeit und in den Tenorsoli einen Sänger von hohen Graden: den mit offenem, glänzendem Stimmklang begabten Nicolai Gedda. Dimitri Mitropoulos, der in Köln schon bekannte Dirigent, ist ein idealer Berlioz-Interpret. Er erfaßt das Grandios-Männliche dieser ekstatischen Musik, ist selbst ein einzigartiger Ekstatiker des Details, der noch kahles Tongestein in Organisches wandelt.

Friedrich Berger

Sechshundert Sänger, ein Haupt- und vier Nebenorchester zu je sechzehn Trompeten und Posaunen verlangte Berlioz für seine „Grande Messe des Morts“, die er im Staatsauftrag für die Beisetzung eines Generals im Invalidendom schrieb.

Es ist eine pietätvolle und etwas melancholische Reminiszenz, wenn einer der bedeutendsten Dirigenten unserer Tage versucht, diesem hundertzwanzig Jahre alten Mammutgebilde wieder Leben einzuflößen. Es ist eine Erinnerung an Sturm- und Drangjahre einer musikalischen und sozialen Epoche, die unaufhaltsam, trotz scheinbarem Glanz ihrem Ende zustrebt: die Epoche des großen romantischen Orchesters und des bürgerlichen Konzertwesens, und, so fügt der Spötter hinzu, der Dampflokomotive.

Berlioz hielt das Requiem für sein bestes Opus. Der Hörer, dessen Ohr die Klanggewalt noch nicht außer Gefecht gesetzt hatte (die zeitgenössische Karikatur postierte sogar Kanonen ins Berlioz-Orchester), der empfindsame Hörer wird von der tragischen Zerrissenheit romantischer Künftertums mehr bewegt als von der mitunter großartigen Musik. Geniales Vordringen zu den extremen Möglichkeiten von Orchester-

und Chorklang steht neben ausgespartem A-cappella-Satz, überzeugende Aussage neben Bombast und Schmalz. So schwankt, zwischen Lobpreisung und Achselzucken, das Porträt dieses Kolumbus neuer sinfonischer Welten in der Musikgeschichtsschreibung bis heute.

Im vereinten Hamburger und Kölner Rundfunkchor und im Kölner Funksinfonieorchester hatte Mitropoulos Mitwirkende von einer Könnerschaft und Bereitwilligkeit, der er als erster selbst lebhaft applaudierte.

Mitropoulos dirigierte auswendig — eine bewundernswerte Leistung des Gedächtnisses und der Konzentration. Trotzdem vermochte er nicht, die auseinanderstrebenden Teile zum Ganzen zusammenzuschmelzen, so groß er vielfach — im urgewaltigen „Dies irae“, im archaisch strengen „Sanctus“ — war.

Das Requiem, unmittelbar durch UKW übertragen, eröffnete gleich-

zeitig sowohl die öffentlichen Konzerte des WDR-Winters als auch den musikalischen Sektor des Katholikentages. GA

WELT, Düsseldorf, 3.9.1

Kurz referiert

KÖLN

Hector Berlioz' Requiem

Als Festkonzert anläßlich des 77. Deutschen Katholikentages dirigierte Dimitri Mitropoulos im Großen Sendesaal des Westdeutschen Rundfunks in Köln eine bemerkenswerte Aufführung des Requiems von Hector Berlioz. Der WDR-Chor war durch den Hamburger Rundfunkchor verstärkt; über dem in größter Besetzung spielenden Kölner Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchester saßen zwei Bläsergruppen in den Saleken. War damit auch die von Berlioz geforderte Besetzung mit 5 Orchestern und 600 Sängern nicht erreicht, so gelang es dem energischen und temperamentsvollen Dirigenten doch, eine außergewöhnliche Klangfülle vor allem in der Darstellung des letzten Gerichts, im „Dies irae“ und im zweiten Teil des „Lacrymosa“ zu entfalten. Auch in der Auffassung der lyrisch-liebhaften Stellen wurde er dem Romantiker Berlioz gerecht.

Das Orchester war allen Schwierigkeiten der überreichen Instrumentierung gewachsen. Der Chor, einstudiert von Max Thurn und Bernhard Zimmermann, behauptete sich gut im Überschwang des Klanges und in der klaren Wiedergabe der aus dem Gesang in die scharf akzentuierte Sprache übergehenden Stellen. Nicolai Gedda sang mit verhaltener Empfindung den Tenorpart. Der nach einer Besinnungspause einsetzende starke Beifall zeugte von der nachhaltigen Wirkung dieser Programm-Musik. W. F.

Aus dem Schau-Hör-Bild der Partitur dringen immer wieder phantastische, „greifbare“ Bilder hervor, deren Farbe vom Monotonen über das Blendende bis zum Gruseligen reicht. Dazwischen erfreuen konzertante Episoden und die Streichorchesterrufe im Offertorium offenbart eine erstaunliche Kunst, zumal in solch raffiniert gestalteter Darbietung. Andere Partien sind primitiv, und manchmal mangelt es an der Balance (Übergewicht der Bässe).

Im ganzen gesehen findet die kirchliche Liturgie, die Text und Anlaß zum Werk liefert, keine „fromme“ Erfüllung. Man müßte denn einen spätbarocken Altar, auf dem ein gruslicher Skelettmann den Bischof in sein Wurmergrab zerrt, während pausbackige Putten zum jüngsten Gericht blasen, für fromm halten.

Hans Schaarwächter

Mittwoch, 29. August 1956

BERGISCHE LANDESZEITUNG / RUNDSCHAU

Berlioz' „Requiem“ im WDR

Dimitri Mitropoulos dirigierte das 1. Chorkonzert

Hector Berlioz drohte in seinen Kompositionen oftmals einem alten, dummen Irrtum anheimzufallen: daß nämlich viel gleich gut, daß Masse gleich Kunst, daß Häufung schon Fülle sei. Maßhalten war seine Sache nicht. „Er ging immer über die Grenzen, auch wenn er sonst Lößliches zustande brachte“, hat Verdi zu treffend über ihn gesagt.

Berlioz' „Große Totenmesse“ (1837) gehört zu den Monströsten der Musik: ein bombastisches, streckenweise gar aufgeblähtes Opus, das dreißig fünf Orchester und einen Riesenchor

(Berlioz selbst hielt 600 Kehlen für zureichend) zur Ausführung verlangt. Ganze Hundertschaften werden hier verbraucht, um einen Dreiklang zu intonieren oder um ein simples Ostinato-Motiv zu singen. Zehnfach besetztes Blech und acht Paar Pauken donnern dem Hörer eine Vision des jüngsten Gerichts ins Ohr, daß ihm wahrhaftig Hören und Sehen vergeht. Das pompöse Alfresco überwiegt weitaus über die verhaltenen, verinnerlichteren Partien des kontrastreichen Werkes. Alles ist auf größte Wirkung berechnet. So war natürlich das weite Podium

des Großen Sendesaals drängvoll überfüllt von Mitwirkenden. Wir haben's ja, sagte sich der Rundfunk. Und er holte sich zu seinem eigenen Kölner Chor fix noch den Hamburger Rundfunkchor hinzu; er verstärkte sein Sinfonieorchester mit dröhnendem Blech und setzte den tönenden Heerscharen einen alten Griechen an die Spitze: den 60-jährigen Dimitri Mitropoulos (jetzt Neuyork), einen der ganz Großen am Dirigentenpult, der zwischen dem Salzburger „Don Giovanni“-Aufführungen flugs herreiste, um das „Requiem“ zum Katholikentag zu gestalten. Er

hat alles, was Berlioz von seinen Interpreten forderte: „äußerste Genauigkeit, verbunden mit unwiderstehlicher Verve, ein wildes und doch maßvolles Feuer, träumerische Empfindsamkeit, eine sozusagen krankhafte Schwerenut“. Doch Würde und ergreifende Wirkung gewann der Abend erst durch den fanatischen Ernst und die beschwörende Kraft des ursprünglich zum Priester der orthodoxen Kirche bestimmten Mannes. Er identifizierte sich mit Leib und Seele (und das ist hier durchaus religiös zu verstehen) mit dem Werk. Unter seinen vibrierenden Zuhänden vollzog sich ein Wunder der Verwandlung, das nur aus unerklärlicher Magie der religiösen und künstlerischen Inspiration erwachsen kann. Ihm allein war zu danken, daß das

aufgedonnerte Pathos der gigantischen Totenmesse alles Peinliche und Fatale einbüßte.

Nicolai Geddas strömender Tenor erfüllte das herrliche Sanctus mit sanfter Zärtlichkeit. Die Qualitäten des vorzüglichen Kölner Orchesters und der vereinigten Chorscharen erfuhren unter Mitropoulos ihre denkbar höchste Steigerung. Nur das Kölner Musikpublikum hatte das im guten Sinne Sensationelle des Abends offenbar nicht vorhergesehen; das nicht ausverkaufte Haus bereitete den Mitwirkenden um so herzlichere Ovationen. CWC.

Star des Abends war der Dirigent

Dimitri Mitropoulos zum erstenmal am Pult der Staatsoper

Wir hoffen, daß die erste musikalische Direktion von Dimitri Mitropoulos in der Staatsoper den Beginn fruchtbarer Beziehungen zwischen dem Dirigenten und dem Institut darstellt. Der berühmte Gast leitete eine Aufführung der „Manon Lescaut“. Die spürbare Liebe, mit der er seine Pflicht erfüllte, ließ daran glauben, daß er sich selbst diese Oper für sein Wiener Entrée ausgesucht hat. Vielleicht reizte es ihn, in diesem vom Publikum und von den Theaterdirektoren für nicht ganz voll genommenen Frühwerk den ganzen Puccini, den späteren Meister der „Bohème“, der „Turandot“ nachzuweisen.

Sicher, dieser „Manon“ fehlte noch die ins Ohr springende und im Ohr bleibende Plastik des melodischen Einfalls. Es fehlt ihr auch noch der Zugriff einer ohne allzuviel Rücksicht auf feinen Geschmack geführten „Bühnenpranke“, vor deren Gebrauch der Komponist später nicht mehr so ängstlich zurückgeschreckte. Echter Puccini ist hingegen die ungemein geschmackvolle Kleinmalerei und die Grundierung des feinen melodischen Linea-

ments mit einer immer fesselnden, nie billigen Harmonik. Hier alle Farben leuchten zu lassen und trotzdem das formale Fortschreiten, die Entwicklung vom Kleinen zum Großen nicht aufzuhalten, ist eine lohnende Aufgabe für den Dirigenten. Und Mitropoulos hat alle in ihn gesetzten Erwartungen erfüllt. Im Musizieren wurde eine Verbindung von Intensität und Präzision erreicht, wie sie in der Staatsoper durchaus nicht alltagsüblich ist. Gerade die italienische Oper lebt von dieser Synthese — und Puccini war in dieser Beziehung auch in seinen Anfängen schon ein typisch italienischer Opernkomponist.

In all diesen Opern müßte der Sänger mit seiner Stimme „spielen“ können. Carla Martinis kann es von Natur aus, Eberhard Wächter besitzt dazu die nötige Intelligenz; nur Ivo Zidek lyrischer Tenor ist dazu noch zu nuanzenarm und wird zu steif geführt. Intensiv Arbeit mit dem Studienleiter erscheint dringend notwendig. — An diesem Abend aber wurde sowieso der Dirigent wie ein Tenor gefeiert. R. W.

Die Presse

18. September 1956

Triumphales Operndebüt Mitropoulos'

Puccinis „Manon Lescaut“ in vollem Glanz

Die jüngste „Manon-Lescaut“-Vorstellung der Staatsoper trug den Stempel der überragenden Persönlichkeit Dimitri Mitropoulos'. Unter seiner magistralen Stabführung avancierten sogar die Leistungen der Solisten, des Orchesters, des Chors. Was früher als gut zu bezeichnen war, erlangt diesmal himmlischen Rang. Routine vorzuerst pflegte, empfand man diesmal durch sinnvolle Anordnungen angeregtes, gesteigertes Interesse an der Erfüllung der jeweiligen Aufgabe.

Welches Maximum an Ausdruck verleiht Mitropoulos jeder einzelnen orchestralen und vokalen Phrase, welche vorbildliche Deutlichkeit den Ensemblemitgliedern! Die oft unter dem Vorwand der „Italienität“ vernünftigen Dehnungen der Fermenten wurden ebenso vermieden wie die gerade in jüngerer Zeit von manchen Orchesterleitern geübte Praxis, aus Angst vor Sentimentalität sachlich zu werden und musikalische Hauptpunkte als Nebensätze auszusprechen.

In „Manon Lescaut“ steht Puccini erst an der Schwelle der Meisterschaft. Vieles, was sich später im vollen Genieglanz zeigen wird, ist hier erst im Keime vorhanden. Mimis Hirscheiden im Montmartre-Atelier, Lius Opfertod erfuhren stärker inspirierte musikalische Schilderungen als das Verdurstens der Manon in den amerikanischen Sandwüsten. Die Deutung Mitropoulos' zeichnet sich jedoch durch einen dermaßen hohen Grad von Geschlossenheit aus, daß das Werk wie aus einem Guß geformt erscheint. Das symphonische Zwischenspiel, welches der Komponist als „Fahrt nach Le Havre“ überschrieb, wurde zu einem Triumph des mit Walter Barylli am ersten Pult in Höchstform musizierenden Philharmonischen Orchesters. In solchen Musteraufführungen wird auch der Verismo, ein Stil von gestern, wieder durchaus aktuell. (Wie im übrigen jede gehaltvolle, perfekt dargebotene Schöpfung). Die Bereicherung, die dem österreichischen Musikleben durch das Wirken Mitropoulos' erwächst, kann nicht hoch genug eingeschätzt werden.

Als Chevalier Des Grieux stellte sich der für

mehrere Monate der Staatsoper verpflichtete Tenor Ivo Zidek erstmalig in einer größeren Partie vor. Seine Gestalt ist einnehmend, desgleichen sein natürliches Spiel. Die Stimme ist dem Umfang nach stark, im Timbre spröde. Für die Lyriken Puccinis fehlt es noch an entscheidender Dynamik. Viele positive Eindrücke erweckten indes zweifellos Hoffnungen für die Zukunft. In bester Form, strahlend in den Spitzennoten sang Karla Martinis die Titelpartie, und von der darstellerisch wie gesanglich gleich hervorragenden Leistung Eberhard Wächters seien vor allem die Parlando im zweiten Akt in ihrer musterhaften Wortdeutlichkeit und ihrem schönen Pianogesang hervorgehoben. Mi

From SEP 12 1956

VARIETY

New York, N. Y.

Longhair Maestro Gives

Jazz Beat at Town Hall

Dimitri Mitropoulos again takes a swing at the jazz field next month when he conducts the first concert at New York's Town Hall sponsored by the Jazz and Classical Music Society. Tootlers appearing with the longhair maestro will be Miles Davis, Percy Heath, J. J. Johnson, Connie Kay and John Lewis, among others. The maestro previously had conducted Rolf Lieberman's jazz concerts with the Stan Kenton orch at Carnegie Hall, N. Y.

Bash, which is set for Oct. 19, will be put into the groove by Columbia Records. The disk royalties as well as the proceeds from the concert will be utilized for future concerts and the commission of new works.

NEUES ÖSTERREICH Dienstag, 18. September 1956

Erlebnisreiches Wochenende in der Staatsoper

Das erste große Ereignis der neuen Opernsaison hieß Dimitri Mitropoulos, der am vergangenen Samstag erstmals am Pult der Staatsoper erschien, um Puccinis „Manon Lescaut“ zu dirigieren.

Wir geben unserer christlichen Freude darüber Ausdruck, daß es gerade ein Werk Puccinis war, dem die Ehre einer fulminant-erstklassigen Leitung zuteil wurde, werden doch auch in Wien die Meisterwerke dieses Genies vielfach in die Rolle erfolgreicher Lückenbüsser des Repertoires gedrängt, wobei dann das Niveau an der Nonchalance, mit der man Puccini gegenüber aus Werk gehen zu dürfen glaubt, keinerlei Zweifel offenläßt. Dabei dirigierte Mitropoulos „nicht einmal“ „Bohème“, „Tosca“, „Turandot“ oder gar „Gianni Schicchi“, sondern „Manon Lescaut“, jenes an der Schwelle reifer Meisterschaft stehende Werk, dem nur noch die Plastik der melodischen Erfindung fehlt, um sich neben den späteren Opern des Meisters erfolgreich behaupten zu können. Die Eigenheit des Puccini-Stils ist bereits voll ausgeprägt: die

virtuose Beherrschung eines aufgelockerten, belcantenreichen Rezitativstils mit jenen lyrischen Ruhepunkten, die formal nicht mehr als Arien im Sinne der älteren italienischen Oper zu bezeichnen sind, denen ansatzweise bereits in der „Manon“ der unwiderstehliche Reiz hochkultivierter Klanglichkeit anhaftet, dem später in „Tosca“ die spezifische und nicht nachzuahmende Puccini-Harmonik mit ihrer Bevorzugung „samtweicher“ Nebenseptakkorde — auch dies bahnt sich in „Manon“ bereits an — den adäquaten Untergrund geben wird. Vor allem aber macht die erstaunlich-sichere Beherrschung einer reich differenzierten und besonders am Beginn des ersten Aktes bravourösen Instrumentationstechnik „Manon Lescaut“ zu einem mitreißenden Stück Musik. Man darf nie vergessen, daß Puccini von allem Anfang an dem Orchester eine weit wichtigere Bedeutung beimißt als etwa Donizetti oder der junge Verdi. Auch die besten Sänger vermögen in einer Puccini-Oper eine am Opernschlehdrian krankende Direktion nicht vergessen zu machen.

Mitropoulos deckte mit fast erschreckender Deutlichkeit auf, welche Staubschichten im Opernalltag auf einer Puccini-Partitur lagern. Die „Entrümpelung“ war radikal, der erzielte Effekt dementsprechend. Stellenweise glaubte man beinahe, ein Strauss-Orchester musizieren zu hören. Mit spielerischer Leichtigkeit und aus spontaner Intuition geboren, gelangen die heikelsten dynamischen Nuancierungen; mit unerbittlicher Energie, die bei aller Kraft des Fortissimos niemals in brutale und musikwidrige Härte ausartete, wurden die dramatischen Akzente gesetzt. Es gab keinerlei Hegemonie der Sänger gegenüber dem „begleitenden“ Orchester. Nur ein ganz oberflächlicher und unversierter Opernbesucher wird ja angesichts dieser thematischen Durchdringung von Orchester und Solisten von „Begleitung“ sprechen können! Wahrhaftig: nur so kann und darf Puccini gespielt werden! Den Sängern freilich wurde stimmlich alles abverlangt, wobei es leider an manchen kräftig instrumentierten Stellen nicht immer gelang, den Orchesterklang so zu dosieren, daß er die Sänger nicht zudeckte und ihnen somit die undankbare Aufgabe des „optischen Singens“ übertrug. Ein Vorwurf übrigens, den man auch Karajans „Lucia“-Direktion nicht ersparen kann. Zweifellos wird eine längere Tätigkeit Dimitri Mitropoulos' an der Staatsoper, die für die nächstjährige Spielzeit vorgesehen ist und von der wir uns einen unabsehbaren Gewinn für dieses Institut erwarten, eine Überwindung auch dieser einzigen Unzulänglichkeit ermöglichen. Wie gesagt: an diesem Abend spielte der Dirigent die Hauptrolle; die Sänger Karla Martinis (Manon), Ivo Zidek (Des Grieux), Eberhard Wächter (Lescaut) und Adolf Vogel (Geronte) seien daher diesmal mit einem herzlichen Pauschallob bedacht. Auch das Publikum feierte den Star der Aufführung, der eben nicht Meneghini-Callas, Zeani oder Di Stefano, sondern Mitropoulos hieß, mit enthusiastischem Beifall.

XIX FESTIVAL DI MUSICA CONTEMPORANEA

Schoenberg e Strauss alla Fenice diretti da Dimitri Mitropoulos

Il grande Maestro e l'Orchestra Filarmonica di Vienna, hanno ottenuto, in questo concerto, un successo trionfale

Tre sono i musicisti, oggi lo sappiamo, che più influiscono sulla formazione giovanile di Arnold Schoenberg: il Wagner del „Tristan“, Mahler Strauss. Cioè l'ultimo, grandissimo romantico, e i due maggiori esponenti di questo romanticismo, giunti alle sue estreme conseguenze.

Quale sia stata questa formazione, quali gli sviluppi e l'innata, drammatica conclusione, è a tutti noto. E non è quindi il caso di soffermarsi, ancora una volta, a spiegarlo. Ciò che invece va chiarito, perché non vi siano dubbi, è che fra l'epigoniismo romantico giovanile di Schoenberg e l'espressionismo (come ambiente culturale), l'atonalismo (come fatto tecnico) prima e la dodecafonia dopo, non vi è unità di rapporti, logico svolgimento, ma una frattura netta, decisa, irreparabile, che nessun ragionamento, nessun solismo riusciranno a sanare. Dalla esasperazione del cromatismo tristaniano, gli agglomerati armonici mahleriani, alla tensione strumentale straussiana, alla distruzione della tonalità e alla sua codificazione in sistema, Schoenberg non vi giunse per gradi, bensì con un orrido salto. E cominciò quel viaggio nel buio che doveva condurlo alla infernale demenza della „ematurità“ dodecafonica.

L'audizione del „Pelleas und Melisande“, come di altre opere giovanili pre-dodecafoniche, riesce quanto mai istruttiva perché, oltre a definire le origini della formazione schoenbergiana, dimostra che l'autore della „dodecafonia“, pur possedendo eccezionali qualità tecniche, mancava di fantasia, in sostanza non era un artista.

A differenza del „Gurre-Lieder“ che pure sono posteriori, nel „Pelleas und Melisande“ Schoenberg compie la prima, decisiva escursione fuori del mondo armonico tradizionale. Rientrerà stremato per ripiegare, provvisoriamente, su soluzioni meno ardite, ma solo per riprendere forza e ripartire con maggiore coraggio e audacia.

Nel „Pelleas und Melisande“ il germe dell'atonalismo è già presente. L'enorme medusa dilatazione della materia sonora, i viscidii, innaturali amplessi fra il mondo cui era legato e quello che già intravedeva, lo confermano. Il processo di disintegrazione del discorso musicale è in atto, mentre il descrittivismo letterario di origine straussiana si trasforma in una deformazione di carattere rappresentativo. Invano, perché i temi, meglio i miseri frammenti di temi presenti, in questa complessa partitura, tradiscono, con inequivoca chiarezza, la loro origine.

Di quanto lo superasse quello Strauss, così disprezzato da molti fedeli della scuola viennese, lo si è visto, anzi udito, subito anche ieri sera pur con un'opera — la Sinfonia delle Alpi — non certo fra le più grandi del musicista bavarese. Il sentimento della natura, l'amore per la montagna, che ispirano questo amplissimo poema, sono un riflesso letterario, e sia pure coltissimo e astenuto da una mitica sapienza, di quelli stupendamente poetici di Wagner. Tuttavia l'opera, pur con le sue caratteristiche di racconto musicale, talvolta descrittivo, tal'altra balneamente onomatopoeico, ha una sua unità, un suo fascino, derivanti dalla ricchezza generosa della materia musicale, dalla incisiva bellezza di molti ed insieme entusiasti melodi, dall'irresistibile impeto d'una magica strumentazione.

Opere entrambe d'una straordinaria difficoltà d'interpretazione, che solo un grande maestro, quale

è appunto Dimitri Mitropoulos poteva dominare tecnicamente e condurre alla più efficace e spon-

gosa realizzazione. Questo greco dionisiaco, questo cervello elettronico, questo musicista dalla sensibilità acutissima, dominata dal più lucido controllo critico, possiede una intenzione ed un rigore storiografico che gli consentono di adeguarsi perfettamente ad autori ed opere diversi. Ma non v'è dubbio che il mondo romantico, appunto quello di ieri sera, è uno dei più congeniali alla sua reale umana personalità. Il discorso musicale più complesso si sciolse e si organizzò, sotto il gesto di Mitropoulos, con una chiarezza e precisione, una unità stupefacente, le più poderose architetture sonore, vengono realizzate con un vigore pari al plastico rilievo architettonico in Mitropoulos, infine, i più tortuosi valori dinamici, i piani sonori, i contrasti ritmici e timbrici più difficili, fluiscono da un'unica, rigorosa, unitaria concezione.

Così, con la preziosa collaborazione dell'Orchestra Filarmonica di Vienna, magnifica per compatezza, sonorità, disciplina tecnica, bellezza di suono, Mitropoulos ha interpretato le due opere in programma, raggiungendo dei risultati, tecnici ed espressivi, che non si potranno dimenticare.

Dal concerto di Arturo Toscanini del 1949, La Fenice non aveva conosciuto un successo, un vero trionfo, pari a questo di ieri sera. Ed è giusto, perché da allora, non era salito sul podio del nostro massimo teatro un direttore della grandezza di Mitropoulos. Applausi lungamente all'inizio, il Maestro è stato oggetto dopo la prima parte ed alla fine del concerto, di una entusiastica ovazione da parte del magnifico pubblico che gremiva la stupenda sala del Selva.

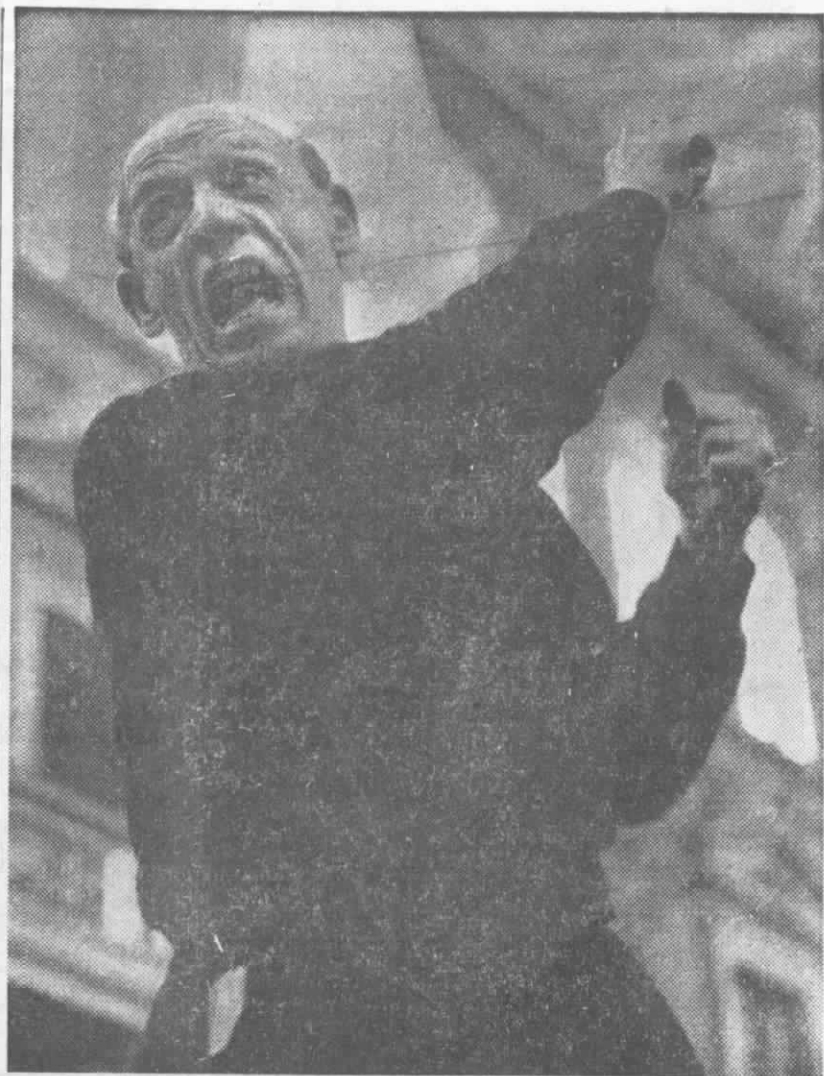
g. pu.



Il Maestro Mitropoulos durante il concerto tenuto ieri sera alla Fenice con la Filarmonica di Vienna per il Festival Musicale (Foto Borioli)

"Gazzettino"
VENEZIA
20.9.1956

Bild-Telegraph. 19-9-56



BESESSÈN von der Musik, die er dirigiert: Dimitri Mitropoulos, amerikanischer Orchesterchef griechischer Abstammung, eine der faszinierendsten Musikerpersönlichkeiten der Gegenwart und ein großer Taktstockzauberer. Seine „Manon-Lescaut“-Aufführung in der Staatsoper war das bedeutendste musikalische Ereignis seit Jahren. Kommendes Wochenende leitet er das erste Abonnementkonzert der Wiener Philharmoniker, mit denen er heute Abend ein Sonderkonzert in Venedig absolviert.

AL FESTIVAL MUSICALE DI VENEZIA

Il «New York City Ballet» e l'Orchestra Filarmonica di Vienna

Un nuovo balletto del triestino Raffaello de Banfield alla Fenice - Musiche di Schoenberg e di Riccardo Strauss dirette da Mitropoulos

DAL NOSTRO INVIATO SPECIALE

Venezia 19 settembre, notte.

Quattro creazioni per la danza, nella felice serata del suo esordio, il «New York City Ballet» ha presentato alla Fenice di Venezia, che già l'aveva avuto ospite tre anni or sono: la poetica *Serenade* di Balanchine, musica di Ciaikovski, già nota al pubblico per la grazia delle sciamanti allegoriche, cui partecipa quasi l'intero corpo di ballo; il *Pas de dix*, dello stesso Balanchine, musica di Glazunov, che in una successione d'interventi piuttosto accademici svolge un ciclo di figurezioni; appena stilisticamente eleganti; la *Bourrée fantasque* ancora Balanchine coreografo, musica di Chabrier, che in un po' il riassunto inventivo e tecnico del geniale successore di Diaghilev; finalmente *Il duello*, presentato per la prima volta in Italia, con la coreografia di

William Dollar, musica del giovane compositore triestino Raffaello de Banfield, costumi di Robert Stevenson e interpretazione, nelle parti principali, della guizante Melissa Hayden e del flessuoso Francisco Moncion.

Il duello, non meno dei restanti balletti, ha avuto accoglienza calorosa e ha procurato all'autore, agli esecutori e al direttore d'orchestra Hugo R. alato insistenti chiamate al proseno. Esso si rifa all'episodio della *Gerusalemme Liberata*, già musicato da Monteverdi nel *Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*, ma qui per un verso arricchito del precedente incontro dei guerrieri in campo, allorché la fanciulla pagana si svela all'ardente cavaliere crociato; per l'altro verso impoverito del toccante episodio del battesimo in *extremis*. La musica di Raffaello de Banfield segue da vicino i gesti, da lontano i sentimenti dei protagonisti che danzano e si scontrano figurandosi in arcione a immaginarsi destrieri. Non è certo un sublime musica «concitata» l'antico madrigalista cremonese, e neppure si vale, come bella, d'alcuna voce umana. Ariva di contenuto emotivo, procede tuttavia orchestralmente disciplinata e si gonfia sovente in una accentuazione ritmica, pomposa e sensuale che al dire dell'autore, vorrebbe tradurre l'elemento bavocco dell'immortale poema.

Questa sera, poi, per il terzo e ultimo concerto sinfonico del Festival, è stata acclamata alla Fenice la celebre Orchestra Filarmonica di Vienna, diretta da Dimitri Mitropoulos. In programma, a titolo commemorativo, erano due soli nomi di grandi musicisti scomparsi, cioè i nomi dei massimi esponenti moderni del sinfonismo a sfondo programmatico e letterario: Arnold Schoenberg e Riccardo Strauss. Opere presentate: di Schoenberg, il *Pelleas und Melisande*; di Strauss, *Una sinfonia delle Alpi*.

Pelleas und Melisande fa parte del secondo periodo della produzione di Schoenberg, un periodo di transizione, detto anche post-romantico; viene subito dopo il sestetto per archi intitolato *Noite trasfigurata*, ma mentre nel sestetto è ancor manifesto per molti tratti il genitino cromatismo wagneriano, nel *Pelleas*, che pur non ignora Wagner, come non ignora Strauss, già si affaccia l'impronta originale e abbastanza compiuta che condurrà gradatamente Schoenberg alle crudeltà del linguaggio politonale e poi ai rigori della codificata dodecafonia. In *Pelleas* la dissonanza appare infatti isolata, come sciolta da ogni rapporto sensibilmente accessibile col tono fondamentale. E se v'ha ancora in esso una certa tendenza allo stile impressionistico, agevolata anche dal nutrito organico strumentale, assai diversa da quella dell'omonima opera lirica debussiana, vi risulta l'atmosfera sonora, poiché il valore proprio di ogni accordo, d'ogni segmento polifonico e d'ogni gioco timbrico spicca con evidenza da un processo autocentrico e strettamente logico delle voci allineate in rigida costruzione contrappuntistica.

Di Strauss, nella seconda parte del programma, è risuonata come s'è detto, *Una sinfonia delle Alpi*, pagina che rende attenti, quasi delusi gli ammiratori degli impeti passionali e delle eccitanti bizzarrie dialettiche dell'autore di un *Til e d'un Don Giovanni*. Non è qui il più tipico Strauss. Ma l'indirizzo illustrativo, quasi oleografico delle evocazioni, e il carattere descrittivo e squillante degli abbandoni conferiscono una speciale piacevolezza alla partitura.

Entrambe le opere sinfoniche sono state intese da Mitropoulos con esaltante rilievo dei valori espressivi e fonici, alimentati da un pensiero consapevole e dominatore. L'Orchestra Filarmonica di Vienna a sua volta le ha realizzate con alto magistero, esemplare compattezza, prorompente vivacità comunicativa. Teatro affollato. Successo entusiastico.

Franco Abbiati

Erfreulicher Auftakt der philharmonischen Saison unter Mitropoulos

Nun hatte Schönbergs „Pelleas“ auch in Wien Erfolg

Die Philharmoniker haben unter der starken und feurigen Führung von Dimitri Mitropoulos die Konzertsaison eröffnet. Es war ein ganz ungewöhnliches Programm, das den Abonnenten in hinreißender Aufführung geboten wurde. Es bestand aus zwei großen Orchesterwerken, die alle Mittel, Klangmassen und Farbenströme des modernen Orchesters in Tonbildern von gewaltigen Dimensionen verwendeten und die das Zeitalter der Romantik beschlossen haben: Arnold Schönbergs symphonische Dichtung „Pelleas und Melisande“ und die „Alpensinfonie“, mit der Richard Strauss die Reihe seiner Orchestergeräusche beendet hat.

Das Schönberg'sche Jugendwerk — es ist das Werk eines 27jährigen Genies — ist in den Philharmonischen Konzerten noch nicht gespielt worden. Es wurde bald nach seiner Entstehung von einem so großen Dirigenten wie Willem Mengelberg in Amsterdam erfolgreich gespielt und gleich darauf in einem Symphoniekonzert in Prag und in einem

punktischer Baumeister. Er ist hier, wo er in der „Szene im Sterbegemach“ schon die Gantonskala verwendet, ein kühner Harmoniker und in der Instrumentation — so in dem berühmten Glissando der gedämpften Posaunen — wahrhaft erfindend. Er ist reich und überströmend in dieser Musik. Drei Jahre später hat Schönberg in seiner „Kammersymphonie“ alles Neue, das in seinem „Pelleas“ mit glühenden Massen aus der

romantischen Form herausbrach, ganz vergeistigt und verdichtet.

Eine vollendete Aufführung der „Alpensinfonie“, die Mitropoulos schon in Salzburg dirigiert hat, gab den Malereien dieses Werkes, von dem Strauss dem Dichter Hofmannsthal schrieb: „Die Alpensinfonie müssen Sie hören; es ist wirklich ein gutes Stück“, den strahlenden Farbglanz eines Riesentableaus und die malerische Phantasie eines Panoramas, mg

Bild-Telegraf

Wien

Datum:

Nach der Pause war die Phantasie arbeitslos

Seelendrama und kolorierte Ansichtskarten im ersten Philharmonischen Abonnementskonzert

1. Abonnementskonzert der Wiener Philharmoniker, Samstag und Sonntag im Großen Musikvereinsaal. Dirigent: Dimitri Mitropoulos. Programm: „Zwei Meisterwerke der Programmmusik“ — „Pelleas und Melisande“ von Arnold Schönberg und „Eine Alpensinfonie“ von Richard Strauss.

Dimitri Mitropoulos mußte nach Wien kommen, damit auf dem Programm eines Philharmonischen Abonnementskonzertes auch einmal der Name Arnold Schönberg aufscheint. Und dessen symphonische Dichtung „Pelleas und Melisande“ mußte immerhin über fünfzig Jahre alt werden, um die philharmonischen Weihen zu empfangen. Dafür brachte es der Tonfilm „Alpensinfonie“ von Richard Strauss in den letzten vierzig Jahren

schon auf achtzehn Aufführungen in diesem erlauchten Rahmen. Popularität ist eben alles!

Das konnte man auch dem Publikum anmerken: es empfand Schönberg als höchst verdächtigen Eindringling; sein geniales Stück erhielt trotz grandioser Wiedergabe nur philharmonischen Achtungsbeifall. Dabei ist „Pelleas und Melisande“ keineswegs ein kompliziert zu hörendes Werk, sondern hochromantische, expressive Musik, die ihre Herkunft vom „Tristan“ weder verleugnen kann noch will.

„Pelleas und Melisande“ ist der kühne, um die Jahrhundertwende unternommene Versuch, Maeterlincks Drama — im Gegensatz zu Debussy — mit den Mitteln der „absoluten“ Musik zu vertonen. Denn Schönberg schrieb ja gar keine „Programmmusik“. Sein Programm sind menschliche Gefühle, seelische Regungen und tragische Konflikte — also das Programm aller wahrhaft großen Kunst. Nur werden hier die Mittel der Musik bis zum äußersten genützt: Seelenfotografie von beklemmender Intensität, reproduziert mittels der Hochspannung und Ausdruckskraft einer übersensiblen, feibrigen Tonsprache, die stets innerhalb der Grenzen der Tonart bleibt, gegen die aber Tristans Delirien nur eine Kinderkrankheit sind.

Bei der „Alpensinfonie“ braucht man hingegen nicht in die Tiefe zu horchen. Man kann es gar nicht. Denn hier ist alles schillernde Oberfläche, Artistik der Klangfarben und manuelle Meisterschaft. Eine kolorierte Ansichtskartenserie mit dem Bimmel von Kugelhaken, einem mittels Donner- und Windmaschine perfekt hergestellten Hochgebirgsgewitter und einem von Franz Schütz auf der Orgel fabrizierten Sonnenunter-

From

TIME

SEP 24 1956

To all but the most casual concertgoers, the Philharmonic has sounded ragged for the past two years, and the impression grew that nobody seemed to care. Conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos, 60, a man of great good will and enormous gifts, tolerated sloppy playing—possibly demoralized because the Philharmonic's board often failed to support him in performing modern music, the kind he likes best. The orchestra members, working too hard and denied a hand in policy-making, felt like underpaid hired help. And Manager Judson could not escape his share of the blame. Throughout his remarkable career, Judson had treated music as a business, usually with brilliant results, but his artist-clients came to fear his power.

Musical Director Mitropoulos also seemed to be getting tired of the Philharmonic feuds, recently told a Vienna newspaper that this will be his last season with the orchestra. He added: "If I were in Judson's position, I would have resigned a long time ago, to take a rest after such glorious activity. It takes a great character to resign in time."

TIME, SEPTEMBER 24, 1956

Neuer Kurier

Wien

Datum:

Schönbergs „Pelleas und Melisande“ eröffnete die Saison im Musikverein

Mitropoulos dirigierte das 1. philharmonische Abonnementskonzert

Im Jahre 1903 beendete Arnold Schönberg die Arbeit an seiner symphonischen Dichtung „Pelleas und Melisande“. Das dramatische Gedicht Maeterlincks hatte Claude Debussy zu dem Komponisten persönlichster Aussage angeregt, die Frankreich einen Sonderplatz in der neueren Musikgeschichte sichert. Dasselbe Gedicht gab dem jungen Schönberg Gelegenheit, noch einmal den Tonraum, den Wagner mit „Tristan“ und „Parsifal“ geöffnet hatte, bis an die äußersten Grenzen abzuschreiten. In dieser musikalischen Schöpfung meint man schon das Chaos zu spüren, das jenseits jener Grenzen lauert; andererseits gibt sich in dieser Musik eine eigenartige Persönlichkeit zu erkennen, der das epigonenhafte Wirtschaffen in einem vorgegebenen Raum auf die Dauer nicht genügen konnte.

Wie Schönberg kraft seines schöpferischen Intellekts dem Chaos und dem Epigonen auswich, ist bekannt. Die Arbeit an „Pelleas und Melisande“ aber dürfte entscheidend die revolutionäre Wendung des Komponisten vorbereitet haben.

Für diese Musik der harmonischen Spannungen, Steigerungen und Ausbrüche war Dimitri Mitropoulos der gegebene Dirigent. Sein stark ausgeprägter Sinn für dynamische und klangliche Differenzierung ließ Schönbergs Frühwerk in all seiner berückenden Farbenpracht aufleuchten. Dabei bleibt es besonders bewundernswert, daß trotz der Komplexität des Satzes das formale Geschehen stets zu verfolgen war, daß man immer des inneren Zusammenhangs der einzelnen Abschnitte gewahr wurde.

Mit einer grandiosen, im festlichsten philharmonischen Klang schwellenden Wiedergabe der „Alpensymphonie“ von Richard

Strauss schloß dieses erste Abonnementskonzert, das dem Dirigenten und dem Meisterorchester einen rauschenden Publikumerfolg eintrug.

R. W.

Der Abend

Wien

Datum:

Neues vom Rialto

Als die Wiener Philharmoniker vor wenigen Tagen mit dem Dirigenten Dimitri Mitropoulos beim Venediger Musikfest gastierten, standen die „Alpensymphonie“ von Richard Strauss und „Pelleas und Melisande“ von Arnold Schönberg auf ihrem Programm. Dieselben Werke wurden vorgestern und gestern in dem ersten philharmonischen Abonnementskonzert dieser Saison aufgeführt. Bei „Pelleas und Melisande“ wurde ausdrücklich vermerkt, daß dies die erste Aufführung von Schönbergs Werk im Rahmen der Philharmonischen Konzerte sei. Ob sie auf Wunsch von Mitropoulos oder auf Verlangen der italienischen Veranstalter zustande gekommen ist, wissen wir nicht. Sie ist jedenfalls eine Überraschung in dem traditionellerweise konservativ gehaltenen Philharmonischen Jahresprogramm. Nun kommt die Nachricht, daß die Philharmoniker auch im Herbst 1957 nach Venedig eingeladen sind, und die Veranstalter den Wunsch zum Ausdruck gebracht haben, Werke von Gustav Mahler und Alban Berg zu hören. Werke von Berg waren bisher kaum im Repertoire der Abonnementskonzerte zu finden. Es hat aber den Anschein, daß die Wünsche des Auslands nicht ohne Einfluß auf die künftige Programmgestaltung bleiben werden. Schon heute kann man einen — allerdings noch zaghaften — Durchbruch der neueren Musik im Philharmonischen Repertoire verzeichnen. Außer Schönberg werden Werke von Hindemith und Gottfried von Einem aufgeführt. Vielleicht werden sich die Philharmoniker künftig stärker für Österreichs moderne Musik — und auch für die Komponisten der Gegenwart einsetzen!

Der Abend

Wien

Datum:

Philharmonisches Wochenende

Programmatisches zur Programmmusik

Das erste Philharmonische Konzert der Saison stand im Zeichen eines großen Dirigenten und zweier „Meisterwerke der Programmmusik“. Dimitri Mitropoulos dirigierte Arnold Schönbergs „Pelleas und Melisande“ und Richard Strauss' „Eine Alpensymphonie“, „Pelleas und Melisande“ erlebte hiermit die erste Aufführung in der Philharmonischen Konzerten (wie oft war es wohl überhaupt in Wien zu hören?), und so erblickte, da es am Beginn stand, ein Name wie Schönberg — welches ein Kuriosum! — die Philharmonische Saison. Richard Strauss' Symphonische Dichtung dagegen hat, laut Programmheft, bisher allein durch die Wiener Philharmoniker, die das Werk auch uraufführten, achtzehnfache größere Verbreitung gefunden. Auch ohne die beiden Stücke zu kennen, ließe sich daraus und aus dem berühmten Traditionsbewußtsein des berühmten Orchesters, aus diesen zwei be-

kannten Größen also, mit mathematischer Zuverlässigkeit ableiten, welches von beiden das konventionelle und welches das zukunfts-trächtige ist — trotz mancher gemeinsamer Merkmale: war es doch schließlich Richard Strauss, der Schönberg zu dieser Symphonischen Dichtung anregte. Beide Werke zwingen den Hörer nicht zum Mitdenken, nur zum Nachempfinden. Ihre äußere Hülle ist einfach zu „schön“, zu glatt, als daß man Lust verspürte, tiefer zu schauen.

Für Schönbergs Frühwerk gilt dies allerdings nur bedingt. Die rein musikalisch-thematische Struktur ist nämlich viel weniger unverbindlich oder illustrierend als absolut-musikalisch, und enthält im Keim schon den späteren Schönberg, dessen überwältigendem Schaffens sich auch das Publikum der Philharmonischen Konzerte heute nicht länger mehr verschließen sollte. Hier ist es noch das „Tristan“-Orchester, mit dem Schönberg nach ewigen musikalischen Gesetzen kraftvolle Emotionen schafft, für die rückschauend das gleichnamige Maeterlincksche Schauspiel mit dem ein wenig schattenhaften Geschehen nur Anlaß war, Musik zu machen. Ganz anders Richard Strauss, der Schilderer. Die Bildhaftigkeit seiner Musik wird mit Recht gerühmt. Aber die Bilder sind, zumindest in der „Alpensymphonie“, platt, abgebraucht, entwertet durch Hausgebrauch seitens der Unterhaltungsmusik und Filmindustrie — von ein paar wenigen Taktchen echter Musik abgesehen. Daß es zudem ein unendlich langes Stück ist, konnte die grandiose Darstellungskraft des Dirigenten und das hinreißende Musizieren der Wiener Philharmoniker, die sich von einer bedeutenden künstlerischen Persönlichkeit gern führen lassen, glücklicherweise vergessen machen. Dafür sei ihnen der Dank aller sicher, die nicht in Richard Strausschen Monsteraufgeboten das Nonplus-ultra der Musik des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts sehen. Es war, ist und wird niemals Aufgabe der Kunst sein, die Außenwelt naturalistisch nachzubilden; ebenso wenig kann selbst für den bescheidensten Zuhörer der Kunstgenuß damit erschöpft sein, die Kugelhaken im Strausschen Instrumentarium erfreut als solche zu erkennen. Ein paar Aussprüche, die ich zufällig zwischendurch anhören mußte, bewegen mich zu dieser nicht gerade sehr neuen Feststellung.

Karl Heinz Füssli

Österreichische Volksstimme

Wien

Datum:

Philharmonisches und Unharmonisches

Wie oft haben wir das Lob der einzigartigen Wiener Philharmoniker gesungen! Nun konnten wir einige der besten Orchester der Welt — das Amsterdamer Concertgebouw-Orchester, die Leningrader Philharmoniker, das Bostoner Symphonie-Orchester — in Wien hören. Niemand spielt Tschakowski aufwühlender als die Leningrader, niemand Ravel virtuoser als die Bostoner. Und doch nehmen wir kein Wort des Lobes für unsere Philharmoniker zurück. Sie werden bei der Wiedergabe musikalischer Kunstwerke, gleichsam improvisierend, selber zu schöpferischen Künstlern. Darin besteht das Geheimnis ihres betörenden, unachahmlich strahlenden Klangs. Kommt noch — wie diesmal, unter der genau überlegten und dennoch phantasievoll freien Leitung von Dimitri Mitropoulos — gründliche Vorbereitung hinzu, dann ist das künstlerische Ergebnis in der Tat einzigartig.

Das Programm des ersten Philharmonischen Konzerts brachte zwei, in ihrem Charakter gegensätzliche symphonische Dichtungen aus dem beginnenden 20. Jahrhundert. „Pelleas und Melisande“ von Schönberg verrät in jedem Takt die Hand eines meisterlichen Könners. Dieses Werk eines immerhin schon fast Dreißigjährigen verrät allerdings auch — in seiner Abhängigkeit vom Wagner des „Tristan“, von Mahler und (mit einigen Süßlichkeiten) sogar von Richard Strauß, daß Schönberg, um ein Eigener zu werden, die Tonart aufgeben und sich ein eigenes musikalisches System schaffen mußte. Die „Alpensinfonie“ von Strauß hingegen ist die Arbeit eines fertigen, fast allzu fertigen Meisters. Sie ist — in ihrer Schilderung eines Tages im Gebirge, mit Sonnenaufgang, Wasserfall, Herdengeläute und Gewitter — eine Filmmusik von unübertrefflicher artistischer Wirkung, so eindringlich in den musikalischen Bildern und so selbständig in der Form, daß man den dazugehörigen Film nicht vermißt. Das Stück gab dem Orchester Gelegenheit zu einer Bravourleistung.

Arbeiter Zeitung

Wien

Datum:

Große Orchestermusik

Das erste philharmonische Abonnementskonzert im Großen Musikvereinsaal brachte zwei Meisterwerke der Programmmusik. Zu Beginn die symphonische Dichtung „Pelleas und Melisande“ (opus 5) von Arnold Schönberg, in den Philharmonischen Konzerten zum erstenmal gespielt. Der junge Schönberg schuf dieses Werk auf Anregung seines Förderers Richard Strauß nach dem gleichnamigen Schauspiel von Maurice Maeterlinck, das zu gleicher Zeit (1902) Debussy als Oper geformt hat. Doch nicht allein um den Glanz des großen Orchesters, dessen Klangmöglichkeiten genial genützt werden, geht es Schönberg bei dieser Komposition, er dringt mit reicher Kontrapunktik, mit absolut musikalischer Gestaltung in die Tiefen des Ausdrucks und ist damit schon in jungen Jahren trotz Einflüssen der Neuromantik ein Eigener, durch reiches Wissen und hohes Ingenium zum späteren Schöpfer einer neuen Musik berufen. Philharmoniker bereiten dem herrlichen Werk unter der sorgsamsten Leitung von Dimitri Mitropoulos eine vollendete Wiedergabe. Ebenso großartig war die Aufführung der „Alpensymphonie“ von Richard Strauß, deren geniale Naturschilderungen vom zarten Stimmungsbild bis zum Toben des Berggewitters in virtuosem Orchesterspiel besondere Klarheit erlangen. So gab es dann am Schluß nicht enden wollenden, begeisterten Beifall für den Dirigenten Mitropoulos und unsere Philharmoniker.

Dr. Ruff

Das kleine Volksblatt

Wien

Datum:

Ohrschmaus — unterschiedlich gewürzt

Die Wiederbegegnung mit den Philharmonikern im Musikverein brachte zugleich den Abschied von Dimitri Mitropoulos: aber wir haben ja die Zusage, daß er wiederkommt, und freuen uns heute schon auf seine neuerliche Tätigkeit in Salzburg und Wien. Er hat sich mit zwei „Meisterwerken der Programmmusik“ verabschiedet: vor der Wiederholung der Festspielaufführung der „Alpensinfonie“ von Richard Strauß war Arnold Schönbergs symphonische Dichtung „Pelleas und Melisande“ platziert. Das Frühwerk des nachmaligen Zwölftöners, noch ganz im Nach-Tristan-Stil gehalten, erklang zum ersten Male in den philharmonischen Konzerten: man möchte es am liebsten als Melodram ohne Text bezeichnen, in dem ein vielschichtiges Themengeflecht die Prägnanz des Wortes ersetzt. Die Musik schildert mit einer Fülle von genau disponierten Schattierungen des Orchesterklanges den Inhalt von Maeterlincks gleichnamigem Schauspiel, das auch Debussy zu einer Vertonung inspirierte. Doch die Konturen verschwimmen mitunter in einem seltsam unkonzentrierten Licht, nur einzelne Episoden treten wirklich plastisch hervor. Die Philharmoniker haben sich, befeuert durch die drängende Energie Mitropoulos', des Werkes mit derselben Liebe angenommen wie von ihnen oft schon betreuten Alpensinfonie: ihr meisterhaftes Spiel hat den begeisterten Beifall redlich verdient.

H «BPAAYNH»

25 Σεπτεμβρίου 1956



Η έρσινη επιτυχία του Δημήτρη Μιτροπούλου εις Βιέννην ήτο μία από τας μεγαλειώδεις που γνώρισε ο Έλληνας μουσικός. Έκτός από συμφωνιακούς δοξαριούς, διηύθυνε και όπερες με μεγάλην πάντοτε επιτυχίαν. Διά τελευταίων όρών διηύθυνε την «Μανόν Λεσκώ» στην όπερα της Βιέννης και χθες ανέκδοτος δι' «Ημερέας Πολιτείας», «Ανατίσας ό Μιτροπούλος σε μίς δοκίμην στην σθήνα «Μουζικέρα» της Βιέννης, όπου έβριόμινε.

nstag

Die Presse

25. Sep

Theater und Kunst

Mitropoulos dirigierte Strauss

Das erste Abonnementskonzert der Philharmoniker

Die Philharmoniker sind in die neue Saison — es ist ihr 115. Bestandsjahr — mit einem prächtigen und besonders gelungenen Eröffnungskonzert getreten. Als Dirigent stand Dimitri Mitropoulos vor ihnen, ein Musiker, so ganz nach ihrem Musikerherzen, ein Künstler der Präzision und Korrektheit verbürgt und gleichzeitig die Individualität des Orchesters frei und freudig sich ausschwingen läßt. Ihm ist offenbar auch die höchst anregende Zusammenstellung des Programms zu danken, das zwei große symphonische Dichtungen aneinanderreihete, Schönbergs „Pelleas und Melisande“ und die „Alpensymphonie“ von Richard Strauss. Die beiden Werke gehören ungefähr der gleichen Zeit an — an zehn, zwölf Jahre liegen dazwischen — und haben gleichwohl sehr wenig miteinander gemein. Schönbergs Komposition befindet sich noch ganz im Banne Richard Wagners und stellt etwa den Versuch dar, Tristan-Chromatik und Tristan-Technik weiterzuführen, zu steigern, zu intensivieren. Die Musik berauscht sich dabei an der eigenen Fülle, am eigenen Klang, und treibt in immer wiederholtem Aufschwung Höhepunkten, Ekstasen, fiebrischen Leidenschaftskundgebungen zu. Man hört dunkelglühende, hochromantische Musik. Sie steht zwar auf durchaus tonaler Basis, gleichzeitig aber empfängt man den Eindruck, daß die Möglichkeiten des Systems nunmehr erschöpft sind, daß ein Ende erreicht ist und daß es in der gleichen Richtung nicht weiter geht; daß also demnächst die Tür ins neue System aufgebrochen werden muß.

Das ist, was uns heute dieses Werk so interessant, so fesselnd erscheinen läßt. Der Vorwurf selbst, der Gegenstand der symphonischen Dichtung tritt dabei ziemlich in den Hintergrund, und vom zarten pastellhaften Wesen der Maeterlinckschen Märchenpoesie, das Debussy so sicher einzufangen vermochte, findet sich nur selten ein gläubhafter Widerschein.

Um so klarer und faßlicher tritt in der Alpensymphonie das Thema des symphonischen Programms hervor. Die Gegenständlichkeit dieser Musik ist so einprägsam, ihre Tonsymbolik so sprechend, daß oberflächlichen Hörern der tiefere Sinn verborgen bleibt, daß man sozusagen den Wald vor lauter Bäumen nicht hört. Strauß' Ingenium entzündet sich ja mit Vorliebe am Greifbaren, Dinghaften, aber seine angeregte und in Schwung gesetzte Musikerphantasie reagiert rein musikalisch. Der Gedanke an den Antritt einer Bergfahrt löst einen Tonsetz von strafender symphonischer Führung aus, die Vorstellung des Baches, neben dem der Wanderer aufwärts schreitet, verwandelt sich in feinste, kunstvolle Kammermusik, und aus dem Gipfel erlebnis wird die packendste dramatische Spannung gewonnen. Der Blick, der dann die Aus sich genießt, erfährt mit der gleichen Intensität die Landschaft der Seele, die Landschaft des Gemütes. Und wie grandios ist die Musikarchitektur, die sich aus dem Ablauf der Bergfahrt ergibt! Es ist, als ordneten sich die Situationen nach rein musikalischen Formgesetzen, so daß das Ganze einen künstlerisch festgefügtten Bau mit klaren Umrissen ergibt. Gewiß, wir schlagen ein hentes Musikbilderbuch auf; aber wir hätten es längst beiseite geschoben, wenn sich die Bilder nicht in reine Musik auflösten.

Diese Auflösung des Bildhaften in reine Musik wurde kaum je zuvor in so vollkommener Weise erreicht wie durch Mitropoulos, der mit seiner Musikerintuition alle wirkenden Kräfte weckte und organisierte, die Kräfte, die ins Werk eingeschlossen sind, und die Kräfte, die im Orchester bereitliegen. So erreichte die philharmonische Berausung Höchstgrade, die Streicher, das Holz, die Blechbläser und die Schlagwerker, sie alle befanden sich in glückhafter Verfassung. Schöner, besser kann man nicht spielen.

Kr.

Dimitri Mitropoulos wählte für das erste Abonnementkonzert der Wiener Philharmoniker das gleiche Programm wie das, mit dem er das Orchester vor wenigen Tagen bei den Venediger Festwochen zu glänzendem Erfolg geführt hatte: Arnold Schönbergs „Pelleas und Melisande“ und „Eine Alpensinfonie“ von Richard Strauss. Nicht von ungefähr standen die zwei Werke nebeneinander. Aus fast der gleichen Zeit stammend, gehören sie dem Genre der Programmmusik an. Was aber die Komponisten betrifft, erhielt der jüngere der beiden die Anregung, den Stoff von Maurice Maeterlincks Drama zur Grundlage für ein symphonisches Werk zu wählen, von Richard Strauss, der Schönberg durch Vermittlung eines Liszt-Stipendiums und durch Empfehlung für ein Lehramt am Sternschen Konservatorium in Berlin gefördert hatte.

Mit „Pelleas und Melisande“ ist die Frühperiode in Schönbergs Schaffen, die den Komponisten noch Anschluss an die Romantik und die neudeutsche Schule suchen lässt, abgeschlossen. Man könnte das Werk nicht nur wegen seiner stofflichen Analogie, sondern auch wegen seiner verwandten Zuspitzung in Harmonik und Polyphonie Schönbergs „Tristan“ nennen. Doch besitzt seine Tonsprache zugleich etwas von fast Brahmscher Schwerblütigkeit. Es ist den Philharmonikern zu danken, daß sie mit diesem Abschiedslied von der Tonalität ihrem Repertoire ein ernstes Stück von starker Verinnerlichung einverleibt haben. Mitropoulos war ihnen ein gleich berufener wie leidenschaftlicher herzerhitzer Führer in dieses Musikland. Hier wie bei der „Alpensinfonie“ trug der phänomenale Gedächtniskünstler die ungemein komplizierte Partitur so selbstlos im Kopfe, daß er der Noten vollkommen entbehren konnte. Bei der Tondichtung von Strauss ging er weniger dem Illustrativen als dem Erlebnishaften, dem Poesievollen und der dramatischen Spannung nach, die ja auch hier den Meister der musikalischen Bühne nicht verleugnen kann. Der frohgutete Impetus beim „Anstieg“ des Bergwäanders, das geheimnisvoll zwielichtige Naturrauschen, das Drängen gefährvoller Augenblicke, die Benommenheit, die den Einsamen nach Er-

Die Presse
Wien Datum: 25.9.56
Mitropoulos dirigierte Strauss
Das erste Abonnementkonzert der Philharmoniker

Die Philharmoniker sind in die neue Saison — es ist ihr 115. Bestandsjahr — mit einem prächtigen und besonders gelungenen Eröffnungskonzert getreten. Als Dirigent stand Dimitri Mitropoulos vor ihnen, ein Musiker, so ganz nach ihrem Musikerherzen, ein Künstler, der Präzision und Korrektheit verbürgt und gleichzeitig die Individualität des Orchesters rei und freudig sich ausschwingen läßt. Ihm ist offenbar auch die höchst anregende Zusammenstellung des Programms zu danken, das zwei große symphonische Dichtungen aneinanderreicht, Schönbergs „Pelleas und Melisande“ und die „Alpensinfonie“ von Richard Strauss. Die beiden Werke gehören ungefähr der gleichen Zeit an — an zehn, zwölf Jahre liegen dazwischen — und haben gleichwohl sehr wenig miteinander gemein. Schönbergs Komposition befindet sich noch ganz im Banne Richard Wagners und stellt etwa den Versuch dar, Tristan-Chromatik und Tristan-Technik weiterzuführen, zu steigern, zu intensivieren. Die Musik berauscht sich dabei an der eigenen Fülle, am eigenen Klang, und treibt in immer wiederholtem Aufschwung Höhenpunkte, Ekstasen, fiebernden Leidenschaftskundgebungen zu. Man hört dunkelglühende, hochromantische Musik. Sie steht zwar auf durchaus tonaler Basis, gleichzeitig aber empfängt man den Eindruck, daß die Möglichkeiten des Systems nunmehr erschöpft sind, daß ein Ende erreicht ist und daß es in der gleichen Richtung nicht weiter geht; daß also demnächst die Tür ins neue System aufgebrochen werden muß.

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Η ΚΑΘΗΜΕΡΙΝΗ
TETARTH, 26 Σεπτεμβρίου 1956
Ο ΔΙΑΣΗΜΟΣ ΕΛΛΗΝ ΑΡΧΙΜΟΥΣΙΚΟΣ

Ο ΔΗΜΗΤΡΗΣ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ ΑΠΕΘΕΩΘΗ
ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΚΡΑΤΙΚΗΝ ΟΠΕΡΑΝ ΤΗΣ ΒΙΕΝΝΗΣ

Διηύθυνε την «Μανών Λεσκά» του Πουτσίνι. — Αί εφημερίδες του αφιέρωσαν πολυστήλους ύμνους.

ΒΙΕΝΝΗ, 25 Σεπτεμβρίου. (16. ύπ.). — Το κοινό της αθηναϊκής πρωτοπόρας κατόικου προ μέρους την περίφημη Κρατικήν Όπεραν, όπου ο Δημήτρης Μήτροπουλος διηύθυνε την «Μανών Λεσκά» του Πουτσίνι. Αυτή η πρώτη εμφάνισή του «Ελληνικού αρχιμουσικού» προς το βιεννέζικου κοινού, το οποίο τον απεθεώρει.



Είς τον σιδηροδρομικόν σταθμόν της Βιέννης, ο «Ελλην αρχιμουσικός» κ. ΔΗΜ. ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ με την Καν «Ελλην Φαρανιάτου», τον «Ελληνιστή» κ. Γιάργον Σισιλιάνον (δριστερά) και τον σκηνογράφον κ. Ανδρέαν Νομικόν (δεξιά).

Διά να πάρη την θέσιν του είς το βήμα της αρχιήρας, ο βιεννέζικος υπερέβησαν με ζωστή χειροκροτήματα τον παγκόσμιον φήμης μαέστρον, από την πρώτη δε μπαράτιν αντελήθησαν ότι επρόκειτο να ακούσουν μίαν έντελώς εξαιρετικήν διέλεσιν της γκαυτής μουσικής του Πουτσίνι. Μετά από κάθε παύση η αίθουσα έβλετο από χειροκροτήματα και ζήτωκραυγάς, όταν δε έπρεπε η αλλαγή της τελευταίας σκηνής το κοινόν έ-ξέτασαν είς άδην προηγουμένον έπαιφμιας. Δεκατέσσερας φορές ήνοιξεν η αίθουσα και ο μεγάλος μαέστρος, πλασιασμένος από τους πρωταγωνιστάς, έχαίρουσε τους βιεννέζους με την γνωστήν του άφελειαν, ένα τά χειροκροτήματα συνεχίζοντα και δεν έσταματούσαν διά εμπρόδον μαέστρου. Ο Μήτροπουλος είπε διά μίαν ακούμφοσαν μεγαλειότητα το κοινόν. Οι βιεννέζοι που έχουν γαλουχηθή από τους μεγαλυτέρους και διασημότερους μουσικούς, κατεκρίθησαν από τον Μήτροπουλον.

Την έτοιμην της πρώτης εμφάνισης του «Ελληνικού αρχιμουσικού» είς την Κρατικήν Όπεραν της Βιέννης, είαι αι εφημερίδες αφιέρωσαν ύμνους είς τον Μήτροπουλον με διάτλητα και τριστήλια άρθρα. Η εφημερίς «Βελτ-

Österreichische Neue Tageszeitung
Wien Datum: 26.9.56

Schönberg — gar nicht atonal
Die Philharmoniker brillierten unter Dimitri Mitropoulos

Die diesjährige Konzertsaison eröffneten die Wiener Philharmoniker mit — Arnold Schönberg. Ist unser Meisterorchester so kühn und umstürzlerisch geworden? Aber es war durchaus kein Grund für das Abonnementpublikum, sich zu erschrecken. „Pelleas und Melisande“, eine symphonische Dichtung und Schönbergs fünftes Opus ist gar nicht atonal, in keiner Note. In den Jahren 1902/03, nach Maeterlincks Drama entstanden, fast zur selben Zeit, da Debussy die Dichtung zu seiner epochemachenden Oper vertonte, zeigt das Werk hochromantischen Zuschnitt. Die Nähe des „Tristan“ und der „Verklärten Nacht“ ist fühlbar. Aber auch die Nachbarschaft Bruckners und Richard Strauss', der übrigens mittelbar das Werk veranlaßt hat. Schönberg ist hier Nachfahre und noch nicht Revolutionär. Das hat auch seine Vorteile: das prunkvoll instrumentierte Werk ist reich an polyphoner Kunst, aber auch an klanglicher Schönheit und noch fern von allen grauen Theoremen der Zwölftonreihe; freilich für die Substanz um ein Erkleckliches zu breit geraten. Ein paar kräftige Striche wären dieser Musik heute noch dienlich. Immerhin war die Bekanntheit fesselnd, vor allem für den Kenner von Debussys Oper, der hier anregende Vergleiche ziehen kann. Dimitri Mitropoulos, der alles im Kopf zu haben scheint, dirigierte auch Schönberg auswendig: lebhaft, plastisch, überlegen und ganz ohne Starallüren. Die Philharmoniker, die sich zu diesem prächtigen Musiker in seltener Einmütigkeit hingezogen fühlen — ihre Begegnung mit Mitropoulos war eine Liebe auf den ersten Blick — spielten hinreißend und mit einer Klangpracht, die sie nicht jedem Dirigenten gewähren.

Das kam auch Richard Strauss' „Alpensinfonie“ zugute, die — nicht sehr vorteilhaft — den zweiten Teil des Programms füllte: die beiden Werke sind in der Anlage (wenn auch nicht in der Aussage) allzu ähnlich. So fehlte dem Konzert der erfrischende Kontrast. Die Aufführung selbst war erregend gut. Die

Farben glühten und leuchteten, Mitropoulos, der die Lichter so delikat und zielsicher hinsetzt, wie dies sonst nur Clemens Krauss vermochte, gab dem überdimensionierten Tongemälde mehr Hintergründigkeit und Größe als es besitzt. Es wäre schön, von ihm und den Philharmonikern das nächstmal substantiellere Musik zu hören. Alexander Witeschnik.

Neues Österreich
Wien Datum: 27.9.56

Erstes Philharmonisches Konzert

So wie einst in Bayreuth Cosimas von „Rienzi“ und anderen „Jugendstücken“, darf man in orthodoxen Schönbergianern nicht von den noch ganz im Banne der Spätromantik stehenden Jugendwerken des großen Revolutionärs, von den „Gurreliedern“, der „Verklärten Nacht“ und „Pelleas und Melisande“, und doch sind diese frühen Werke, geschaffen unter dem Eindruck des ungeheueren „Tristan“-Erlebnisses, dem sich kein Musiker dieser Zeit entziehen konnte und das bis heute in unseren Seelen nachwirkt — die Jugend steht vielleicht schon eher im Zeichen Orffs, Liebermanns und Henzes —, stark und eindringlich, und es ist schade, daß man sie so selten hört.

„Pelleas und Melisande“, geschaffen beinahe zur selben Zeit, in der Debussy Maeterlincks esoterische Dichtung zur Oper formte, ist eine symphonische Dichtung nach dem Vorbild Liszts oder Richard Strauss', aber ohne tonmalische Tendenzen, mehr Ausdruck der Empfindung als Malerei, ein Seelengemälde von oft erschütternder Eindringlichkeit, in dem die „Tristan“-Stimmung, die „Tristan“-Harmonik und -Chromatik bis zur letzten unerbittlichen Konsequenz vorgetrieben werden. „Das Werk“, sagte einmal Julius Korngold, „ist eine Art Melodram, zu dem nicht gesprochen wird und zu dem Wort und Szene hinzuzudenken sind. Es hat gegen sich, was jede lang gespannte Musik gegen sich hat, die nicht aus sich selbst, aus ihren Tongedanken, sondern aus einem außerhalb dieser liegenden literarischen Stoff ihre Gliederung bezieht. Diese Gliederung spricht sich um so weniger aus, je treuer und gewissenhafter der Musiker seiner Vorlage folgt.“ Schönberg hält hier noch am Motiv fest, selbst an kantilenhaften Gebilden, entwickelt thematische Energien und verwirrt auch die Mehrstimmigkeit nicht als überflüssige Künstlichkeit. Wiederholt tauchen packende Akzente, erlebte Ausdrucksgestalten auf, sendet elementare Musikkraft ihre Blitze.

Freilich führte hier kein Weg ins Freie, und in dieser Erkenntnis empörte sich Schönberg gegen Melodik, Harmonik und Form und zerbrach, was ihm keiner Formung mehr fähig schien. Wie schön war die Prinzessin Melisande! „Die Sterne fallen herab“, sagt Melisande bei Maeterlinck. Aber war Schönberg wirklich inkind, neue Sterne ans Firmament zu setzen? Das Orchester, unsehbarer, überinstrumentiert und gewaltig, schweigt in düsteren, oft neuen Koloriten, die Harmonik zerspalten das Chroma in feinste Fäsechen und übertrifft noch „Tristan“.

Über Strauss' „Alpensinfonie“ ist in letzter Zeit, und nicht nur in Kreisen der Ato-

Music
Mitropoulos Is Dedicated Artist

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Now that Dimitri Mitropoulos is back from another series of triumphs in Europe, I'd like to go on record once more as a strong partisan of this man's ideals and qualities as person and conductor.

Two weeks ago I wrote an 80th birthday tribute to Bruno Walter in which I stressed the influence and character of that dedicated artist. To my thinking Mr. Mitropoulos is of the same caliber.

These are two men wholly immersed in music, humble in their devotion to art and pledged to its noblest aims. Their roots go deep in literary, spiritual, and philosophical culture. There is a true greatness about both.

Probes Heart of Music.

About Mr. Mitropoulos there is an added something that is peculiarly his; his phenomenal, almost miraculous, faculty of probing the very heart of the most problematic and controversial music.

Few conductors of our day have had this ability to measure the shape and depth and meaning of a symphonic score with the broad vision that is Mr. Mitropoulos'. It is this insight that makes him so often the composer's other self.

Still fewer conductors have been adored by their orchestras as has Mr. Mitropoulos. The man's generosity and democracy are proverbial, and his patience and understanding a model of podium deportment. He is genuinely their friend.

Not a Politician.

There have been lacking, to be sure, the showmanship and picturesqueness that so often make a conductor a personality to be seen perhaps even more than to be heard. This man is neither a showman nor a politician.

In writing these words, I recognize that I am lauding a conductor whom many of my esteemed colleagues have been downgrading for one reason or another. They seem to think he would function best as a specialized guest of the Philharmonic.

That strikes me as narrowing

Musical Themes—
The Art of Conducting

By DR. WERNER WOLFF

In my last week's column the possibility of new ways of musical training was mentioned with its potential advantages and drawbacks. Making a start at the end of the line is, however, not quite as it may seem to be at first glance.

We know of a man of international fame as a conductor who made a name for himself by his early interpretations of contemporary, sometimes ultramodern compositions, and later only by performing the classical and romantic repertory.

For quite a time it was not clear whether he would find his way into the standard literature, because he had been labeled for too many years as the fighter for progress at all costs.

This same man, Herman Scherchen, wrote a "Handbook of Conducting" in 1929 which is so meticulous in technicalities that I admire everyone who would read through to the end of the book and tell me he knew by now what it takes to be a conductor.

I rather share the ideas of those who do believe conducting cannot be taught, because the technical apparatus of this art is of negligible size and depends on the inborn ability of the conductor to coordinate his feelings and his gestures to such an extent as to make the players of the orchestra follow him unconditionally.

It is the personality which counts; the beat does not mean anything unless it indicates the desired expression at the same time. Wielding the baton is the lowest ranking among the many things the conductor has to do. His body expresses spontaneously his feelings and visions of the music, and that is why we can compare conducting to pantomime.

One of the greatest conductors of our time, Wilhelm Furtwaengler, who died about two years ago, had ideas, some related to the subject at the time he started his glorious career. He once told me that he watched his gestures looking in a mirror while he was studying the score, a remark that baffled me greatly. What he means was evidently that he tried to find out how the orchestra might react to his body movements at the rehearsal. Eventually his success proved him to be right, although I would not subscribe to his idea on conducting in general.

My view on the art of directing an orchestra is supported by Dimitri Mitropoulos, the conductor of the New York Philharmonic. In an article written for the "Etude" in 1954, there are several of his observations which might be of interest for every music lover. We read there at the beginning: "The conductor appears to be a fortunate man, the one who has all the advantages. Unlike the soloist . . . whose every mistake is immediately evident to the audience, the conductor performs with his back to the audience and only the orchestra can really know what he is doing." (I do not deny the originality of this idea, but I do not believe in it.) Mitropoulos then goes on:

"It is the conductor who receives the applause at the end of the performance, like a general after a successful battle, and he even shares it with the soloist, who . . . had to spend long years of hard study and practice just to master the technique of his instrument." After having enumerated all the abilities and knowledge the conductor aspires to had to acquire, Mitropoulos comes to the center of his write-up, where he says:

"I have neglected to mention until now the mechanical part of conducting, the standard international gestures . . . those gestures which appear so easy to the audience because they are, in fact, extremely easy. They are the simplest part of a conductor's equipment, and they can be learned in half an hour.

"But that is not conducting! A conductor is a leader, and he must have the knowledge of psychology . . . and must be able to stand in the exposed position of an example before the musicians whose cooperation he needs. He also must be able to communicate this knowledge to them if he is to work with them successfully.

"We find ourselves now before the aspects of conducting which cannot be taught, some of which cannot even be learned. The best conductors, I think, are those who have the coordinate ability to think music and convey it simultaneously through motions, by the intensity of their thought, and by their establishing a rapport with their men. Those who have this gift will make conductors. Without it, one may become a fine scholar, a teacher, a musicologist, a composer—but never a good conductor."

Mitropoulos comes to the conclusion that schools of conducting do not avail to anything unless the student shows unusual talent. "Not many conductors are needed," we read in the last paragraph, "but good musicians are always needed; and it is a pity that some who could be excellent musicians are consumed and destroyed by the illness called 'conductomania'."

Mr. Mitropoulos is quite right in making a clear distinction between a good musician and a good conductor; the latter, of course, must be an excellent musician, but the musician of prominence, even of genius, is not always a conductor. Johannes Brahms was one of the latter species, and he was aware of it. Bruckner, Busoni, to name only a few of them, were not able to give an efficient performance of their own compositions. Fortunately, they found great conductors who knew better how to bring worldwide success to their creations.



From OCT 1 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Metropoulos In From Europe



Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, arriving at Idlewild Airport yesterday from Switzerland. Mr. Mitropoulos spent the summer in Europe, where he conducted at the Salzburg and Vienna music festivals.



OCT 7
TRIBUNE
Chicago, Ill.

Two leading conductors of the Lyric are the opening night figure, Dimitri Mitropoulos, at right, and George Solti, each an international figure taking up the Lyric baton for the first time. Mr. Mitropoulos will lead both performances of "The Girl of the Golden West." Mr. Solti is in charge of "Salome," "Die Walkure," "Don Giovanni," and "La Forza del Destino."

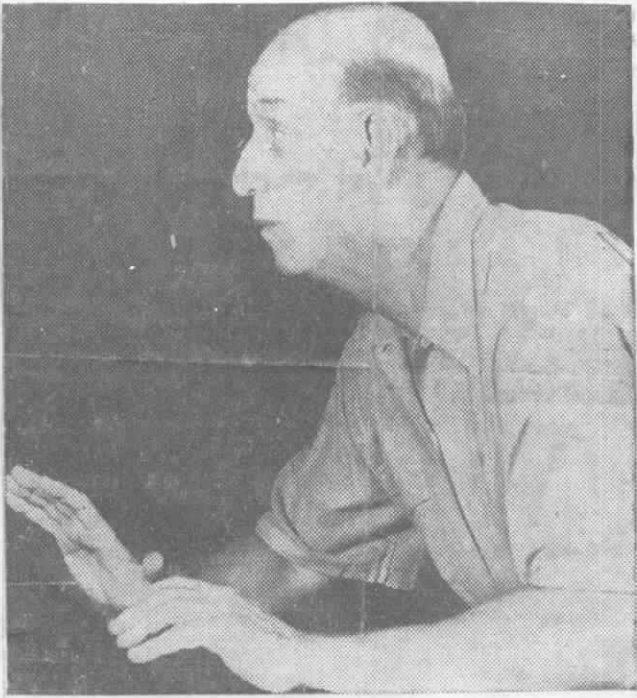
From OCT 14 1956
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

PHILHARMONIC-SYMPHONY OPENS ITS 115TH SEASON ON THURSDAY



Dimitri Mitropoulos, inset, musical director, will take over the podium for the orchestra's first month of concerts at Carnegie Hall.

From OCT 14 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.



Dimitri Mitropoulos rehearses the New York Philharmonic-Symphony in preparation for its first concert of the season on Thursday night at Carnegie Hall.

From OCT 16 1956
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

BERNSTEIN NAMED BY PHILHARMONIC

Will Share Responsibility of Orchestra With Mitropoulos in the 1957-58 Season

At the request of its musical director, Dimitri Mitropoulos, the New York Philharmonic-Symphony has engaged Leonard Bernstein to share the direction of the orchestra, beginning with the 1957-58 season.

In addition to conducting a substantial part of the season, Messrs. Mitropoulos and Bernstein will share jointly the responsibility for the orchestra and general plans for the season. Other conductors, whose names will be announced later, are to make guest appearances during the 1957-58 season.

In a letter to David M. Keiser, president of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society, Mr. Mitropoulos gave as his reasons for requesting the administrative change the large number of invitations he has received to conduct in Europe and a bid to increase his activities with the Metropolitan Opera.

Previously, Mr. Mitropoulos said, he has been obliged to decline many of these invitations "because of my heavy Philharmonic duties."

"After thinking the matter over carefully," Mr. Mitropoulos added, "I would like to suggest that my colleague Leonard Bernstein be invited to work with me, and I am sure that together we will be able to prepare a very sound and stimulating season."

Mr. Mitropoulos, musical director of the orchestra since 1951, will retain that post during the current season, which begins Thursday evening at Carnegie Hall. He first appeared with the orchestra during the season of 1940-41, and appeared regularly as guest conductor thereafter until his appointment as musical director.

Mr. Bernstein was assistant conductor of the Philharmonic-Symphony during its 1943-44 season. He has made guest appearances since then and is scheduled to lead four weeks of the current season, in December and January.

From OCT 16 1956
TRIBUNE
Chicago, Ill.

On the Aisle

Lyric's 'Girl' and 'Chenier' Trio Set 'Otello' Hopes Stirring

BY CLAUDIA CASSIDY

ONE SIGN of a satisfied opera audience is that it immediately begins casting its favorites in other roles. This is an enjoyable indoor sport for addicts, costing not a cent except to the management, should it concur. Some of us indulged it while developing a most unexpected fondness for Puccini's "The Girl of the Golden West." We admired its stellar trio, anticipating their appearance in "Andrea Chenier," which can blaze with the right singers, and did some wishful thinking, say for 1957. For where could you find a more enticing Lyric cast for one of the great operas of the repertory, Verdi's "Otello," not heard here since 1944?

Tito Gobbi is a natural for Iago, in voice, presence and supple operatic flair. Eleanor Steber has the personal beauty, the blandishing soprano and the incorruptible innocence for an exquisite Desdemona. But Mario Del Monaco would be the kingpin of casting, for he is just the man to sing Otello.

I am not forgetting Ramon Vinay, another welcome member of the Lyric fold. When I last heard his Otello at Salzburg in 1952 it was a vivid performance often admirably sung. I have wanted ever since to hear it again. But Mr. Vinay was catapulted into heroic roles by opera's need to have them sung. Mr. Del Monaco was born to sing them.

Chicago has not yet really heard him, for all his success in the "Girl," which had Saturday night's audience stopping the show while shouting in vain for a "bis" of "Ch'ella mi creda libero"—which reminds me that he visibly winced at some ear splitting whistles, which are as much an insult in Italy as they are indications of unbridled rapture here. But the some of the "Girl" is first rate Puccini—notably the love duet and curtain of the first act—the tenor arias are not.

And it could be that Mr. Del Monaco really is allergic to horses, for he was a little hoarse. In his best estate he has the big, soaring splendor of that rare fellow, the true Italian dramatic tenor. His "Otello" could lure me quite a distance to hear it. Meanwhile, not much could keep me from the Lyric's "Chenier" and his "Improvviso," which Giovanni Martelli once made so indelibly a part of the great Ravinia nights.

Speaking of Lyric nights, this second "Girl" rewarded a superior audience, one so warmly in accord with the performance that the Civic Opera house seemed cosy. It made me think of Furtwaengler's smiling insistence that the house with the best acoustics is the house with the best performance.

This one was big in carrying power, yet intimate in detail. It let you see Gobbi's hands, both predatory and pleading in the poker game. It let you smile at Steber's hasty removal of that absurd glove to greet her first gentleman caller—Burr Tillstrom says she got that bit of business from Jeritza. And it must have reminded just about everyone how good it is to have the Lyric on deck again, and how welcome an addition Dimitri Mitropoulos is to its family of conductors.

From OCT 19 1956

World-Telegram & Sun

New York, N. Y.

Mitropoulos

Opens at

Carnegie

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

With Dimitri Mitropoulos at its head, the Philharmonic-Symphony opened its 115th season in invigorating style at Carnegie Hall last night.

Mr. Mitropoulos, fresh from triumphs in other parts of the world, was given a warm welcome when he strode to the podium. He then proceeded to return the compliment in still warmer fashion.

Under his direction, the orchestra played with fine tone, rhythmic zest, and a teamwork that combined expressive singleness of purpose and a mastery of the technical rules of the game.

A New Look.

There seemed a new eagerness and freshness to the orchestra as a whole. What's more it wore a new look—the violins being massed to the left and the cellos to the right. There was conspicuous merit to the change.

Mr. Mitropoulos opened the program with two concertos, miles apart in style and centuries apart in date, the B-flat Major Concerto Grosso (Opus 3) of Handel, and Samuel Barber's "Capricorn Concerto."

Both works were spun out with supreme care and feeling—the Handel a marvel of classical poise and serene melodic line, the Barber an object lesson in crisp technique and pinpoint perfection of detail.

Oboe Solo.

In both scores, Harold Comberg gave the oboe solo a plaintive singing beauty. In the Barber Concerto, he joined John Wummer, flutist, and William Vacchiano, trumpeter, for a first-desk display of high virtuosity.

There followed inspired readings of Richard Strauss' "Don Juan" and Beethoven's Fifth Symphony that reflected glowing credit on both New York's name orchestra and the man who so brilliantly directs it.

The Strauss tone-poem rang with poetic and emotional conviction, besides building subtly and steadily into a powerful web of living tone. There was that beating heart at the center which makes all the difference.

Welcome Home.

The performance of the Beethoven classic was a revelation, as if Mr. Mitropoulos had probed this massive testament anew and come up with fresh secrets of inner tension and drama.

Like the Strauss, it was a reading gratifying on both planes—as a searching enactment of the moral and personal forces at work within the fabric, and as pure music unfolding as inevitably as a law of logic.

Welcome home, Maestro!

Mitropoulos Praised

Dimitri Mitropoulos, who made his Vienna debut as a conductor of opera late in September, came back to New York shortly thereafter with a bundle of laudatory notices. For the Bild Telegraf his direction of Puccini's "Manon Lescaut" was "the most fascinating evening of musical theater that we have heard in many years". In Die Presse, the comment went: "Mitropoulos invested every vocal and orchestral phrase with the utmost in expressiveness, achieving complete individuality in the various units of the ensemble."

From
Bergen Evening Record
Hackensack, N. J.
OCT 13 1956

Bernstein to Co-Direct Philharmonic in 1957

By Paul V. Beckley

Dimitri Mitropoulos, musical director of the Philharmonic-Symphony for five years, will be relieved of sole direction of the orchestra during 1957-58. Leonard Bernstein was named yesterday to share the podium with him. This year's season opens Thursday.

Both men will hold the title of principal conductor of the orchestra. Mr. Bernstein will be the American-born, American-trained conductor of the Philharmonic and one of the few to head a major orchestra in this country. Although men with American backgrounds, including Mr. Bernstein, have conducted the Philharmonic, none has been named to a conductorship with the consequent responsibility for programming, selection of guest conductors, and deciding major policies.

The board of directors of the Philharmonic acted yesterday as a result of a request in writing from Mr. Mitropoulos, who said he wanted more time to conduct abroad and to expand his activities as a guest conductor at the Metropolitan Opera. He is scheduled to conduct four operas at the Metropolitan during the approaching season, "Carmen," "Butterfly," "Tosca," and a revival of "Herani."

Rudolf Bing, general manager of the Metropolitan, said yesterday: "We hope to have him for even more operas the following year."

Mr. Bernstein was specifically requested by Mr. Mitropoulos to work with him at the head of the Philharmonic. In his letter to the board, Mr. Mitropoulos said: "I am sure that together we will be able to prepare a very sound and stimulating season, the Ford Foundation, in each consulting of course with you, the music policy committee, and

the management regarding the society's (Philharmonic - Symphony Society) musical goals."

Pointing out that he had received "a large number" of requests to conduct in Vienna, Salzburg, Paris, London, Milan, Cologne and other European musical centers, Mr. Mitropoulos said: "The time has come when I feel I must yield to some of these requests."

Rumors Current

Rumors that Mr. Mitropoulos planned some such action had been current in music circles here and abroad since earlier in the summer when he was quoted in a Viennese newspaper with saying he would resign from the Philharmonic at the end of this season. However, Mr. Mitropoulos denied vigorously any intention to quit the Philharmonic post in interviews here after his return from Europe in late September.

Mr. Mitropoulos joined the Philharmonic on a permanent basis on a co-conducting basis with Leopold Stokowski during the 1949-50 season. He was named sole conductor for the 1950-51 season and became musical director the following season.

Mr. Bernstein, who was born at Lawrence, Mass., was assistant conductor of the Philharmonic during the 1943-44 season and was a guest conductor in 1951. He is scheduled to appear as guest conductor for four weeks this season in December and January.

Like Mr. Mitropoulos, Mr. Bernstein has long been a baton propagandist for American music here and abroad. He has appeared during the last year on several of the Omnibus television programs sponsored by the Ford Foundation, in each case in an effort to enlist greater interest in music.



Conductors Dimitri Mitropoulos (right) and Leonard Bernstein yesterday.

From OCT 19 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

MUSIC

The Philharmonic

By PAUL HENRY LANG

Opening concert last night. Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos. The program: Concerto Grosso No. 2 in B flat major, Op. 33, by J. S. Bach; "Don Juan," Op. 9, by Franz Strauss; "Capricorn Concerto" for Flute, Oboe, Trumpet and Strings, Op. 21, by Samuel Barber; "Symphony No. 2 in C minor," by Beethoven; Oboe: William Vacchiano, trumpet: John Wummer, flute: Harold Gombert.

Although we have already heard the Philadelphia Orchestra, the season in Carnegie Hall does not really get under way until New York's own orchestra appears. The opening concert of the Philharmonic last night presented a program that caused a little uneasiness in this prospective listener; two numbers that are virtually chamber music, and two really "big" pieces. How would they blend?

My doubts were dispelled right after the playing of the national anthem. There was no contradiction in the two halves of the program, for the Handel piece appeared in a Mac West, played by the entire string section of the orchestra, with sundry additional winds, and there was not a vestige left of its chamber music quality.

This is not Carnegie Hall music, nor is the spirit of such baroque music served by emphasizing physical size. Like the Brandenburg concertos of Bach, this is enlarged chamber music; the "grosso" or "grand" stands for nobility of expression and magnificence of execution, not for bulk. The only redeeming feature of the performance was Mr. Gombert's beautiful oboe playing.

The Barber "Capricorn Concerto," too, was inflated. The "concertino" consisting of flute, oboe and trumpet, ably performed by Messrs. Wummer, Gombert and Vacchiano, demands delicate handling if these instruments are to blend. The sound pattern and texture of this concerto is calculated in terms of milligrams, for this is still intimate music and should be performed with a much smaller orchestra. Actually the three excellent soloists at times had to fight for their lives.

I find this work's attraction undimmed after the dozen years or so of its existence. Its airy writing is wholly delightful and very accomplished. Perhaps the score is a little Stravinskian, but it holds its own quite convincingly.

As soon as Mr. Mitropoulos launched into Strauss' "Don Juan" the situation changed, of its classical style. This is not a work that offers much scope for the lightning flashes of thunders of romantic virtuosity. It is a simpler and more searching test.

Mr. Babin met the test of the first movement and was impressive in his long solo cadenza. But he played the second with distinguished artistry. This sonful slow movement, like the young Beethoven himself, wears its modish dress of his day and serious, with an inner glow perhaps, although the expressive compass of the performance fell sometimes short of what is inherent in the score. There were measures in the first movement which seemed to need a more positive disclosure.

F. D. P.

Mr. Bernstein combined the elegance and intensity with rare success. The final rondo leaped from his fingers with a lilt and control that put the more easy-going orchestra to shame. He put just the right amount of pumping vigor into the rondo's minor key episode and reaped cheers at the end.

The remaining works of the program, the Beethoven Fifth Symphony and Samuel Barber's "Capricorn Concerto," were repeated from the orchestra's Thursday and Friday concerts.



Dimitri Mitropoulos

This is the sort of music he can present with conviction and fervor. The tone poem started with considerable élan and the conductor successfully communicated a certain excitement and dramatic vigor, although the pace was somewhat ruthless and many of the quiet spots that offer much needed contrast in this brilliant score went unnoticed. Once more the long oboe solo nicely executed by Mr. Gombert came as a refreshing interlude.

Two movements of Beethoven's Fifth symphony carried this reporter to the limit of his allotted time, but when I left I was not particularly elated. It was a rather routine reading of the old thriller and the only thing pleasant to record was the playing of the woodwinds in the second movement.

The orchestra played with alacrity but its ensemble was not in good shape. To mention one example, all three chords at the end of "Don Juan" went astray, spilling pizzicatos in various directions. The strings showed plenty of life, the basses were a bit loopy, the horns jumpy, but the woodwinds held the dikes valiantly.

This was not a brilliant concert, just so-so, but then the Philharmonic is just back from Sarasota and it takes a couple of weeks to get into shape.

From OCT 21 1956
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

Philharmonic, in Appointing Bernstein, Is Again Dividing Its Leadership

By ROSS PARMENTER

DIMITRI MITROPOULOS will not be the musical director of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony next season. The orchestra's board of directors did not put it that bluntly last week, but it made the fact plain when it announced that it had acceded to Mr. Mitropoulos' request that another conductor be appointed to share the Philharmonic's musical responsibilities with him. The man appointed was Leonard Bernstein. The two will be known as the orchestra's "principal conductors."

In other words, the orchestra is reverting to the situation of divided authority that prevailed during the 1949-50 season, when Mr. Mitropoulos and Leopold Stokowski shared the general planning for the season. And it was this situation that the board moved to eliminate when it named Mr. Mitropoulos sole con-

ductor in 1950 and musical director in 1951. And the authority for the 1957-58 season will be divided indeed, for it has been learned that Mr. Mitropoulos and Mr. Bernstein will only lead seven or eight weeks each. Since the orchestra's season customarily runs to twenty-eight weeks, it means the two chief conductors will only be on hand for about half the season. The other half will be led by guest conductors, whose names will be announced when negotiations for their services are completed.

Mr. Mitropoulos asked for someone to share his Philharmonic responsibilities so he could increase his activities at the Metropolitan Opera and accept more engagements in such European cities as Paris, London, Vienna, Salzburg, Milan and Cologne. Mr. Bernstein was the man he suggested as his partner. "I am sure that together we will be able to prepare a very sound and stimulating season," he wrote. At the time the joint responsibility was announced the two men had not had a consultation on any plans.

Mr. Bernstein, who is up to his eyes in musical shows this season, said that next season, although he hopes to keep up his television appearances, he will cut down on other outside activities to have more time for the Philharmonic.

From OCT 24 1956
TIMES
Bayonne, N. J.

UN Celebrates 11th Anniversary; Hammarskjold Reaffirms Goals

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y. (UP)—The United Nations celebrated its 11th anniversary today in ceremonies here and in capitals and provinces throughout the world.

Since 1947, when the General Assembly designated October 24—the date on which the UN charter came into force in 1945—as United Nations Day, observances have increased steadily in number and variety. Last year, 92 countries held celebrations and the number is expected to be greater this year.

Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold, who will be host to 3,000 guests at a gala concert in the General Assembly hall tonight, said in a UN Day message:

"We are all aware of the great problems which are reflected in the conflicts of present day international politics. In the efforts to resolve those problems, the UN has a crucial responsibility.

"Let us prove that we are able to see far and to judge with courage and equity. Then we shall be able to develop the organization we have created to the powerful instrument it

should be. Then we shall merit freedom and life as the reward of our efforts to meet the challenge of the international conflicts of our time."

Artists from Austria, Greece, Britain and the United States will appear in tonight's program, which will be broadcast. Dimitri Mitropoulos will conduct the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra and Hugh Ross the Schola Cantorum. Soloists will be soprano Hilde Gueden, contralto Elena Nikolaidi, tenor Richard Tucker and bass Otto Edelmann.

The program will include Brahms' Fourth Symphony, the orchestral suite "Tabuh Tabuh" by Canadian composer Colin McPhee and the finale of Beethoven's Ninth (chorale) Symphony.

Through the United States have appointed UN Day committees, and in most states and territories governors have issued proclamations setting aside the day. Many committees will present UN literature to their public libraries.

Many communities will plant

WED., Oct. 24, 1956 ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

U.N. CELEBRATES 11TH ANNIVERSARY

Ceremonies Today Observe
Effective Date of the
Charter.

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Oct. 24 (UP)—The United Nations celebrated its eleventh anniversary today in ceremonies here and in capitals and provinces throughout the world.

Since 1947, when the General Assembly designated Oct. 24—

From OCT 22 1956
World-Telegram & Sun

Stanley Babin, young Latvian born pianist who made an impressive local debut last season, returned as soloist of the Philharmonic Saturday night in Beethoven's First Concerto.

Mr. Babin gave a good account of both himself and the concerto. The melodic line was neatly and softly spun out, and the swift, chattering passages of the finale were tossed off with crisp fluency. The ovation was well deserved.

Dimitri Mitropoulos painted in an appropriately delicate and poetic background, and the remainder of the program consisted of repetitions of Samuel Barber's "Capricorn Concerto" and Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

the date on which the U.N. Charter came into force in 1945—as United Nations day, observances have increased steadily in number and variety. Last year, 92 countries held celebrations and the number was expected to be greater this year.

Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold, who will be host to 3,000 guests at a gala concert in the General Assembly hall tonight, said in a U.N. day message:

"We are all aware of the great problems which are reflected in the conflicts of present-day international politics. In the efforts to resolve those problems, the U.N. has a crucial responsibility.

"Let us prove that we are able to see far and to judge with courage and equity. Then we shall be able to develop the organization we have created to the powerful instrument it should be. Then we shall merit freedom and life as the reward of our efforts to meet the challenge of the international conflicts of our time."

Artists from Austria, Greece, Britain and the United States will appear in tonight's program, which will be broadcast by radio (ABC, 8 p.m., St. Louis time). Dimitri Mitropoulos will conduct the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra and Hugh Ross the Schola Cantorum. Soloists will be soprano Hilde Gueden, contralto Elena Nikolaidi, tenor Richard Tucker and bass Otto Edelmann.

In the United States about 1200 cities and towns have appointed U.N. day committees, and in most states and territories governors have issued proclamations setting aside the day.

From OCT 24 1956
VARIETY
New York, N. Y.

N. Y. Philharmonic

Opening a new season with concert number 5,578, serially reminiscent of Rosh Hashanah or the audited pressed ducks at Tour d'Argent, the Philharmonic did not make history, just fine music. Under the imperious gesticulation of that grandiose Greek genius (anybody still arguing?) Dimitri Mitropoulos, the "conservative" program ran from Papa Handel of the 18th Century (Concerto Grosso) to Samuel Barber of the 20th (Capricorn Concerto) to Richard Strauss (Don Juan, tone poem) who died in 1949. After intermission it was 100 men with (most of the time) Beethoven's Fifth.

This is the 115th year of a great organization, and these musicians who, under the Greek particularly, are rehearsed into exhaustion, are surely on the border of grandeur when at their best. And that statement plunges the discussion immediately into the arbitrary preference of personal taste. Beethoven's Fifth can hardly be shrugged off though it was dreadfully overplayed half a generation ago, especially because of the war association of its opening statement, that Churchillian da-da-da-boom. One's undocumented impression is that the conductors have been ducking the Fifth. Be that as it may, there was majesty to be re-experienced, though there were peaks and valleys of sureness in the playing. (It was repeated Friday matinee and Saturday evening).

The "modern" work on the opener, by a composer (Barber) resident in Mt. Kisco, has considerable musical personality but does not escape the "stranger in the house" feeling of most contemporary stuff. For this is the house of greatness, and greatly demanding. The traditionalists do well to defend their positions and to retire to new ones, carefully prepared, only slowly. Which, of course, is Mitropoulos' whole dilemma in picking and choosing and routing. He can be sure only that any new work will rile the critical menagerie and that there will be a certain amount of yipping at his coattails.

Bearing in mind that the giant orchestra had only two days together before its premiere, the sheer competence of the ensemble, the power and authority of the conductor and the stately, truly philharmonic, quality of the outpouring suggests this 1956 observation: economics apart, CinemaScope, VistaVision, Cinerama and Todd-AO haven't got anything the much-badged old N. Y. Philharmonic hasn't got.

Land.

From OCT 19 1956
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

Music: Concert Time

Philharmonic Begins
Its 115th Season

PHILHARMONIC-SYMPHONY OF NEW YORK. Conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. At Carnegie Hall. Concerto Grosso in B flat, No. 2, Op. 3, by J. S. Bach; "Don Juan," Op. 9, by Franz Strauss; "Capricorn Concerto" for Flute, Oboe, Trumpet and Strings, Op. 21, by Samuel Barber; "Symphony No. 2 in C minor," by Beethoven.

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

THE Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra is New York's own. When it begins its season, you know that concert time is here in earnest. It was an occasion, then, when the orchestra launched its 115th season at Carnegie Hall last night.

Dimitri Mitropoulos, musical director of the orchestra, who is conducting the first four weeks as well as other weeks later on, arranged a program suitable for many tastes. In Beethoven's Fifth and Strauss' "Don Juan" he provided for those who like something stirring and familiar. Handel's Concerto Grosso No. 2, in B flat, Op. 3, while not exactly a novelty, was on the unbacked side. And Samuel Barber's "Capricorn Concerto" served as a reflection of the contemporary world.

The evening's most exciting performance was that lavished on the Strauss tone poem. In view of the fact that the Berlin Philharmonic under Herbert von Karajan played this piece only a week ago in the same hall, it was fruitful to consider the differences in approach and result. Where the Berliners gave this music an interpretation that had solidity and repose, the New Yorkers played it with dramatic intensity.

The contrasting styles, which are expressions of different attitudes and backgrounds, each had their validity. For this listener's taste, Mr. Mitropoulos' way with the piece was far more stirring. His tempos were swifter; his orchestra blazed with more fiery colors. There were less subtlety and flexibility in the reading, but there were more passion and drama. This was a performance that interpreted Strauss in the light of our own fast-moving, intense world. It was individual—a credit to orchestra and conductor.

The "Capricorn Concerto" had an effective performance. In this score, written in 1944, Mr. Barber was experimenting and expanding his range. Without abandoning his broad, lyrical strain, he adopted rhythmic and harmonic devices characteristic of more advanced trends.

This fusion results in an



Dimitri Mitropoulos

idiom for which Mr. Mitropoulos has an affinity. He conducted the piece with sureness, giving airiness and clarity to its tricky rhythms and a spacious, singing tone to its lyrical passages. The soloists were first-class men of the orchestra—John Wummer, flutist; Harold Gombert, oboist; and William Vacchiano, trumpeter.

There was less to admire in Mr. Mitropoulos' handling of the Handel score. The string tone was too heavy and weighty, so that the solo violins had to saw away for dear life to make any sort of impression. In the G minor Largo, a touch of restraint brought out the fresh poetry in the music. This was the quality and balance the entire piece needed.

As for the Beethoven symphony, the first two movements, which this reviewer was able to hear, had drive and power. It was not Beethoven in the classic vein, nor even a distinctively personal interpretation. But everyone—conductor and players, even the poor brasses who had a bad moment or two, probably out of sheer nervousness—was trying hard, and for that deserves full marks.

Mr. Mitropoulos has made a change in the seating of the orchestra, placing the cello section at his right where the second violins used to be. This is the set-up employed by the Philadelphia Orchestra since Leopold Stokowski's time. It was Arturo Toscanini who once scoffed at orchestral re-arrangements, remarking that violin sections should be in the forefront, at the conductor's left and right, because they are like strong shoulders supporting the ensemble. But one will not take serious issue with this shift in Philharmonic seating if the orchestra sounds all right.

From OCT 22 1956
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

BABIN IS SOLOIST AT PHILHARMONIC

Young Pianist Plays Early
Beethoven Concerto Under
Direction of Mitropoulos

Stanley Babin, the young pianist who made his recital debut last fall in Town Hall, appeared Saturday night in Carnegie Hall as soloist with the Philharmonic-Symphony under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos.

Mr. Babin's progress has been more than external. His debut recital had shown, along with some immaturities of style, the makings of a virtuoso. The breadth of his musical as well as technical approach to the piano, the intensity of expression, the well-trained steely fingers, were all there.

Saturday night he played the early Beethoven Concerto in C major with exhilarating mastery

of its classical style. This is not a work that offers much scope for the lightning flashes of thunders of romantic virtuosity. It is a simpler and more searching test.

Mr. Babin met the test of the first movement and was impressive in his long solo cadenza. But he played the second with distinguished artistry. This sonful slow movement, like the young Beethoven himself, wears its modish dress of his day and serious, with an inner glow perhaps, although the expressive compass of the performance fell sometimes short of what is inherent in the score. There were measures in the first movement which seemed to need a more positive disclosure.

F. D. P.

Mr. Bernstein combined the elegance and intensity with rare success. The final rondo leaped from his fingers with a lilt and control that put the more easy-going orchestra to shame. He put just the right amount of pumping vigor into the rondo's minor key episode and reaped cheers at the end.

The remaining works of the program, the Beethoven Fifth Symphony and Samuel Barber's "Capricorn Concerto," were repeated from the orchestra's Thursday and Friday concerts.

From OCT 22 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Babin Is Soloist At Carnegie Hall

With Stanley Babin as soloist in Beethoven's Piano Concerto in C major, the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra opened its Saturday night series at Carnegie Hall before an audience which occupied all available seats and standing room. The twenty-five-year-old pianist, who had shown marked talent in a Town Hall recital last fall, made a similar impression in his first New York appearance with an orchestra, and received a generally well balanced and coordinated accompaniment from the musicians under Dimitri Mitropoulos' direction.

Mr. Babin gave a convincing exhibition of his well schooled technical mastery. His playing was with little exception clear in medium and detail and always musical in tone. With fluency and continuity of line and a well graded dynamic range, the phrasing and general interpretation told of taste and discernment. Sensitiveness was apparent, although the expressive compass of the performance fell sometimes short of what is inherent in the score. There were measures in the first movement which seemed to need a more positive disclosure.

F. D. P.

From OCT 23 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Philharmonic Reception

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur A. Houghton Jr. were hosts to the Friends of the Philharmonic committee members and chairmen at a reception yesterday at their residence, 3 Sutton Place. Dimitri Mitropoulos, musical director of the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, and Mrs. Robert L. Wagner, honorary chairman, women's divisions of the Friends of the Philharmonic, were present.

From OCT 25 1956
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

TV: Music From U. N.

Concert, Televised by WOR, Is Civilized
Respite From Usual Video Fare

By JACK GOULD

STATION WOR-TV provided last night's television treat: a broadcast of the United Nations Day concert by the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra.

Originating in the grand hall used by the General Assembly, the telecast was remarkably effective, a most civilized hour amid the deluge of situation comedies and quiz shows. Why in the world the television medium, so desperate for things to do, should not give more heed to the rich store of classical music seems more baffling than ever.

The evening's main feature was the now-traditional United Nations Day performance of the finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. With Richard Tucker, tenor; Hilde Gueden, soprano; Elena Nikolaidi, contralto; and Otto Edelmann, bass, the Schola Cantorum and the Philharmonic, it was a musical event such as the forgotten viewer doesn't come upon for months at a time.

The telecast proved how silly it is to argue that classical music fare is not suited to the camera; one might similarly contend that thousands of people are foolish because they want to attend a concert in person. In the close-ups of the faces of Hugh Ross and Dimitri Mitropoulos, who shared the conducting honors; in the scenes of individual segments of the orchestra and chorals; and in the broad perspective of the whole magnificent setting at the U. N. there was superb television for the eye as well as the ear.

And how refreshing it was to be taken by television to the scene of a concert, with its audience, with the calls for repeated bows by the participating artists, with the glimpses of musicians and singers informally walking offstage at

the program's close. Here was actuality at which the television viewer was a guest, not a program run off with maddening split-second precision in the same, old, familiar studio.

In spots perhaps the camera work was a little restless, but not seriously so. The director missed only one possibility. This was to focus on the faces of those in the audience; their absorption in what they are hearing often makes the ideal visual complement to the music. In London, this technique has been employed by the British Broadcasting Corporation with singular success.

WOR-TV presented the concert as a public service, so there were no commercial interruptions for the entire sixty minutes; what a joy!

Incidentally, thanks also must go to the craft unions for their cooperation in making the telecast economically possible. Surely, there must be a way of arranging for further concerts on television without waiting until next year's United Nations Day.

MUSIC The Philharmonic

By PAUL HENRY LANG

CARNEGIE HALL
Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos
Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98, Brahms
Toccata Giocosa (first N. Y. performance)
The Poem of Ecstasy, Op. 84, Scriabin

Last night's concert of the Philharmonic produced a real mixed salad of a program, starting with the noble strains of "Gluck's 'Alceste' overture and ending with the whacky music of Scriabin's 'Poem of Ecstasy.' In between we heard the great farewell symphony of Brahms, his fourth, and a new orchestral piece by Gardner Read that supplied French, Russian, Roquefort and various other dressings for the salad. The Scriabin opus having come after critical bedtime I am spared discussing this curious piece which today has only historical significance, and I must confess that the Gluck overture, too, is little more than a marble monument, though, of course, for different reasons.

It is noble music, certainly, but it is a curtain raiser which does not properly belong in the concert hall. This is not adverse musical criticism, only a remark about program making. There are many overtures that can be detached from the work they preface, but a true curtain raiser does not aspire to a life of its own.

Why is it that so many musicians when they want to profess their allegiance to the classics drag out old Gluck who is not really liked but has a frosty dignity that is considered the last word in Olympian grandeur? This overture will do in the theater, but its stodgy harmonies, its lack of symphonic development, and its interminable pedal points weigh heavily on the listener.

Mr. Read's "Toccata" is not an important contribution to American music. It is competently written—strike that, why should it not be competent? Unless a composer is competent to handle pen and music paper he has no right to appear on the Philharmonic programs. But that is not enough. Nor is there any point in saying that it is well orchestrated, for nowadays any one can orchestrate in the "grand" manner. Composing includes the communication of ideas, moods, and feelings, and of these I found none in Mr. Read's music. Cander compels me to state that Mr. Mitropoulos seemed to have liked the

"Toccata" and led his musicians in a rousing and noisy (not his fault) performance.

Now let us see what is left. A truly great work, and one that gains by prolonged study and familiarity.

What makes Brahms' E minor symphony so difficult for conductor and listener alike is the deliberate, though subtle, archaism of his work. Mr. Mitropoulos escaped many of the traps so many conductors fail to notice. The dangerously long melody that begins the first movement was kept within bounds, the "choral" handling of the wind sections, recalling Brahms' north German ancestors, was respected, and with the exception of some arbitrary phrasings, the continuity was maintained. But the elegiac details suffered from nervousness and the obvious musicianly wariness of the conductor failed to penetrate the whole movement.

The conductor succeeded in conjuring up the evocative mood of the second movement, but somehow the gentle story-telling quality was missing. The only symphonic scherzo Brahms ever risked in the face of the Beethovenian species was brisk and gallant, but was marred by eccentric phrasing. Why those breathing pauses? They kill the momentum.

And now we come to the crowning movement of the work, the great set of variations. Here Mr. Mitropoulos was less successful, for with his penchant for the dramatic he attempted to infuse drama into a work that is not dramatic but epic. The very fact that the theme is "obstinate," that Brahms avoided interludes and mad ethe variations—thirty of them—follow inexorably one upon the other, demands straightforward performance. This is what provides unity, for the drama the conductor was seeking comes from the cumulative effect of the many metamorphoses.

The orchestra sounded better than last week and there were many felicitous moments, but on the whole this concert was not a memorable affair. It is very difficult to wax enthusiastic over such an incongruous program, and the conductor himself may have suffered from its diffuseness.

MUSIC Mitropoulos Thrills With Symphony

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Virtuosity of a high order marked the concert of the Philharmonic Symphony directed by Dimitri Mitropoulos in Carnegie Hall last night.

The banquet of tone and technic began with a profoundly moving reading of Gluck's "Alceste" Overture and ended with a brilliant account of Scriabin's "Poem of Ecstasy" that was virtually a rebirth for that strange score.

Between them came an enormously dramatic reading of Brahms' Fourth Symphony and a local premiere of a sizzling "Toccata Giocosa" by Gardner Read that should spread like wildfire along the concert circuit.

Extraordinary Playing.

I don't want the word "virtuosity" to mislead anybody about last night's concert. The playing was extraordinary in every technical sense; but there was more than superlative technic about it—infinite more.

For instance, I don't recall a performance of Gluck's overture that so thoroughly and poetically captured the classical mood of both Gluck's period and the Greek ideals that inspired him. It evoked a whole climate of beauty.

The Brahms was similarly strong in its expressive content. The surface—clean, vibrant, restless—was the perfect image of the artistic and emotional tensions within. If this was music with heart and soul, so was the performance.

Choirs Soar.

For those who have any doubts about the various choirs of the Philharmonic, they had only to listen to the sections together and separately as they soared through this masterpiece of Brahms. They were all first-class men last night.

The new Gardner Read piece was stunning proof that American composers are finding exciting new uses for Old World forms without ceasing to be American. The "Toccata" builds up a jazz-tinged momentum on a firm classic base.

It is exhilarating music, keyed to a brisk five-note theme that acts on the whole fabric like an atomic center. Read keeps the orchestra moving at breakneck speed, racing out of the sheer joy of motion, never over the same route twice.

Through some deep alchemy of insight and fervor, Mr. Mitropoulos gave the Scriabin "poem" fierce new life. One forgot the gibes about the "mad Russian" and his wild visions in a reading that rocked and surged with terrific power.

Philharmonic Going to U.S.; Mitropoulos Visits Austria

By Rudolf Klein
Vienna

The members of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra are deep in preparations for their first postwar tour of the United States, which begins in November. The most recent of the Philharmonic concerts here, under the direction of Karl Schuricht, was devoted to program material for their journey—works by Beethoven, Bruckner, and Haydn, representing the music export of Austria.

Certain of the export articles can really be given their original flavor only by the Vienna Philharmonic; for instance, Anton Bruckner's symphonies, the beauty of which is fully realized only through the special art of the horn employed in Vienna. Not only that, but we are in position to offer worthwhile extras in the tradition which links us with these composers.

In the matter of imports, by contrast we are well supplied at the moment. The Vienna Philharmonic invited Dimitri Mitropoulos to conduct one of its concerts. However, not with the Philharmonic, but in the Staatsoper the conductor has enjoyed his greatest success. He conducted three performances of Puccini's "Manon," and to the

astonishment of the audience he directed the entire opera from memory, a feat which called forth intense enthusiasm. Puccini's and Verdi's operas are usually entrusted in Vienna to run-of-the-mill conductors. In Mitropoulos' hands the music took on new liveliness, youth, and freshness. The maestro was widely acclaimed.

Numerous artists are coming to Vienna from America to give concerts. One of the most delightful reappearances was that of the contralto Elena Nicolaidi. Seven years ago, after differences with the Staatsoper, she left Vienna. Now she stood again on the stage and overwhelmed the audience with evidence that there is perhaps no other contralto voice today of the beauty and volume of hers. The audience which usually flocks to the opera, thronged the Konzertsaal and gave her an ovation. Unhappily she is not going to be heard at the opera.

From OCT 27 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Ruth Slenczynska Soloist In Philharmonic Concert

By Francis D. Perkins

Ruth Slenczynska, playing Chopin's Piano Concerto in F minor, was Saturday night's soloist with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra under Dimitri Mitropoulos' direction at Carnegie Hall in a program which also offered the first public performance of Robert Starer's "Prelude and Rondo Giocoso." Miss Slenczynska had been heard here with orchestra more than twenty years ago as an amazing child virtuoso, but this was her first orchestral appearance here as a mature artist.

Shows Thorough Command

She showed a thorough command of the music in its technical aspects, playing with lucidity and musicality of tone as well as with deftness; there was artistry of phrasing and dynamic shading. She was particularly persuasive in the larghetto; its long lyric line was presented with sensitive poetic discernment.

Elsewhere the degree of her disclosure of the mood and imaginative essence of the music occasionally varied in an interpretation which told through-out of objective devotion to the music, often capturing but sometimes missing a realization of the work's expressive resources. The finale was performed with clarity and momentum, but needed slightly more buoyancy. Mr. Mitropoulos and his musicians provided a sympathetic, well proportioned accompaniment.

Mr. Starer is an experienced composer; the "Prelude and Rondo Giocoso" shows an effective

masterly mastery of combination of orchestral hues and timbres, particularly in the wind scoring of its first part. The treatment and transformations of the two dominating ideas also revealed notable structural skill; there was a definite expressive color.

In the rondo, one would have welcomed more of the atmosphere implied in its title. Here there were animation and ingenuity, but more convention, less of a sense of attainment of an expressive objective. The laudable performance implied understanding as well as careful preparation by the conductor and orchestra, who also played Gluck's Overture to "Alceste" and Brahms' Fourth Symphony.

Conductors to Give Break To Contemporary Composer

Leopold Stokowski answered the always present question, "What to do with the contemporary composer?" by recently conducting a program devoted exclusively to the works of contemporaries, using Toscanini's old orchestra, now called The Symphony of the Air.

The composers were Alan Hovhaness, with his third symphony, Kurt Leimer with his fourth piano concerto, and Charles Ives with his "Robert Browning Overture," all of which were being performed for the first time, and Werner Egk's "Franzoesische Suite," which had been performed but when or where no one seems quite sure.

It made a quite interesting program, certainly as interesting as the average symphonic program made up of works of the old masters, greater and lesser. At least, no one would have observed more nodding heads in the audience than at any other symphonic concert.

Hovhaness provides an orchestra with a rich texture and soothes it along many a graceful melody. Leimer, who was his own soloist, kept a Steinway forever a-tremble with percussion uproar, and the orchestra exceedingly busy. Ives, of course, was a genius with whom composers and music-listeners may catch up with any generation now. The overture reminded very little of Robert Browning beyond deep-running passages of seeming philosophic content, but it kept the listener's receptive apparatus going.

A sad thing, the contemporary composer, with his "third" symphony or his "fourth" piano concerto and very few in the audience with even a vague idea of the themes and development of the first and second or the first, second, and third.

Much, much "serious" music is

being composed these days and some of it is very much worthwhile.

The program was the first of a series The Symphony of the Air will play on scattered Sunday evenings in Carnegie Hall this season. Stokowski was the first of a group of guest conductors. Others will be Josef Krips, Igor Markevitch, Sir Thomas Beecham, and Georg Solci.

Dimitri Mitropoulos' answer to the contemporary composers question has always been to include them in his regular programs. He opened the season of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony with Samuel Barber sandwiched in with Beethoven, Richard Strauss, and Handel.

The Barber piece was the "Capricorn Concerto" which was first performed back in 1944 and has made its way, oh, so very slowly. Yet it is loaded with interest and even has charm and wit. It is a concerto for flute, oboe, trumpet and strings—and you see the possibilities for fun, for the audience as well as for the players, with those instruments out in front tossing music around among them.

From OCT 29 1956

WORK BY STARER BOWS AT CONCERT

'Prelude and Rondo Giocoso' Played by Philharmonic Under Mitropoulos

A new "Prelude and Rondo Giocoso" by Robert Starer, a faculty member of the Juilliard School of Music, received its first performance Saturday night in Carnegie Hall by the New York Philharmonic-Symphony. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted the program, which also included the first appearance with the Philharmonic of the former child prodigy pianist Ruth Slenczynska.

Mr. Starer's deftly written score presented a contrast in moods. The jocosity indicated in his title applies to the refrain of his rondo. The prelude, by contrast, starts on a rather plaintive, pastoral note and works up to a brief yet impassioned lyric climax.

To this listener the prelude was the most persuasive part of the work. The perky rondo refrain, with its angular, syncopated theme, had more than a whiff of Shostakovich. As it bustled through its various returns, a bit of fugato, mirror inversion and other tricks of the trade, it ended by sounding commonplace.

Fortunately the lyric impulse of the prelude was strong enough to carry the piece and win the composer a hearty round of applause.

Miss Slenczynska chose Chopin's F minor Concerto for her Philharmonic debut. She gave an intelligent but not very sensitive or imaginative performance. E. D.

From OCT 26 1956
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

Music: Read's Toccata

Philharmonic Plays Its New York Premiere

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC-SYMPHONY SOCIETY, Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor. At Carnegie Hall. Overture to Alceste, Gluck. Toccata Giocosa (first New York performance), Gardner Read. Poem of Ecstasy, Scriabin.

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

GARDNER READ'S Toccata Giocosa, Op. 94, is an unpretentious but engaging piece for full orchestra. Commissioned by the Louisville Philharmonic, it was introduced to New York by the Philharmonic-Symphony at Carnegie Hall last night. In its modesty and liveliness it made for agreeable listening.

Mr. Read, a 43-year-old American composer, has been faithful to the spirit of the toccata form, which arose a long time ago as a kind of warm-up or prelude device. Using a pliable, skipping theme, he manipulates it with liveliness and resourcefulness while he keeps everything in motion. There are some amusing instrumental effects, and the momentum does not lag.

This toccata offers the orchestra an opportunity to show off its individual and ensemble skills without demanding anything in the way of interpretive profundities. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted the Philharmonic in a snappy, full-bodied performance of the work, and at the end of its ten-minute span the composer came out to take a bow.

After opening the concert with Gluck's "Alceste" Overture, which does not stand alone without the opera it introduces as well as some other overtures, Mr. Mitropoulos and the orchestra went on to the big piece of the evening—Brahms' Fourth Symphony.

Here the orchestra played with an improved coherence and precision as compared with



Gardner Read

some performances one remembered last season. The strings glowed, though there was a little carelessness on attack at the start. The woodwinds and brasses were also more in the vein, though there were some flabby spots.

Mr. Mitropoulos' interpretation of the symphony was not all of a piece, but it had meritorious points. There were urgency and intensity in the music; the passion of Brahms' thought was communicated at times. But the grand architecture of the piece was not reared up for all to see. The conductor seemed to break the continuity, giving us a Brahms who seemed to nod faintly between passages of tension and fervor.

Scriabin's "Poem of Ecstasy," which seems more dated with each hearing, concluded the program. Here Mr. Mitropoulos was in his element, bringing out the muted and gaudy color effects with sureness of touch.

Met and Society Glow as Local Girl Makes Good

By NANCY RANDOLPH

The scramble at last night's 72d Metropolitan Opera opening to hear and see Manhattan-born soprano Maria Callas brought out a number of socialites who for many seasons couldn't be budged from the safety of their brocaded sofas to risk the carriage-crash.

But it happened last night—the great throng had been drawn, every one, by the legend of a wild new nightingale, at 33 a prima donna from the West Side in the old hell-raising tradition, one who prefers brewing tantrums to cooking ravioli.

According to a musical historian, there hasn't been anything like the furor over Callas since showman Phineas T. Barnum took the Swedish nightingale, Jenny Lind, on tour here a century or so ago. Or since Gertrude Farrar opened 50 years later at the Met in "Juliet," then created such a "Carmen" that the "gerry flappers" followed her up Broadway, after matinees, flinging roses.

Vincent Astor's first wife, now Mrs. Lytle Hull, and his present wife, who was Mrs. Brooke Marshall, both attended the opening for the first time in several years. Miss Beth Leary, who usually avoids mobs, arrived resplendent in blue brocade and a Russian crown sable cape. She was escorted by Baron Stuckard, Brazilian airlines president.

Elsa Maxwell's Dress

Noted party-thrower Elsa Maxwell, despite a spinal fracture, rose from the hospital bed installed in her Waldorf apartment, to attend "Norma" with Count Rasponi. She wore a red and gray satin dress by Jean Dessès, with a white ermine wrap.

Mrs. William C. Breed, in a silver-gray Dior dress, had in her party Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor of the Philharmonic, Gen. and Mrs. Ralph K. Robertson, and Greek Ambassador and Mrs. Melas. Baron Eric Rothschild-Goldschmidt, one of Garbo's escorts, came with Mrs. Albert Lasker.

Mrs. Robertson wore a magnificent new diamond necklace with her beige satin dress. Nearby



(NEWS photo by Fred Morgan) Frank Chapman and wife Gladys Swarthout have a bite.

was Mrs. Claude Arpels with a diamond necklace her husband, nephew of Louis Arpels, said he'd bought from the Maharajah of Rewa "the white tiger" of India. Mrs. Arpels said she "hopes to get it for a Christmas present."

Emeralds shone in the necklace worn by Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney, matched by her green taffeta dress worn with a white mink jacket.

Amid the gathering of many rich Republicans there was a strong Democratic flavor: Helen Stevenson, whose father is a distant cousin of Adlai, dined in Sherry's Met restaurant with Gov. Robert Meyner of New Jersey (her reported fiancé). Across the vast room were Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Daniel, she was Margaret Truman.

Baron de Gripenberg, Finnish Ambassador to the UN and his popular wife, Peggy, were with

the Duke and Duchess of Canevaro and Mrs. Charles Ulric Bay. Former Ambassador to Britain Lewis Douglas and Mrs. Douglas came with a party including Giovanni Martinelli. Amory L. Haskell escorted Mrs. William K. Dick. Mrs. John Nicholas Brown brought her lovely debutante daughter, Angela.

Hope Hampton's "black cobra" dress, made entirely of shiny sequins, and worn with an electric blue satin cape was the sensation of the carriage entrance.

But, regardless of dress, or diamonds, the audience of nearly 4,000 all brought away from the old Met opera house a brand new memory to cherish.

They had heard Callas.

(Other pictures in centerfold)



(NEWS photo by Bill Quinn) Claude Arpels, the jeweler, and his wife arrive for the gala opening. She is wearing a \$100,000 necklace.

Schuller Symphony Played At Philharmonic Concert

By Jay S. Harrison
PHILHARMONIC-SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CARNEGIE HALL
Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; soloist, Robert Casadesus, pianist. The program: Symphony No. 100 in G major ("Military"), Haydn; Brassy Symphony, Gunther Schuller; Nights in the Gardens of Spain, De Falla; Piano Concerto for the Left Hand, Ravel (Mr. Casadesus).

Gunther Schuller's Symphony for Brass and Percussion, which the Philharmonic-Symphony played last night at Carnegie Hall, is all about sonorities and what makes them tick. Scored for a seventeen-man ensemble, it is, to quote the thirty-one year old composer literally, an attempt "to show that the members of the brass family are not limited to the stereotypes of expression usually associated with them." And since Mr. Schuller is himself a crack French horn player—he sits at the first desk of the Met—it is reasonable and correct to assume that

he has given his instrumentalists quite a run for their breath and has dealt with their parts idiomatically and soundly.

What he has not done, however, is to create a piece whose musical impetus is everywhere cogent and recognizable. As Mr. Schuller's principal concern centers on the matter of sonority, he has sacrificed almost everything to that aim, with the result that the Symphony emerges as a series of gloriously resonant "effects" with very little thematic fibre to knit them together. Harmonically, the piece, in four increasingly difficult movements, wanders between chromaticism in the atonal manner and a dissonant diatonicism that spar with one another but rarely come to serious battle; and interlarded with the piece appears to proceed from numerous similar works of Hindemith.

In its overall outlay the composer has tried to give his Symphony coherence by making each new movement a shade more intense in expressivity than its predecessor, but the plan falls apart midway as the composer finds himself unable to maintain an ever growing tension throughout the work. Principally, however, as I have mentioned, an undue emphasis on sonority for its own sake soon fatigues the ear, for even the brightest clusters of sound turn grey if they are repeated too often. And the constant clash of seconds and sevenths and the endless gurgling, braying and cooing of the brasses, despite the ingenuity that called them into reality, does not relieve the piece of a certain monotony which, frankly, is implied by the instrumental combination straight from the start.

As for the rest of the concert, Mr. Mitropoulos was in rare good form during the Haydn, delivered the introductory adagio with a serenity not often encountered and the first allegro with all the buoyancy and bounce necessary to its nature. The slow movement was a mite short on grace and its military flourishes sounded—through no fault of the conductor—as ridiculous as ever, but the minuet and finale scooted about in the fashion of a young lamb and were equally as attractive.

Attractive also was De Falla's idyll, for Robert Casadesus finds it especially easy to adapt himself to music of this kind. Thus it was that his piano playing never seemed arbitrary or unreal. In performing the obligato part his work was consistently elegant, of an acute poetic sensitivity and glowingly colorful. It was playing, indeed, of a sort that makes the "gardens" seem less of an Andalusian confession than they really are. To turn sugar into an artistic substance more permanent may be checked off as a rather remarkable feat.

From NOV 5 1956
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

BETTY JEAN HAGEN IS VIOLIN SOLOIST

Betty Jean Hagen, violinist who made her Town Hall debut six seasons ago as winner of the Walter W. Naumburg Foundation award, played yesterday afternoon with the Philharmonic-Symphony in Carnegie Hall as winner of the 1955 Leventritt Award.

Lalo's "Symphonie Espagnole" for violin and orchestra may not be the most wonderful music in the world, but Miss Hagen played as if it were. She seemed so exhilarated by the music and the beautiful tone of her violin that the audience could not help but share her feeling.

Her tone not only was sweet, it also had carrying power and brilliance, too, for the flashy finish of the finale. She knew how to linger over a phrase without sentimentalizing and to color her tone with fine sympathy for Lalo's lush romanticism. It was, in short, a masterly performance. If Miss Hagen can play other composers' works this well she should have a fine career ahead.

Mr. Mitropoulos and the orchestra gave her sympathetic support. The program also included Haydn's "Military" Symphony No. 100 and Gunther Schuller's "Symphony for Brass and Percussion" repeated from the previous Thursday-Friday concert. It ended with the "Dance of the Seven Veils" from Strauss' "Salome." E. D.

From NOV 5 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Betty Hagen Is Violinist On Philharmonic Program

A gratifying week-end of music was given by the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, which included on its Saturday night program under the direction of Andre Kostelanetz the premier performance of William Schuman's "New England Triptych," a set of three stunning orchestral pieces after William Billings. The Sunday afternoon concert, conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos, listed a repetition of Gunther Schuller's unusual Symphony for Brass and Percussion and the New York orchestra debut of violinist Betty Jean Hagen.

Treating of first things first, one must exclaim that Mr. Schuman's "Triptych" is a thoroughly distinguished and gratifying piece of orchestral writing. Its point of reference to the music of the eighteenth century composer, Billings, is clearly established. But in the process of composition, Mr. Schuman has made the material entirely his own, laying on brasses in the great wide swatches he creates so effectively; carrying the flow of melody in the second movement, "When Jesus Wept" with dignity and unsentimental nobility to its concise, formal conclusion; tossing off a final piece, called "Chester," which was as splashy, bright, and short as an exclamation point. This is, one suspects,

a work destined for popularity. But it has lowered itself not one inch to seek it.

Similarly, one feels safe in predicting that the Canadian born Miss Hagen will be an extremely popular violinist in this country. She has already been heard in Europe with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, with the Suisse Romande, and in Great Britain, with the London Philharmonic. She has, as well, won the Walter W. Naumburg Foundation Award and the 1955 Leventritt Award. And, yesterday, her debut with the Philharmonic-Symphony showed her to be an artist of achieved stature and excitingly distinctive personality. Lalo's "Symphonie Espagnole," old friend though it may be, seemed fresh and lifting as if one had heard it but once before.

There is little need to discuss Miss Hagen's technical equipment. It is that of a virtuoso. Her tone is resonant, compact, and elegant. Her bowing and left-hand techniques are airy and precise. And, in a purely interpretive sense, one feels in her such a delighted personal involvement with the music that each phrase and flourish reaches the listener with the immediacy of elevated song. Miss Hagen, on stage, is graceful, and her music making is graceful too. It is, at the same time, strong. One can demand little beyond a combination of this validity.

L. T.

From NOV 5 1956
EVENING STAR
Washington, D. C.

Fine Collection of Photos Marks U. S. Camera Annual

U. S. CAMERA, 1957. Edited by Tom Maloney. (U. S. Camera Publishing Corp.) \$6.95. 260 pages text, 27 pages advertising. Black and white and color on heavy glazed stock. Pages 8 by 11 inches.)

This annual of fine photography is contemporary in every sense, and fittingly carries as its corollary title the phrase "The year's best pictures." Never abstract, grotesque or arty, it is a down-to-earth compilation of nature copying, color fashions, contemporary "creative" work, and newspaper coverage, not to mention a generalized gallery of photographs exposed in the studio and in the field. Ray Atkeson's "The West in Color" is a fitting opening chapter to an exceptionally fine overall collection.

Four portfolios of the works of Sheldon M. Machlin, Philippe Halsman, Max Scheler and Sanford H. Roth are included in 41 pages, some of them very complimentary double spreads 16x11 that "bleed" the stock.

Mr. Machlin does a folksy job with the Sardinian town of Orgosolo, which he calls "one of the wildest and most primitive sections of Europe, its inhabitants remnants of a civilization that predates Christ."

Mr. Halsman is represented by a group of well-known personalities, including actresses Magnani and Hepburn, Britishers MacMillan and Bevan and others. Halsman, a smash in Europe for 10 years, came to the United States an unknown in 1940, soon fought his way to the top.

Mr. Roth likes to photograph people "who have made an impact on the world." Having said so much he discusses techniques (always relies on 35 mm. with existing light). "I look for strength," he says. "If I find it, I have a portrait." His subjects include Dimitri Mitropoulos, Alfred Hitchcock, Magnani, Louis Armstrong, Utrillo, Picasso, Braque, Judy Garland, others.

Of his own work, Max Scheler of Munich and Paris says he often finds himself "laughing and crying with my subjects." Such rapport is developed that the picture starles the viewer with its "shocking moment" of impact.

An historical piece on Eadweard Muybridge, who in 1880 made pictures that "moved," and a chapter on the news highlights of 1956 conclude the work.—H. A. LYON.

From NOV 4 1956
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

PROKOFIEFF: Lieutenant Kije Suite; KODALY: Hary Janos Suite; Dimitri Mitropoulos and New York Philharmonic (Columbia). A natural coupling. Both scores are nationalistic, lively, humorous and brilliantly orchestrated. Mitropoulos feels at home in this music and conducts with a light hand. Superb recorded sound.

From NOV 9 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

MUSIC

The Philharmonic

By PAUL HENRY LANG

CARNEGIE HALL

Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; soloist, Byron Janis, pianist.

The program: Overture, "La Clemenza di Tito"; Mozart's "La Clemenza di Tito"; Schumann's Piano Concerto No. 1 in F major; Op. 1, Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 1 in B-flat major, Op. 38.

Mozart's "La Clemenza di Tito" is not one of his great operas; the terms of the commission called for a style he had long since abandoned. But there is nothing archaic about the fine overture that prefaces this work and which opened the Philharmonic concert last night in Carnegie Hall. Unfortunately, Mozart does not seem to be Mr. Mitropoulos' dish; the brisk and festive "rollers" and chords were unaccountably separated and slowed down, which made the following fermatas meaningless, and after an uneventful playing of the bulk of the overture the same thing happened at the end.

The second number, William Schuman's "Credendum," gave the virtuoso orchestra an excellent chance to show its wares. As is his habit, Mr. Mitropoulos placed himself wholeheartedly at the composer's disposal and played the piece with sympathy and eagerness. Nevertheless, I found the sonorities a little forced, in fact strident, and the scherzo was not airy enough.

"Credendum" gains by repeated hearing. I still think that the first movement is a bit noisy, but the meditative second is very engaging. How lovely dissonances sound when created by good part-writing instead of just landing on them! The finale is a strong piece that forges ahead with elan, ending in a massive hymnic climax.

The first opus of a composer is only a promissory note. If it is better than that—like Bee-



Byron Janis, piano soloist last night.

ethoven's C minor trio—we can be sure that a good many numbered works precede the official first born. Rachmaninoff's first piano concerto, Opus 1, may seem an exception, but what we heard last night was not the original but a later version equipped with plenty of hindsight. The only thing the composer could do was to invest his eldest offspring, now turned grandchild, with more musical savoir faire; the spiritual content did not change.

That content is faded and jaded, very difficult to reconcile with modern musical taste. There is enough sob stuff in this concerto to supply half a dozen television companies with theme songs.

The performance was not an inviting one. In order to make this sort of thing believable, and to do justice to its style, the goody stuff must be played with appropriately melting sentiment. Mr. Janis is a very capable pianist who mastered the fireworks and thundering octave runs with ease, but his tone was brittle for the melodies which latter must be sticky like flypaper. Or is it possible that being a young man he really dislikes this greasy catharsis? The conductor brought in the tutti like the Moscow express.

Robert Schumann's first, or "Spring" symphony recalls not only the season of the year but also vernal love. It was the product of that blissful year with his young bride when the composer burst forth with music like the meadows in bloom. Although as a symphony it is not a good work, it is a lovely one. But its loveliness must be brought out by the conductor, and this Mr. Mitropoulos failed to do. The young lover he conjured up was ardent and impatient. Thought that should have been whispered or merely intimated were brashly proposed.

The evening began with the reverent playing of Bach's chorale prelude "O Mensch, bewein' dein Suede gross" in memory of Marshall Field, former president of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society, who died yesterday morning.

From NOV 2 - 1956
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

MUSIC

Mitropoulos With Brass And Drums

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

A fine note of improvisation dominated the Philharmonic concert conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos in Carnegie Hall last night.

Not that any of the music was actually impromptu; there was the superb discipline that comes from full care and study—but a discipline allowing wide room for a sense of freedom and inspiration of the moment.

This was true of the playing of a Symphony for Brass and Percussion by young Gunther Schuller and of the performance by Robert Casadesus of two keyboard classics by De Falla and Ravel.

The "brass" symphony might be called an inside job. Its composer plays first horn in the Metropolitan Orchestra and his father occupies one of the second-violin desks in the Philharmonic.

The music is the work of a brass chauvinist. Scored for 17 instruments, it keeps the brass huddle busy blending colors and harmonies with affection and skill.

The air of improvisation entered in both the performance and in the way Mr. Schuller let his fancy guide him freely through a fine maze of horns and trumpets and tubas. Spontaneity was the keynote.

Mr. Mitropoulos is to be congratulated on maintaining that note throughout the four-movement span and on proving once again that, given a chance to shine in solitary splendor, the Philharmonic brasses are the country's best.

Mr. Casadesus always brings a refreshing note of newness and surprise to whatever he plays. In the case of De Falla's "Nights in the Gardens of Spain" and Ravel's "Concerto for the Left Hand" the margin for freedom was even wider.

A vein of festive impressionism runs through this Spanish travelogue, leaving the pianist on his own in the free application of color. Mr. Casadesus seemed to be excitedly composing the music as he went along.

From NOV 2 1956
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

Music: Brass Symphony

Philharmonic Plays Work by Schuller

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC-SYMPHONY SOCIETY. Robert Casadesus, pianist, Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor. At Carnegie Hall. Symphony No. 100 in G major, Haydn; Symphony for Brass and Percussion, Gunther Schuller; Nights in the Gardens of Spain, De Falla; Piano Concerto for the Left Hand, Ravel.

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

MEET Gunther Schuller, friend of string and brass players. By writing his Symphony for Brass and Percussion, which Dimitri Mitropoulos and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony played at Carnegie Hall last night, the 30-year-old New York composer performed a service for both groups of instrumentalists. He gave the string players—and the woodwinds, for that matter—about twenty minutes off, and he turned all eyes and ears on the brass choir.

Don't think that the string and brass men will not appreciate Mr. Schuller's thoughtfulness. The string players of a symphony orchestra generally feel ill-used; they are the workhorses of the band and rarely get time off because a composer has seen fit to dispense with them. A fiddler this observer knows had been brooding over a plan to have string men raise funds with which to commission pieces for woodwinds and brasses.

The brasses, on the other hand, have a right to feel that their potentialities are not often exploited. Mr. Schuller happens to be a French-horn player himself; he is soloist in the Metropolitan Opera orchestra. His conviction is that the full resources of horn, trumpet, trombone and tuba need employment, and in this symphony he has undertaken to give them scope for their capacities.

Mr. Schuller's sympathies as a composer lean in the direction of the twelve-tone school. In the program notes he is quoted as regarding the climax of his piece "a chord in which the twelve tones of the chromatic scale are sounded by members of the ensemble." Perhaps it is a greater matter of pride to arrive at such a climax than at a simple C-major chord. The point is that the climax, whatever chord is used, is making. Mr. Schuller's makes very little.

Mr. Schuller's score should



Robert Casadesus

not be dismissed. He has a great deal of know-how about the brasses. He has a vivid imagination for fresh timbres, and he knows how to develop rhythmic contrasts of considerable interest with a group of this sort. There are moments when his work has an odd attractiveness, even if it is not a wholly satisfying piece.

The seventeen players, arrayed in the center of the stage like a solitary platoon in an exposed position without the customary cover at the flanks, played this music with accuracy and freshness. They may have felt uneasy at the thought of being out there alone with Mr. Mitropoulos but seemed to be enjoying the experience by the time it was over.

The evening's soloist was Robert Casadesus, the gifted French pianist. He appeared in two pieces—Fallas' "Nights in the Gardens of Spain" and Ravel's "Concerto for the Left Hand." He played with resourcefulness and musicianship, giving due value to the subtle differences in the styles of these contemporaneous composers.

Mr. Mitropoulos and the orchestra, which had begun the evening with a rugged performance of Haydn's G major Symphony, No. 100, played the Falla and Ravel music with some distinction. Like the pianist, they differentiated between the landscapes evoked by the composers—Fallas', which captured the scents and contours of his country, and Ravel's, whose vista encompassed not only his private world but foreign elements like jazz figures.

Opera: Verdi's 'Ernani'



Mario Del Monaco and Zinka Milanov in Verdi's "Ernani"

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

IN a new production of "Ernani," the Metropolitan Opera paid homage last night to the old master, Verdi, when he was young.

"Ernani" was his fifth opera, written in his thirty-first year. It contains some attractive arias and concerted numbers and some rousing choruses. If we could divest ourselves of our familiarity with the great operas that came later, we might be able to react to "Ernani" with the freshness of audiences in 1844, when the piece was new. But we are conditioned and spoiled by the master of the middle and late years; like Verdi, we have outgrown "Ernani."

Fortunately, the Metropolitan has not approached "Ernani" in any condescending fashion. It has furnished it forth with handsome sets and costumes, four of its most popular leading singers and a conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos, whose approach catches some of the excitement that inhaled in "Ernani" more than a century ago.

Mr. Mitropoulos has made some changes in the score, most of them cuts that are traditional. He has transposed Silva's cavatina, "Infelice! e tu credevi," from the first act to a point near the end of the second. To smooth this shift he has written four bars of modulation.

Dramatic effect is the reason given for this change. One cannot dispute the point on psychological grounds, but one feels that the insertion of the cavatina into the place it now occupies is arguable on musical grounds. The build-up of the act's close is interrupted.

In the last act, short as written, the Metropolitan has added an extended ballet, a wedding celebration. The music for this interpolation has been drawn from other Verdi operas, including "Sicilian Vespers," "Macbeth" and "Un Giorno di Regno." In its previous revival at the opera house more than twenty-five years ago, a ballet was also grafted at this point.

In the last analysis, it is singing that justifies an "Ernani" revival. With Zinka Milanov, Mario del Monaco, Leonard Warren and Cesare Siepi as the principals, the Metropolitan has assembled the means for the grand gesture in vocalism. At the opera's start, however, these experienced artists seemed to be working under pressure. But as the evening wore on, they warmed to their tasks and rose to the occasion.

The Cast

ERNANI, opera in four acts by Giuseppe Verdi; libretto by Francesco Maria Piave after Victor Hugo's drama, Hernani; set, light and costumes by Esteban Frances; choreography by Zachary Solov; staged by Dimitri Mitropoulos. At the Metropolitan Opera House.

Ernani..... Mario Del Monaco
Elvira..... Zinka Milanov
Don Carlos, King of Castile..... Leonard Warren
Don Ruy Gomez de Silva..... Cesare Siepi
Don Riccardo..... James McCracken
Isidro..... George Cohanovsky
Giovanna..... Helen Vanni

Miss Milanov's big aria, "Ernani, involami," unfortunately, came early, when she was not at her best. Though dress rehearsals do not count, it may be reported that last Wednesday she sang this most famous of all numbers from "Ernani" with soaring freedom; the chances are that she will do so again the next time out.

Mr. del Monaco emitted his usual thunderous fortissimos; it is difficult to resist a dramatic tenor who can pour out tone so prodigally, and such procedure is easy to justify in old-fashioned opera of this sort. Mr. Siepi brought dignity to Silva and sang the cavatina effectively. It was Mr. Warren who, in the fattest part in the opera, did the most consistently distinguished work. His singing was in the bel canto tradition.

Esteban Frances' sets have quality, particularly the third act, at the tomb of Charlemagne. For reasons difficult to understand he has taken the first two acts outdoors, when they belong indoors. They have soft night in Spain, don't they? Mr. Frances' costume designs are striking. Those for Mr. Warren as the King of Spain are so bedecked with gold and jewels that one wonders the poor man could stand under their weight. Mr. Mitropoulos conducts with vigor. If he lays it on a bit thickly with the brasses and drums, this approach is not out of keeping with early Verdi. For the most part, however, he remembers that the singer has the primacy in this opera. Dimitri Mitropoulos' unobtrusive staging is based on the same principle.

The chorus as much as the principals has a vital share. The Met's chorus, trained by Kurt Adler, sings with pace and resonance. Its best-known piece, "Si rivedessi il Leon di Castiglia," can still thrill us. And if we could appreciate how this call to fight for freedom against oppressors stirred the Italians a hundred years ago, we might be able to respond wholeheartedly to "Ernani" as its contemporaries did.

From NOV 24 1956

HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

OPERA

'Ernani'

By PAUL HENRY LANG

METROPOLITAN
OPERA HOUSE

Opera in four acts, libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, music by Giuseppe Verdi. The cast:

Ernani..... Mario Del Monaco
Elvira..... Zinka Milanov
Don Riccardo..... James McCracken
Isidro..... George Cohanovsky
Giovanna..... Helen Vanni

Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; staged by Esteban Frances; sets and costumes by Esteban Frances; choreography by Zachary Solov; Melissa Hayden, Pierre Locotte and Corps de Ballet.

"Ernani," restored last night to the Metropolitan Opera's repertory, was composed by the thirty-one-year-old Verdi in 1844. The production was very good, yet I am skeptical about the necessity of widening the repertory in this direction when so many masterworks are on the shelves.

This was Verdi's first opera to acquire international renown, and, while an early work, it presents some of the real Verdi, if only somewhat sketchily and with a strength that is more potential than actual. The building of motive unity which characterizes the mature works is still rudimentary, only one of the figures of the drama, the King, is fully delineated though not consistently so, and in contrast to "Rigoletto" or later works, the characterization is perhaps interesting but seldom moving. Most noticeable are the plain orchestration, serviceable but often awkward, and the crude use of the brasses and percussion.

After enumerating all the shortcomings we still have a

work of fair persuasiveness, and this in spite of the silly libretto. We must beware of approaching and judging this Italian opera from the point of view of German or French opera. Even at this stage Verdi was already the lawful heir and scion to Rossini and Bellini. Those who call this barrel-organ music do not realize that these melodies come straight from the heart of the Italian people, they are the issue of their folk music, hence their simplicity, strength, and humanity.

The performances were notable for some excellent singing by singers with great voices, something that these days is occasionally—and incomprehensibly—considered of secondary importance in an opera house. Zinka Milanov (Elvira) could do little but sing in this opera because that's all there is for her to do. At first her beautifully flowing soprano sounded edgy and a bit off center, but beginning with the second act she found herself and satisfied all demands.

Cesare Siepi was the elderly Spanish grandee, Silva, who has a taste for sweet sixteen but has to be very noble about it. He weathered the ordeal without losing caste and managed to sing nicely while so doing. At times, though, his fine voice does not settle unequivocally on the desired pitch.

Mario del Monaco (Ernani)

had a role that suits his style. Put him on the stage in a dashing costume, preferably a cape that can be flung over, and let him toss out those ringing high notes, f.o.b. entrance, and he won't disappoint anyone. There is not much subtlety in all this, but it stops the show.

The principal role in "Ernani" belongs to the baritone. In Leonard Warren, Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor, came to life with truly imperial splendor. Every one knows that Mr. Warren can portray all the manly virtues with appropriately glorious vocalism, but those who listened attentively when he sang his quiet cavatina in the second act must have realized the full measure of this great artist's capabilities.

The new sets and costumes by Esteban Frances were attractive and picturesque, and the sage direction, severely limited by the absurd libretto, resourceful. Mr. Yannopoulos had no easy task with that. I must say though that the light-reflecting sequins they hung on every square inch of Mr. Warren's imperial costume, fore and aft, and even on his puttees, were quite midwintery. They would suffice for all the road signs from here to Charlemagne's tomb. A subdued guffaw went up all over the house when Carlo made his blinding entrance.

Mr. Mitropoulos puzzled me. He is an old opera hand with a commanding musical personality who, in past seasons, gave us a finely balanced "Masked Ball." It was within his power to make this period piece more palatable to modern audiences, yet he emphasized the trivial features. The introductions to the arias could have been more unobtrusive, after all, in most instances in "Ernani" they merely give the pitch to the singer; instead of keeping the meaningless "fillers" played by the brass inconspicuous, he illuminated them; and the percussion was noisy—only a soupçon of that snare drum is needed to accentuate an already heavily accented rhythm, but last night it roared.

The tempos, especially in the large ensembles and in the ballet were very fast; the conductor took a minuet-like piece at a clip that would wind a sprinter. Incidentally, they must have used some leftover turkey in the over-long ballad music; surely all that stuff is not in the original score. However, Mr. Mitropoulos kept things neatly together, the accompanied recitatives were exemplary, and if he can curb his penchant for extremes in tempo and dynamics, this could become one of his really good pieces.

From NOV 26 1956

Journal of Commerce
New York, N. Y.Verdi 'Ernani'
Revived at Met

"Ernani," one of the earliest of Verdi's operas and certainly the first to win any wide renown, was revived in a new dress by the Metropolitan on Friday evening with an impressive list of performers but with curiously mixed results.

The sets (Esteban Frances) and the staging (Dino Yannopoulos) were of the best. With Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting, and with such professionals as Zinka Milanov, Mario del Monaco, Leonard Warren and Cesare Siepi in the leading roles, the performance should have been likewise. From the beginning it seemed, however, that everyone save Leonard Warren was indicated by some form of nervous tension that did not shake loose until the program was half over.

By that time, though, the quality of Verdi's music had worn pretty thin, because even the first-rate performance that this eventually became could not obscure the fact that "Ernani" is far from the composer's best. We are inclined to doubt whether it is worth the time and effort the Metropolitan is expending to widen its repertoire these days—although it is an effort that deserves encouragement.

S. F.

rom

MIRROR

New York, N. Y.
NOV 24 1956

Robert Coleman's THEATRE:

'Ernani' Is Exciting
Revival at the Met

• Verdi work presented with star-studded cast. Mitropoulos conducts brilliantly.

In 1830 Victor Hugo changed the course of French drama. His "Hernani" caused riots in the theatre. It signalled the arrival of romanticism and the doom of classicism, or what had been passing for it since the days of Corneille and Racine.

F. M. Piave was entranced with the melodramatic work, and turned it into an operatic libretto, "Ernani." Young Giuseppe Verdi, then in the first of his three musical periods, equipped it with a dramatic and melodious score. The result was an opera that has worn better than any of the Master's earlier work.

SCHOLARS HAVE attributed the influence, variously, of Donizetti, Bellini and Rossini upon the Verdi of "Ernani." But if he were under the spell of these models, it was evident that he had a mind and a method of his own—that he was something

more than an imitator, and destined one day to surpass his distinguished predecessors.

"Ernani" was last given at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1929. Why it was not again revived until Friday evening is a mystery to us. If minor Verdi, it is major opera. It's packed with action and exciting music. Its heroes and villains are colorful, its arias and ensembles feasts for the ears.

Esteban Frances has designed new and spectacular sets and costumes for the thriller. Zachary Solov has choreographed a ballet interlude for Melissa Hayden and Pierre Locotte to dance. And impresario Rudolf Bing has cast it

From NOV 28 1956

VARIETY

New York, N. Y.

Ed Sullivan Show

Ed Sullivan atoned for Elvis Presley last Sunday (25) by handing over a hefty segment of his CBS-TV "Toast of the Town" show to the Metropolitan Opera and a scene from the second act of "Tosca." For added spice he threw in a filmed interview with Clark Gable, Collier's 1956 All-American Football Team, singer Teresa Brewer, monologist Dick Shawn and an acro-dance team (on stilts) from Scandinavia.

If variety was the thing viewers were looking for last Sunday, Sullivan had it a-plenty.

The "Tosca" scene, introing the Met's new temperamental sensation Maria Callas in her tv debut, with George London singing Scarpa and Dimitri Mitropoulos in the pit, was the piece-de-resistance. It was effectively staged by the Met's John Gutman; competently if not brilliantly sung, and briefly introduced by Met chief Rudolf Bing.

"Tosca" is Italian opera at its dramatic best. Miss Callas is as much of an actress as she is a singer. Her "Vissi d'arte" soared beautifully and powerfully, and she conveyed a good deal of suppressed passion in those long moments when she had to listen while London sang. Unfortunately, and inexplicably, Miss Callas was exposed to one of the most unflattering closeups seen on tv for a long time, and the camera held it for seemingly endless moments at the height of her big aria.

London was in fine voice and the staging of the stabbing scene and Tosca's reverent ritual were properly arranged for tv. It's difficult to understand why the scene was sung in Italian. In the light of the mass audience looking in, it might more profitably have been in English. If the Met wants to become popular, it better make a few concessions.

from among his brightest stars. DIMITRI MITROPOULOS was an excellent choice to conduct "Ernani." A dynamic figure on the podium, he made the Met's orchestra fairly sing. He brought a stirring quality to the score that spread throughout the auditorium. He supported the artists admirably, though he made terrific demands on them.

Zinka Milanov was a hand-some Elvira, who loved a dashing bandit passionately only to lose her lover and life in the end, through a treacherous rival for her hand. Her range was lush and full, though occasionally her top notes had a tendency to become shrill under the drive of the uncompromising Mitropoulos baton.

Mario Del Monaco, as the aristocratic bandit, Ernani, was at his best. His resonant tenor was true and rich. Leonard Warren was at his acting and vocal peak as Carlo, King of Spain, which means from opera's top shelf. And Cesare Siepi ably complemented this outstanding trio as

the jealous, vengeful Don Ruy Gomez.

DINO YANNOPOULOS has staged the latest addition to the Met's repertory with skill. Yannopoulos has sought to bring some of the polish of Broadway to the conventional operatic

directorial technique. And we think he's been highly successful. He's improved the histrionics of vocalists to the point that the productions bearing his stamp are good, rousing theatre, as well as good, rousing opera.

Bing has built a solid foundation of masterworks for the Met's subscribers. That's fine. But many musical gems that fall just short of that category eminently deserve to be heard. Variety, re-discovery of forgotten delights, are wonderful, too. Bing's choice of "Ernani" is felicitous.

(November-Heft) Heft 41, 1956, Seite 768:

MUSICA - BERICHT

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" DAS 19. INTERNATIONALE MUSIKFEST "

Venedig

Es waren eigentlich nur zwei Ereignisse, welche das heurige Musikfest an der Lagune besuchenswert machten: das geistliche Konzert in der Markuskirche mit den Urwiedergaben zweier Werke von Strawinsky (Musica, Heft 10, S. 683) und ein Abend im Fenice-Theater, der dem Gedächtnis Arnold Schönbergs und Richard Strauss' gewidmet war, wobei Mitropoulos das Wiener Philharmonische Orchester dirigierte. Leider ist zu sagen, dass der künstlerische Ertrag der weiteren Abende nicht eben beträchtlich war.

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Das Konzert des Wiener Philharmonischen Orchesters bildete eine Veranstaltung zum Gedenken an zwei grosse Tonmeister von der Schwelle der Gegenwart. Es brachte zwei symphonische Dichtungen, deren Strukturen sich dadurch unterscheiden, dass die eine, "Pelleas und Melisande" von Arnold Schönberg, nach dem Wagnerschen Prinzip der "unendlichen Melodie" gestaltet ist, die andere jedoch, Richard Strauss' "Alpensymphonie", einfach den einzelnen Bildern eines "Programms" folgt. Mitropoulos' Mittlerschaft, bei welcher eine angeborene Musikbesessenheit durch hohe Geistigkeit gezügelt wurde, führte die Wiener Philharmoniker zu einem Triumph von Siedegraden. Man erzählte sich, seit dem Jahre 1949, da Toscanini im Fenicetheater, wo heuer alle Orchester-aufführungen stattgefunden haben, sein letztes Venediger Konzert gab, sei noch kein Dirigent so laut umjubelt worden wie heuer Mitropoulos.

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MUSIC The Philharmonic

By PAUL HENRY LANG

CARNEGIE HALL

Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos. The program: Suite No. 3 in D major, Bach; Tone Poem, "Death and Transfiguration," Strauss; Symphony No. 5, Op. 100, Prokofiev.

Last night's Philharmonic concert took place under the shadow of tragedy. Guido Cantelli, young Italian guest conductor of the New York orchestra, the victim of an airplane crash, was taken by fate when he was about to acquire his true stature.

Cantelli's art of orchestral interpretation was still a little misty, but it was the fresh mist of morning, with the sun beginning to shine through. It is heart-breaking when an artist's cradle and his grave are so terribly close to each other. The death of a young man such as this entails the loss not only of a sympathetic and gifted creature, but of that unfolding and as yet unrealized world which he carried within him.

The Philharmonic, under Mr. Mitropoulos' direction, paid homage to the departed artist by playing Strauss' tone poem, "Death and Transfiguration." This was no random selection. The title seems appropriate for the occasion. Mr. Cantelli was fond of the work, and conductor and orchestra must have felt that he would have liked this tribute. Yet I could not feel this memorial to be truly fitting.

How can a young man, a young Italian, be recalled in his youthful Mediterranean optimism by this self-portrait of a self-made hero, who always wants to be revelatory, but always ends up by being dazzling and rhetorical? This is a wonderful piece for a virtuoso orchestra, but let us bury our dead to the strains of music that is tender and warm, and which the bright monsters of romantic realism are held and subdued in the crystal of a chaste musical mind.

But the performance of this showpiece was well-nigh perfect. Mr. Mitropoulos ably sustained the "reverie" section, without permitting the slightest aberration in tempo or dynamics (Mr. Goodman's pianissimos on the timpani rate special praise).

while the following sections kept the audience on the edge of their seats. However, the tonal frenzy was well controlled and the orchestra played with remarkable precision and with a tonal balance and beauty seldom heard these last few years. Mr. Mitropoulos and his men, God bless them, were really transfigured and their tribute came straight from the heart.

The Bach suite in D (No. 3) struck me like one of those amusing maps entitled "A New Yorker's Idea of the West," where geography is distorted in fantastic fashion. There was a lot of fast sawing by a huge orchestra, the contrapuntal lines were lost, the cadences testified to the rugged individuality of the members of the orchestra, the timid trumpets contributed a bit of color instead of proudly dominating the scene, the oboes could not be heard, and of course the absence of the harpsichord or piano (the latter was on the stage!) resulted in holes in the harmony.

In Prokofiev's sturdy and



Dimitri Mitropoulos

imaginative Fifth Symphony the Philharmonic again showed that it is a great orchestra. I could stay for only two movements, but they faithfully realized the composer's intentions and were full of color and verve. It is a pleasure to see such a fine modern work become a repertory piece, enjoyed by old and young.

international musician

November 1956



Dimitri Mitropoulos • see page 20

KEEP MUSIC ALIVE — INSIST ON LIVE MUSICIANS
OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA



From NOV 30 1956

MUSICAL LEADER
CHICAGO ILL

New York

Editor and Critic: SHIRLEY CECILLE CASH, 42 Cloverfield Road, So. Valley Stream, N. Y. Tel: Tilden 4-8192
Other Critics: Harry L. Fuchs, Sherman Gottesman, Walter F. Loeb

Philharmonic-Symphony Opens 115th Season

There was a festive air about the Philharmonic's first concert of the season at Carnegie Hall, Oct. 18. A near-capacity, enthusiastic audience turned out to hear Dimitri Mitropoulos lead the orchestra in some very fine music making. The virtuoso expression of the evening was Strauss' Tone Poem, "Don Juan." Mitropoulos is expert at this kind of music. He puts his heart and soul into it, rousing the orchestra to yield its fullest in color and spirit. The whole thing was very stimulating. The varied program opened with a solid rendition of Handel's Concerto Grosso No. 2, in B flat major. Then, for contemporary flavor, there was Samuel Barber's "Capricorn Concerto," featuring John Wummer, flute; Harold Gomberg, oboe; and William Vacchiano, trumpet. This pleasing, rhythmic work was effectively performed. The program concluded with Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

For the Oct. 25 program, Mitropoulos again ranged from the classic to the contemporary. The opener was Gluck's Overture to "Alceste," which was a bit heavy-handed in interpretation. The Brahms' Fourth Symphony, which followed, was more to our liking. It had broad sweep and great depth of feeling. Furthermore, Mitropoulos again demonstrated the excellent qualities of this orchestra when its resources are fully utilized. How the strings can shimmer and glow, how the woodwinds and brasses can sing out in turn! Gardner Read was present to share the applause for the first New York performance of his "Toccata Giocosa." The title is appropriate for this vivid selection, and it received a first-rate reading. On the other hand, we found Scriabin's "The Poem of Ecstasy" frankly boring. We would like to substitute it "orchestration in search of a theme," for although the instrumentation was colorful, the music itself had little to say.

Philharmonic Notes: Mayor Wagner proclaimed the week of Oct. 22-29 as "Philharmonic Week." Oct. 22 also opened

the 1956 Friends of the Philharmonic campaign to raise \$225,000 toward the operating expenses of the Society. Bruno Walter has announced that after the current season he will discontinue his regular guest appearances with the Philharmonic. He stated that "as an 80-year old musician" he wished "to leave before age compels me to do so." He did not entirely close the door, for he also indicated "should you ask for my services for an extraordinary occasion, it will make me happy to comply." Dr. Walter's association with the Philharmonic covers a 34-year period, beginning in the season 1922-23. "Backstage at the Philharmonic," a series of lecture-discussions, was so successful last year that a second season of these events has been scheduled, again with Dr. Carleton Sprague Smith, well-known musicologist, as moderator. The dates will be Dec. 6, Jan. 3, Feb. 21 and April 25. The Philharmonic played in the U. N. Assembly Hall, Oct. 24, in celebration of United Nations Day. Mitropoulos conducted Brahms' Fourth Symphony, and Hugh Ross conducted the orchestra and the Schola Cantorum in Colin McPhee's orchestral suite "Tabu Tabuhan," and the finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. In the latter, the excellent soloists were Hilde Gueden, soprano, Elena Nikolaidi, contralto, Richard Tucker, tenor, and Otto Edelmann, bass. The concert was beamed on Radio Station WABC, on WOR-TV, and on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Trans-Canadian Network. In compliance with Dimitri Mitropoulos' request, the Board of Directors of the Philharmonic-Symphony have appointed Mr. Mitropoulos and Leonard Bernstein as principal conductors for 1957-58. They will share jointly the responsibility for the orchestra and general plans for the season. Mitropoulos remains Musical Director for the current season; he has held this post since 1951.

From NOV 30 1956

World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Cantelli Tribute By Mitropoulos

The memory of Guido Cantelli, who died in an airplane crash last Saturday, hovered over the Philharmonic concert in Carnegie Hall last night.

Taking over the concert originally assigned to the 36-year-old conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos featured a profoundly moving reading of Strauss' "Death and Transfiguration"—a favorite of his young Italian colleague.

The intensely elegiac music rang with strong feeling and drama, becoming for the moment the memorial of a gifted young man who had often stood on the same podium and evoked power and beauty.

In an eloquent program tribute, the Philharmonic stated that Cantelli's "ideals of artistry and musicianship would be a cherished part of its tradition."

Also billed last night were Bach's D major suite and Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony, B. H.

From NOV 30 1956

TIMES
New York, N. Y.

Philharmonic Plays Cantelli Tribute

THE Philharmonic-Symphony concert last night in Carnegie Hall was an occasion of sorrow. This was the program that was to have been led by Guido Cantelli, who died last Saturday in an airplane crash. There was a black-bordered page in the program that read:

The musical world shares with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra a profound grief in the tragic accident that cost the life of Guido Cantelli and his fellow-passengers, but it can hardly share the loss felt by the Society, its players and its audience.

Following his American debut with the N. B. C. Symphony Orchestra in 1948, Cantelli had appeared with the Philharmonic-Symphony more often than with any orchestra outside of his native Italy. Since 1952 these appearances had been a recurrent part of every season's schedule, in the rising line of a career rich in achievement, even more abundant in promise.

The Philharmonic-Symphony was proud to share in the sponsorship of this uncommon musician and honored to have been the instrument by which he became better known to the American public. His ideals of artistry and musicianship will be a cherished part of its traditions, his accomplishments within an abruptly curtailed life span an example to which successors, no matter how talented, may look for encourage-

ment. He will be missed, and he will not be forgotten.

Dimitri Mitropoulos, who volunteered to conduct the three Philharmonic-Symphony concerts this week, chose Strauss' "Death and Transfiguration" as a memorial to Signor Cantelli. Apparently many in the audience did not realize the memorial aspects of the Strauss tone poem. There was much applause at the conclusion of the piece, whereupon, after a few moments, Mr. Mitropoulos made quieting gestures and had the orchestra stand. It did, with bowed heads. Some members of the audience also rose in tribute. The Strauss "Death and Transfiguration," with its programme about "Death's iron hammer" * * * deliverance from the world, transfiguration of the world, was, of course, a fitting work to play. Mr. Mitropoulos opened the program with Bach's Suite No. 3 and closed it with Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5.

With only five days to work up a program, Mr. Mitropoulos was in no position to pay an elaborate musical tribute to Signor Cantelli's memory. Even so, something more in keeping with the nature of the occasion might have been found instead of the Prokofiev Fifth. At the very least, could not "Death and Transfiguration" have been placed at the end of the program?

H. C. S.

RHYTHMIC COLORS OF A SYMPHONY

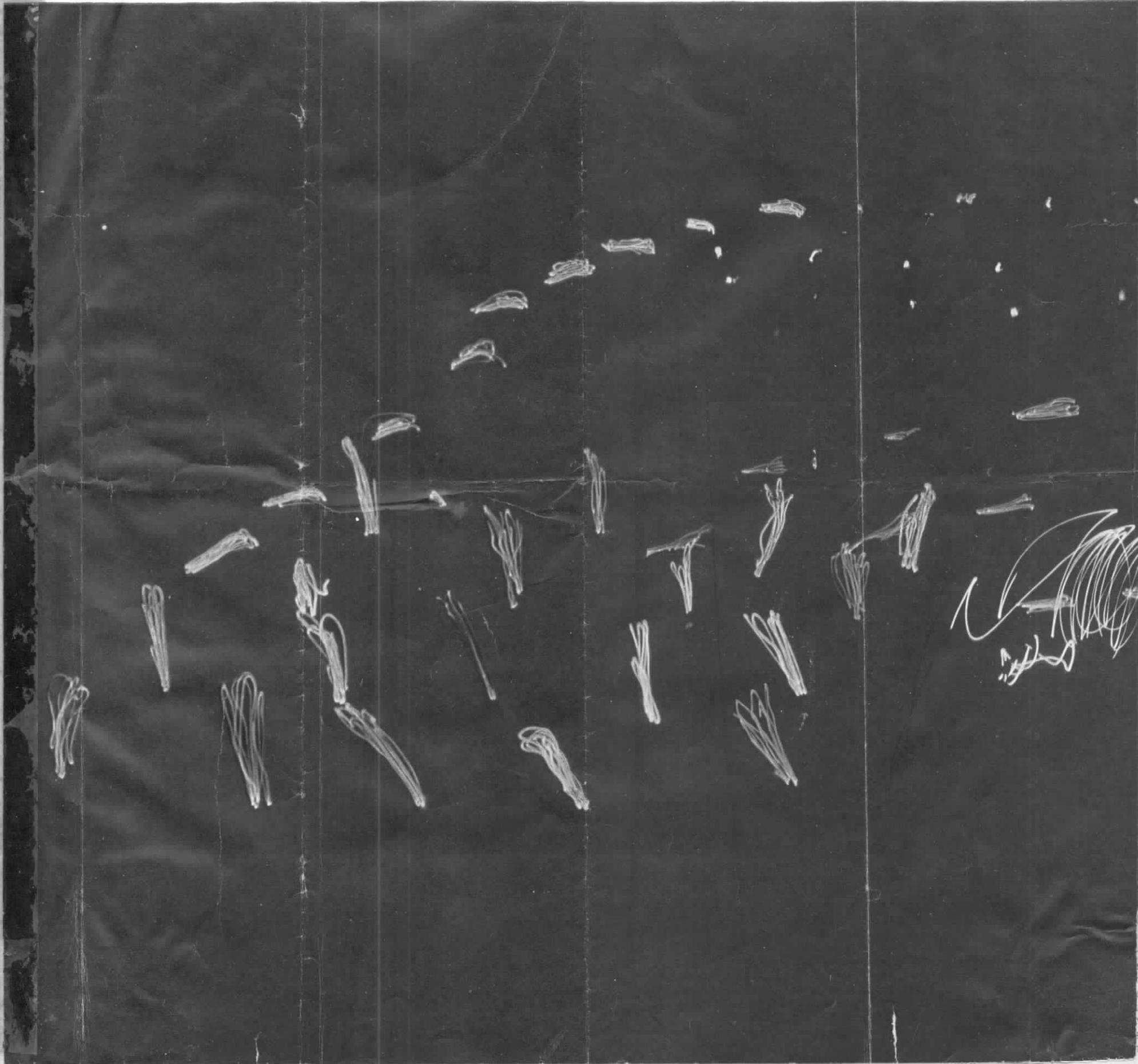
Lights record varied movements of an orchestra in full swing

From
LIFE
New York, N. Y.

NOV 26 1956

Members of the New York Philharmonic sat before Conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos in a Columbia Records studio, wired for light instead of sound. Attached to their instruments or playing fingers were colored lamps. As the music began, the studio grew dark and 109 lamps swayed rhythmically, arching with the string

instruments' bows, bobbing above the fingered woodwinds, waving with drumsticks and baton. From a control booth Photographer Werner Wolff opened his shutter for 20 seconds to close out six months of experiments conducted with Sylvania Electric that produced the luminous portrait of a symphony in motion.



THEATRE:

'Madama Butterfly' Welcomed to Metropolitan

appealing in title role.
as masterly on the podium.
t Puccini's "Madama Butterfly" given at La Scala. The audience fied. Only the Maestro himself as, it was done again at Brescia success.

"Tosca" have their partisans. Anyway, since that night in Brescia, the exotic work has been a hit throughout the world. From seeming failure came inevitable triumph.

THESE THOUGHTS came to mind Saturday evening at the Metropolitan Opera House, when "Madama Butterfly" was given for the first time this season. The venerable institution was jammed from the lower floor to the topmost balcony by an enthusiastic audience.

It was gratifying for us to note the number of youngsters present, they ranged from the grammar school to the college set. This bodes well for the future of good music in Manhattan, for it demonstrates that opera is holding its own with rock 'n' roll.

Licia Albanese was the Cio-Cio-San, sensitive, fragile and appealing. Though her velvety voice has lost some of its power, she sang with evocative warmth and admirable skill. Her taste and finesse atoned for her lack of volume.

MISS ALBANESE has always been a favorite of ours. It is quite a wonderful thing to hear and see an artist who knows how to sing and act. She holds audiences spellbound with her delicacy and charm. She drew bravas from the first-nighters Saturday.

Daniele Barioni, as the Lieutenant Pinkerton who loves too lightly with tragic results, has a resonant tenor and uses it capably. Though he has a thing or two to learn about the vocal and histrionic arts, he was ingratiating and effective.

Clifford Harvuot was a good Consul Sharpless. Rosalind Elias, Alessio De Paolis and George Cehanovsky did justice to Suzuki, Goro and Yamadori.

DIMITRI MITROPOULOS, musical director of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, was, as usual, excellent on the podium. He showed consideration for Miss Albanese's desire to keep "Madama Butterfly" in a restrained key, yet allowed the orchestra to have its head in the dramatic climaxes. A bit of a feat, that!

It was inspiration on the part of Rudolf Bing to persuade Mitropoulos to take a busman's holiday from his duties at Carnegie Hall, and conduct several operas a season at the Met.

For a batoneer whose first allegiance is to instrumental music, he has an amazing ability to understand and lend support to singers. His performances are invariably exciting, and most often distinguished.

From DEC 2 8 1956
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music

Mitropoulos Revitalizes 'Carmen'

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI.

A strong and fiery performance of Bizet's "Carmen" redounded to the glory of Dimitri Mitropoulos at the Metropolitan last night.

This was the Maestro's first encounter with the score here, and for many in the house it must have sounded like their first, too. The performance had the freshness and impact of a wholly new experience.

Besides being the unexcelled musician he is, Mr. Mitropoulos is also a man of the theater. For a "Carmen" of ideal continuity and steady suspense such a temperament is indispensable.

Power and Intensity.

One sensed the power and intensity of the man in scene after scene of this renewed masterpiece. There were dark corners of the score that took on new light and life, and the whole fabric vibrated like a living thing.

This is all to the good of an opera that centers in a commanding personality to the point of drawing attention away from the massive skill and inventiveness woven into the score.

It was a score bustling with eager comment and sinister prophecy last night, a second drama that vividly mirrored and previewed the tragic, hopeless drama of the events on stage.

Mr. Mitropoulos is once again to be congratulated on conducting an old opera and by sheer force of genius making it sound like a new one.

Unrivaled Carmen.

Heroine of the evening was the fascinating and unrivaled Carmen of the Metropolitan's glamour wing—Rise Stevens. She was captivating of voice and style last night and, needless to add, of person. A very revealing Carmen, in fact.

The others were also quite fine—Richard Tucker as Don Jose, George London as Escamillo, Norman Scott as Zuniga and Lucine Amara as a honey of a Micaela in sweet tone and personal appeal.

The chorus, superbly trained by Kurt Adler, joined the orchestra last night in some of the warmest and smoothest blend of vocal and instrumental tone heard this season.

It all adds up to a highly attractive new lease on life for "Carmen."

From DEC 1956

MUSICAL LEADER
CHICAGO ILL

With the Orchestras

Philharmonic-Symphony: Uppermost in our minds is the tragic death of Guido Cantelli, who was killed in a plane crash, Nov. 24, in Paris. Dimitri Mitropoulos, Paul Paray and Leonard Bernstein will take over for the four weeks during which Signor Cantelli was scheduled. The death of this young, gifted conductor leaves a sorrowful gap in the music-loving world.

Nov. 1, Mitropoulos led the Philharmonic in a program including Haydn's "Military" Symphony, Schuller's Symphony for Brass and Percussion, Falla's "Nights in the Gardens of Spain," and Ravel's Piano Concerto for the Left Hand. The highlight of the program was the exquisite playing of Robert Casadesu in the last two selections named. . . . Andre Kostelanetz chose a delightful program, Nov. 3, for the first in his special Saturday Night series. The highlight was the New York premiere of a fine work by William Schuman, "New England Triptych." There were also works by Weber, Corelli, Prokofieff, and first Philharmonic performances of suites derived by Robert Russell Bennett from Rodgers' "South Pacific" and Cole Porter's "Kiss Me, Kate" . . .

On Nov. 8, Mitropoulos conducted the first Philharmonic performance of William Schuman's "Credendum," a powerful showpiece of wide dynamic and color range. Also featured was Rachmaninoff's First Piano Concerto, which Byron Janis performed with steely virtuosity but not enough lyricism. Included were Mozart's Overture to "La Clemenza di Tito" and Schumann's First Symphony . . . Nov. 11, with much of the program the same, Anna Xydis played the Tchaikowsky First Piano Concerto and regrettably was technically not equipped to handle the difficult work.

From DEC 2 6 1956

World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

European Award For Mitropoulos

The Orfeo d'Oro (Golden Orpheus) for 1956 has been conferred upon Dimitri Mitropoulos by the City of Mantua. The Orfeo d'Oro is bestowed annually upon five singers, representing each of the vocal categories, and one conductor, and it is considered one of the principal musical distinctions of the year. Recipients are named by an international committee of conductors and critics in Europe.

From DEC 1 1956
HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Guido Cantelli Mass Held; Leaders in Music Attend

A requiem mass in memory of Guido Cantelli, thirty-six, Italian conductor who was killed last Saturday in an airplane crash at Paris, was held at 10 a. m. yesterday at St. Malachy's Roman Catholic Church, 239 W. 49th St.

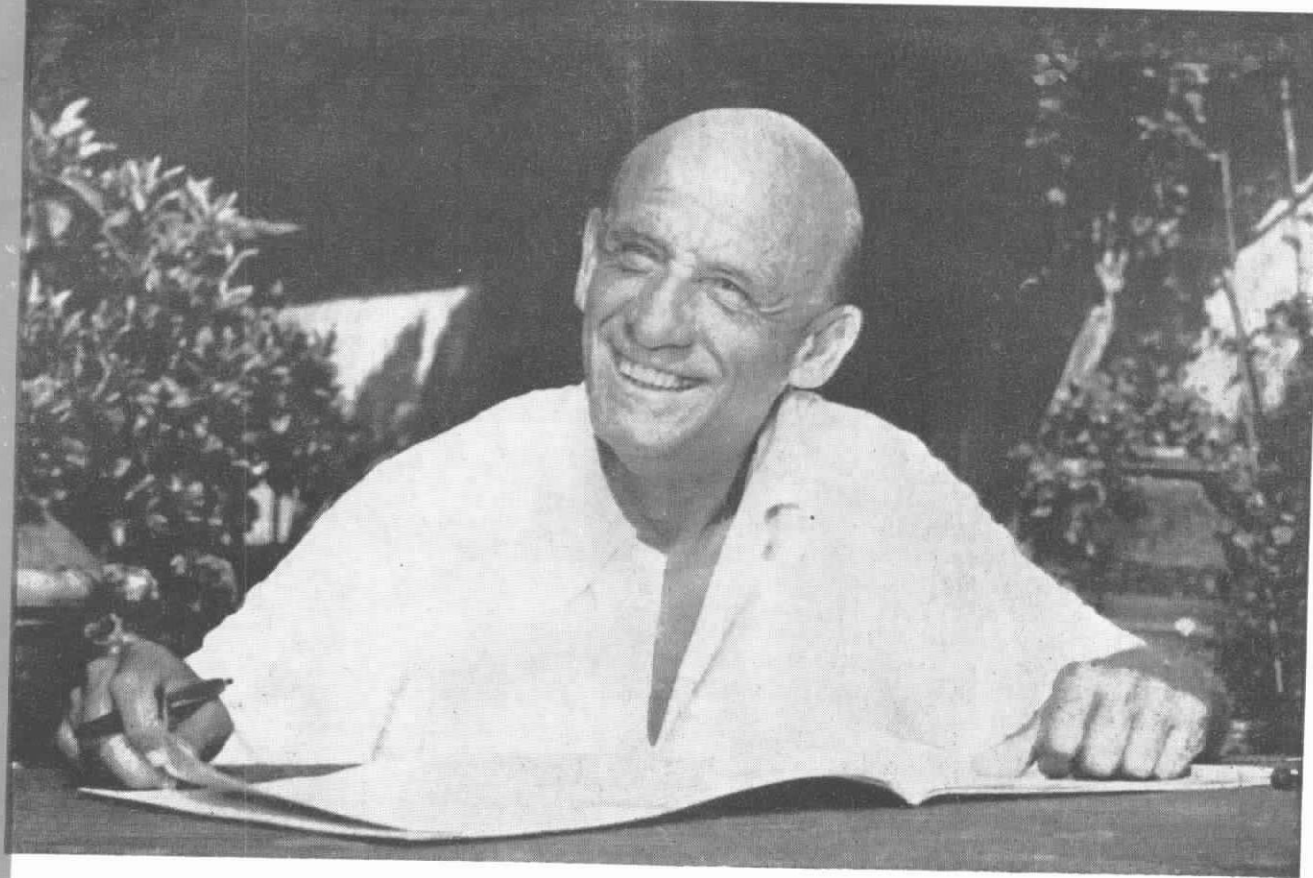
Dimitri Mitropoulos, musical director of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, and about fifty members of the orchestra, which Mr. Cantelli had been scheduled to conduct from Thursday through Dec. 23, were among more than 200 persons who attended. John Corigliano,

concertmaster of the Philharmonic-Symphony, accompanied by Paul Creston, composer and organist, played Handel's "Largo" and Vivaldi's "Sicilienne" during the mass.

Others Attending

Members of the Symphony of the Air, which Mr. Cantelli led as a guest conductor when it was the NBC Symphony, attended the mass. David M. Keiser, president of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society; Bruno Zirato, managing director of the Philharmonic-Symphony, and members of its board of directors also were present.

Among others who attended were conductors Andre Kostelanetz, Wilfred Pelletier and Giorgio Polacco; Mrs. Wanda Toscanini Horowitz, daughter of Arturo Toscanini; Mieczyslaw Horszowski, pianist; Franco Colombo, American head of the House of Ricordi, Italian music-publishing firm; and David Soria, president of Angel Records, and his wife. The Right Rev. James B. O'Reilly, pastor of St. Malachy's, officiated.



Dimitri Mitropoulos —

● "A good musician should try also as much as possible to be a first-rate human being. Possessing a certain talent is no excuse for him to be arrogant and presumptuous." Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, says this earnestly and simply. A man of convictions, he feels that the good way is the hard way. This belief is not evidenced alone in his heavy winter-time schedule. The vacations which most conductors find necessary for recouping their energies, he uses to expend his. He climbs mountains for the sense it gives him of battling with the elements. He serves his fellow men in direct and basic ways. One summer during World War II he traveled about Minnesota with a mobile blood donating unit as a Red Cross worker. For twelve to fourteen hours a day he loaded and unloaded supplies and cleaned test tubes at grimy sinks in railroad stations. He did this not only with cheerfulness; he did it as a special sort of outlet into the larger life. A few years later he and his men of the New York Philharmonic purchased a Red Cross ambulance.

This man with a mission has a capacity for driving work which would kill a less hardy soul. He is up at five or six. After a sketchy breakfast he plunges into a minute analysis of the score at hand. "I take the score

apart, just as a child takes a clock apart," is the way he describes his disentanglement of main themes, sub-themes and counter-themes. "Then I put the pieces together again. Sometimes there will be a piece or two left over the first time—measure 157 or measure 233, say. So I start over again. If it takes two or three months, I still work at it. Finally, when everything fits, I know I have it."

At nine-thirty, Mitropoulos finishes his morning study of scores. Then he goes to Carnegie Hall, a block away from his apartment, and begins a rehearsal session which lasts till noon. He lunches then, in a small restaurant nearby—his first real meal of the day. In the afternoon, if there is not another rehearsal, he goes home to the seclusion of his penthouse apartment, where religious symbols remind him that his personal life, quite as fully as his professional life, is a dedicated one. On the evenings when there are no concerts, he studies far into the night. Mitropoulos eats no supper. He is a one-meal-a-day man.

This conductor comes naturally by his view of life as a spiritual struggle. He was born (in Athens, on February 18, 1896) into a deeply religious household. His two uncles were monks of the Greek Orthodox Church. One of his granduncles was an archbishop.

His home was a regular meeting place for disciples of the church. Dimitri's father considered entering the priesthood himself, but finally settled for a life of good works in the capacity of citizen and leather merchant. When the Turks expelled some two million Greeks from Asia Minor in 1921, he served as unofficial priest and comforter to his suffering countrymen who came as refugees from the ports of Smyrna. He was jailed for his work in their behalf and died in his prison cell of the plague.

It was this man whom Mitropoulos had as his example throughout his youth and early manhood.

The young Dimitri dreamed of leading the consecrated life of a monk. He often visited the nearby monasteries. He searched out distant chapels and stayed days and nights there, sleeping on the floor and eating the black bread and thick soup of the hermits. He sometimes got together an audience of the small boys in the village and delivered a sermon or had them act as acolytes to his own ritualistic devotions.

He prayed constantly for his fellow-beings, for his own soul. But when the time came to decide on his life work and he realized that if he entered a monastery, they would not allow him even a little harmonium—the Greek

Orthodox Church does not countenance musical instruments in its religious rituals—he knew he could not do it.

Love of music had been as deeply instilled in Mitropoulos as love of religion. From the age of nine he had studied piano. One day Armand Marsick, a professor at the Odeion Conservatory in Athens as well as leader of the Athens Symphony, chancing to stroll by the boy's house, overheard strange and intriguing music. He made inquiries and discovered that the works were of the boy's own making. He suggested that he become his private pupil at the Conservatory. So at the age of twelve, Dimitri began studying composition with one of the best teachers in Greece.

New Frontiers

As he had formerly sought out mountain chapels, the boy now sought out new forms in music. He was much interested in the theater and tried to compose brief dramatic works. His spiritual life gained new impetus. Marsick took Mitropoulos with him on his vacations in Italy (Marsick's wife was Italian) and the young man was thrilled with the religious history of Rome. He delved deeply into the mystical writings of St. Francis of Assisi. To do good to one's fellow men, to follow the path of humility became the chief purpose of his existence.

When Dimitri was twenty-three, his opera, *Sister Beatrice*, based on a text by Maeterlinck, was performed at the Conservatory. Camille Saint Saëns, who happened to be in Athens, carried back to Paris a glowing account of it. This famous composer's recognition brought the City of Athens to a sense of responsibility for its talented son. Funds were provided to send Mitropoulos first to Brussels to study under Paul Gilson, then, in 1921, to Berlin to study under Ferruccio Busoni.

Busoni, though he was touched by the thin shy young man who played the piano so astoundingly, who composed so earnestly, who thought so deeply, did not let his feelings keep him from his usual brutal frankness. When Mitropoulos played for him a forty-five-minute-long sonata of his own, one into which he had "poured his whole soul," Busoni pulled it apart mercilessly. "Too much passion," he said. "Go back to Mozart for purity of form!"

From Composer to Conductor

Mitropoulos had looked on composing as his life work. From that moment he gave it up. "I listened to Busoni, absorbed his knowledge and ended up as a recreator instead of a creator," he says. Or he can be more abrupt: "Well—so I deteriorated into a conductor!"

Mitropoulos during this period acted as an assistant at the Berlin State Opera, rehearsing, coaching, accompanying, conducting. Since the Berlin Theater was under the same general management as the Opera, he made himself useful there also, conducting and playing piano and organ for the incidental music in performances of Shakespeare and Ibsen.

When after four years Mitropoulos received an offer from Athens to lead the city orchestra, he accepted with alacrity. It was not only the conducting itself he enjoyed. He liked contributing money for instruments and music for the men. He liked hearing their problems

and arriving at solutions together with them. He might well have concluded that here was to be his future. But destiny decided differently.

Mitropoulos' guest-conducting assignments had taken him to many European cities outside Greece. In March, 1930, he was invited to conduct the Berlin Philharmonic. Shortly before the concert Egon Petri, who had been scheduled as soloist to play Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto, fell ill. It was impossible at that late date to find a pianist who included in his repertoire this erratic and mechanistic concerto. So, at Mitropoulos' offering to serve both as soloist and conductor, the management, doubting but desperate, agreed.

What happened that evening made Mitropoulos known all over Europe. With the piano lid removed to allow visibility both ways, he flayed the air, orchestra-ward, during the pianoless passages; then, precisely at the opening notes of the solo passages, plummeted hands to the keyboard, leaving it to his darting eyes and bobbing head to carry on the conductor's role. His amazingly quick reactions, his finger and mind interplay, his split-second timings, his ability instantaneously to project his intentions to the orchestra men, made his performance something to talk about. Music critics didn't miss their chance. Word of the performance spread all over Europe.

The Entering Wedge

All doors were now open to Mitropoulos. He made his Paris debut with this work. The composer himself was in the audience and declared that this amazing man could outstrip him as pianist-interpreter. News spread to the other side of the Atlantic and Serge Koussevitzky invited him to be guest conductor of the Boston Symphony.

When Mitropoulos at forty years of age first set foot on American soil, he was no novice in the field of conducting. He had for years made an annual tour of the principal Italian cities. For years also he had had a standing engagement to conduct an annual three-month season at Monte Carlo. For a dozen seasons he had been at the helm of the Athens Symphony. He had conducted most of the major orchestras of Europe.

For all this experience, he knew that to appear before one of the most famous orchestras of America was a challenge of a very special sort.

As usual Mitropoulos met the challenge head-on. Bostonians came to startled attention as he lashed the orchestra men to fever heat, as he swooped earthward, clenched his fists, shook his body like a garment. Once their ears took over from their eyes, however, what they heard was pure, unimpeded music. At the close of the concert they gave him an ovation. More to the point, they asked him back.

When Mitropoulos returned to America the next year it was on a double invitation, from both the Boston and the Minneapolis orchestras. In Boston, his success was repeated. In Minneapolis, on January 29, 1937, "An audience that is considered one of the calmest and coldest-handed in the country," wrote John K. Sherman, music critic of the *Minneapolis Star and Tribune*, "became an excited mob that staged the nearest thing to a riot ever seen in Twin Cities concert halls. Wild-eyed

spectators cheered and shouted bravos, clapped strangers on the back, and otherwise acted as if they were under the influence of strong stimulants. . . . Mitropoulos appeared to be a fanatic who had sold his soul to music and conducted the orchestra like a man possessed."

The answer to such a triumph was a permanent conductorship. When this was announced from the platform of Northrop Auditorium, the audience stood up and cheered. Mitropoulos was to hold the post twelve years.

American Adjustability

In welcoming Mitropoulos, America has had unexpected returns. His uncommon ability to adjust to our ways of life has led him to address Christian Endeavor societies, eat in one-arm joints, explore the mountains of the Great West and attend movies—"opening cans of life for one who has no time to cook," he calls this latter activity.

But it is Mitropoulos' attitude as conductor which stamps him particularly as American. "I do not want to be a dictator but a man who pleads for love, justice and consideration both for the composers and for my colleagues in the orchestra," he says. "I could no more do without my colleagues than they could do without me." His feeling for the men is more than professional respect. On tours, he rides with them, carries on discussions with them, snatches cat-naps as they do on the dusty plush seats of the day coaches.

In Minneapolis Mitropoulos threw himself into civic enterprises. Northrop Auditorium needed a new shell for its stage. It got its shell—an excellent one—because Mitropoulos launched the project, going from house to house asking for contributions. In two days he had \$5,000 in his pocket for the cause.

It was in Minneapolis, too, that he became famous for his "firsts." Composers far and near blessed his presence on the podium as one after another he launched premieres. "If we do not face and listen to the spirit of our time," he would plead, "we shall not be able to resolve its frustrations and confusions," and again, "The next Bach or Beethoven will be born in America. We want to be in on the birth."

Guest Conductorships

Mitropoulos began to take regular guest-conductorships in the East. In 1938 he conducted the NBC Symphony. In 1940 he guest-conducted the New York Philharmonic-Symphony. In 1945 and 1946 he was conductor at Robin Hood Dell. The latter year was a big one for him. He became a citizen of the United States—for him a deeply symbolic act.

As a result of a series of successful guest conductorships with the New York Philharmonic, Mitropoulos was asked in 1949 to become the orchestra's regular conductor. He accepted. It must have been stimulating to this scaler of mountain peaks to take over a podium whose record of casualties among conductors quite equals Mount Everest's among climbers.

A farewell talk Mitropoulos gave at Northrop Auditorium at the end of the last concert there eased hurt feelings. "My friends," he said in part, "You helped me grow and you did grow with me. . . . So I am going some place where I don't know if I am going to be

happy. But I have to go. I have to climb the mountain that is expected from me . . . If I have sometimes been harsh, please forgive me, and if I have ever hurt you with some modern compositions, I hope you will not keep it in mind . . . because I had some duties also toward your education and also to serve my art . . . So I tell you—so long! And God be always with you!”

For the first season the New York conductorship was a shared one: Mitropoulos and Leopold Stokowski were podium colleagues. But, beginning with the 1950-51 season, the whole task devolved on Mitropoulos. He gave his whole self to it.

In September, 1950, Mitropoulos took the Philharmonic into Manhattan's Roxy Theatre as the stage attraction—brought fine music to those who could not afford to pay the high prices at Carnegie Hall. He answered the hesitant who disliked having the impeccable Philharmonic play in a Broadway theater with “Art is pure no matter where it goes. Art cannot be brought down . . . People can only be brought up.”

He sent shivers up spines of Carnegie Hall habitués with his concert presentations of Strauss' *Elektra* and Berg's *Wozzeck*.

Unorthodox in his ideas, Mitropoulos is also unorthodox in his podium methods. At rehearsals he springs down among the violins and pulls out their themes as if by direct propulsion. He points directly in the face of a horn player to exorcize from him the last iota of sound. He leaps in the air to whip up a rhythm, sings in a raw dramatic voice a passage along with the players, or crisscrosses the air as though engaged in invisible sword-play. At such times, frantically pulling at the collar of his turtle-neck sweater, he shouts, “Don't act Hamlet! *Be* Hamlet! Don't act the music. *Be* the music!”

When he takes time out for a recess, the orchestra men crowd around him, to discuss, to hear his remarks about the work, or to offer him a cigarette and solicitously light it for him. At such times his craggy features shadow into a gaunt smile.

In 1954, Mitropoulos, along with his Philharmonic duties, became guest conductor at the Metropolitan Opera House. He has since conducted *Salome*, *The Masked Ball*, *Boris Godunov*, *Tosca*, and *Manon Lescaut*.

With the increase in his activities, Mitropoulos has had regretfully to forego his

hobby of mountain climbing. (Earlier he had climbed the West Coast Sierra, the Tetons, and many high mountains in Colorado.) His whole concern now is “instead of struggle for the high peaks, struggle for the heights in music.”

Many honors have come his way. King Paul and Queen Frederika of Greece personally presented to him the decoration of the Commander of the Order of the Phoenix. He was named Chevalier of the French Legion of Honor for his services to France in playing contemporary French music. He was awarded the “San Luca 1954 for Music,” the Florentine equivalent of Hollywood's “Oscar.”

His New York podium occupancy has set Mitropoulos' characteristics in sharp relief. In the midst of devotees of Freud and Adler, he holds to his simplicity; with anti-atonalists to the left and right of him, he continues to encourage modern composers; with unlimited opportunity to dictate, he remains humble. The struggle to maintain these values has been unrelenting. But to one who believes “only life suffered can transform a symphony from a collection of notes into a message for humanity,” this is all as it should be.

—Hope Stoddard.

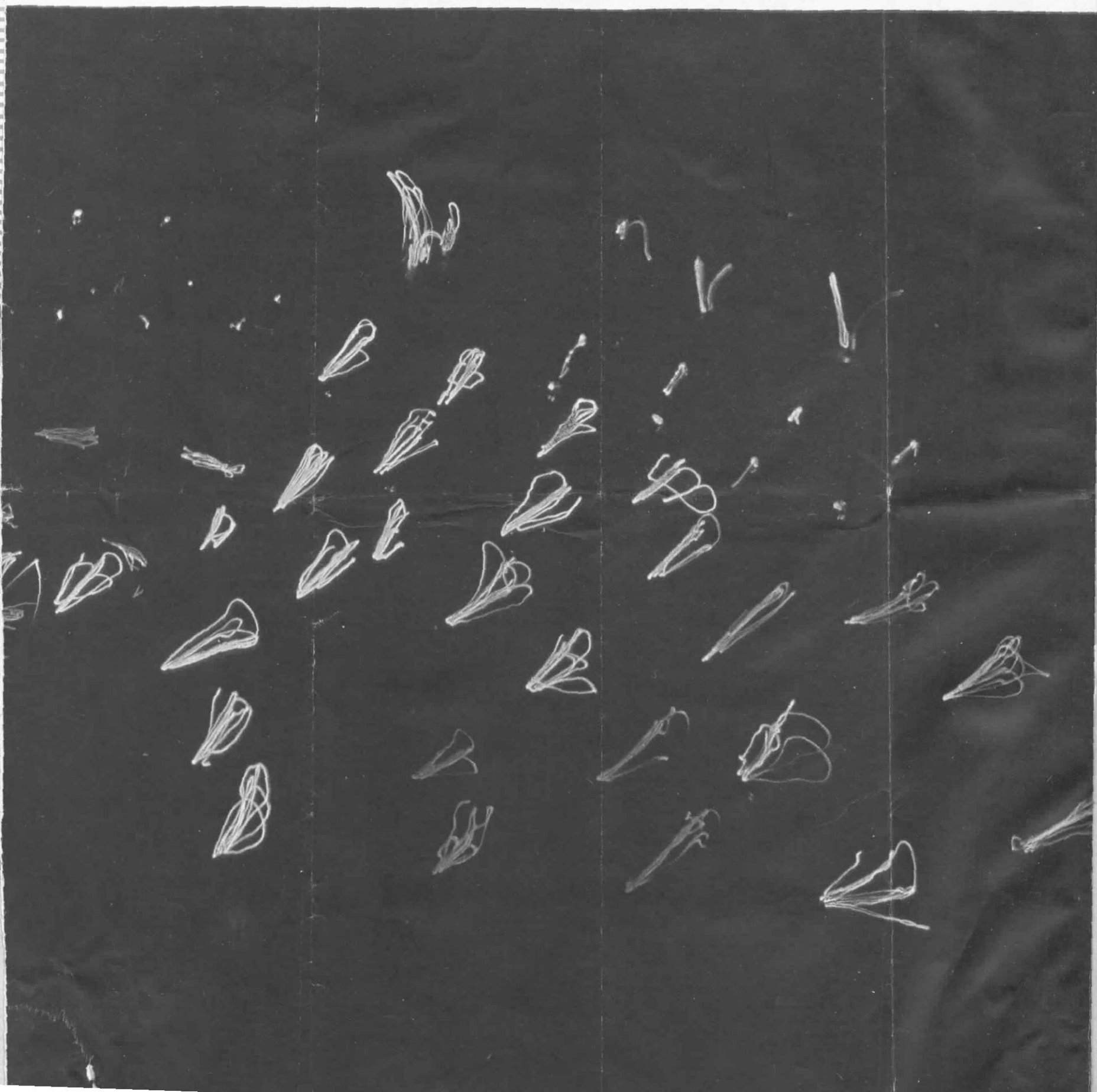
The New York Philharmonic-Symphony





AS MUSIC STARTS, double exposure reveals players and the light on Conductor Mitropoulos' moving baton.

PLAYERS' PATTERNS are seen in dark studio. Golden lights (*left*) are first violins; pink lights above them the basses. Green streaks are cellos, blobs are woodwinds, French horns. Second violins (*right front*) range from light pink to red; violas behind are white. Brass is golden, percussion white and red. The white swirl at center is baton.



Early Verdi Opera Presented For First Time in 27 Years

By Miles Kastendieck

New York
For the first new production of the season the Metropolitan presented Verdi's "Ernani." Not having been heard in 27 years, it came as a novelty to the majority of the audience. The first-night reception was reserved, in part because the performance did not jell, but there was strong interest.

Historically "Ernani" figures prominently in the Verdi story because it brought him fame outside Italy. His gift for melody undoubtedly attracted attention to the work, for the opera is continuously melodic. Its arias, however, strike few responsive chords in the listener, while the sound conventional to ears long conditioned by Verdi's greater operas. It is conceivable that presented more dynamically the opera as a whole might sound less historical. With "Rigoletto" and "Il Trovatore" as logical successors, "Ernani" appears to be first in line rather than to have equal status.

The production is handsome. Pictorial merits alone may compensate for the apparent thinness of the early Verdi. The sets and costumes of Esteban Francés have an air of sumptuousness, and the stage direction of Dino Yannopoulos exploits every possibility for pageantry. Thus the element of spectacle becomes an important aspect of the total affect of this presentation. A ballet has been added to Act IV to crystallize this motif. Through the choreography of Zachary Solov it adds an important touch of elegance.

Music vs. Melodrama

At the moment the cast made "Ernani" more of a singer's opera than a melodramatic tale of three men and a girl. There is more theater in the work than they enacted. The opera calls for the same kind of dramatic thrust inherent in "Il Trovatore" to make its impossible story seem credible.

As Carlo dominated the story, so Leonard Warren stood out in the performance. This new role accentuates his artistry, calling as it does for a portrayal different from his other roles. He sang magnificently. As Ernani, Mario Del Monaco so pressured his singing that he had little room for more than ringing notes powerfully produced. His stage acting was even less subtle than his vocalization. As

From DEC 8 - 1956
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music

Vienna Philharmonic Ret

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

After playing in 26 cities on its first American tour, the Vienna Philharmonic was back in Carnegie Hall last night for a second visit. The tour winds up in Hartford tonight.

Conducting the celebrated orchestra this time was the Belgian-born Andre Cluytens, who has been sharing the touring podium with Carl Schuricht. Mr. Cluytens will be the guest leader of our own Philharmonic for four weeks next season.

Another Debut

For Mr. Cluytens, as for Mr. Schuricht at the earlier concert last month, the occasion was a New York debut. He is a man of high standing in French concert and opera life, and has often conducted the Vienna Philharmonic on home ground and on European tours.

Sound Disciplinarian

Like Mr. Schuricht before him, Mr. Cluytens struck me as a sound disciplinarian with very definite and precise ideas as to how to go about conducting a tone poem by Richard Strauss and symphonies by Haydn and Brahms.

Everything was thoroughly planned out, consistent in itself as regards tempo, phrasing, and balance, and always clear. What seemed lacking much of the time was the pulsing fervor and warmth to give each of the readings individual conviction.

I found Strauss's "Death and Transfiguration" lucid and definite in pattern, yet lacking in the emotional surge and drama with which Dimitri Mitropoulos infused the music at the three memorial perform-

From DEC 1 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

'Butterfly' Presented at Met; Licia Albanese in Title Role

"Madama Butterfly," the trusting child-bride of Nagasaki, played out her pathetic story once again at the Metropolitan Opera House on Saturday night. Having been absent from Broadway for a season, she returned this time in the familiar and searching portrayal of Licia Albanese, surrounded by a number of new friends and deceivers.

Leading the latter group was Daniele Barioni, who, as Pinkerton, pursued his infamy in a manner that should have made the hapless girl wary from the start. Perhaps she was dazzled by his handsomeness as an American Naval officer, or maybe she was overly swayed by his robust tenor voice.

One of the high lights was the solo dancing of Melissa Hayden, whose sparkling personality aptly suited her leading role in the ballet. This was generally well danced, although it encountered some difficulty with Mr. Mitropoulos's accelerated tempos.

Vibrant Tosca

Though Maria Meneghini Calas may consider "Norma" her favorite role, "Tosca" showed her off to much better advantage. In a performance packed with drama she became one of the most vibrant Toscas in the history of the opera at the Metropolitan.

Her singing is a means to dramatic ends. Her primary concern vocally is to convey all the side-lights of emotional tension inherent in the situation through phrasing meticulously colored. This flexibility highlights the character remarkably. She makes a striking Tosca and portrays her vividly. Her "Visi d'arte" became a piece of dramatic acting instead of a famous aria.

George London distinguished himself as Scarpia, Giuseppe Campora sang Cavaradossi more lustily than dramatically. Mr. Mitropoulos excelled in the pit though he tends to allow the orchestra to play too loudly.

When Antonietta Stella and Carlo Bergonzi sang together again in Verdi's "Il Trovatore," they created as much excitement as they did in "Aida." Miss Stella fulfilled the expectations aroused at her debut, giving promise of big things in the future. Mr. Bergonzi promises as much in his own way when he returns next year after only a brief visit this season.

From DEC 1 1956
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

ENSEMBLE HEARD IN CHAMBER MUSIC

Group Offers First of Three
Concerts—Hambro Steps
in as Piano Soloist

The New York Chamber Ensemble, which specializes in music for out-of-the-way instrumental combinations, gave the first of three concerts last night at the Ninety-second Street Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association.

Leonid Hambro replaced Pietro Scarpini, the scheduled piano soloist, who was ill. Mr. Hambro took part in Hindemith's "Kammermusik," Op. 24, No. 1, with Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting, and in Milhaud's Suite for Violin, Clarinet and Piano.

Although it was a replacement on the program, the Milhaud was given in a performance of rare ensemble virtuosity. It is a brilliantly witty piece to start with. Mr. Hambro, Leon Temerson, the violinist, and Stanley Drucker, the clarinetist, seemed to understand one another so well that each phrase had perfect spontaneity as well as precision and polish. It was a happy model of chamber playing and a delight to the audience.

A somewhat more obvious piece of musical tomfoolery was the Francis Poulenc Sonata for trumpet, horn and trombone. It was effective enough that the audience burst into laughter at more than one point.

In Mozart's early Quartet for flute, violin, viola and cello (K. 298), John Wummer did some elegant flute playing. The trio of the Menuetto was an especial triumph.

Beethoven's Duo No. 3 for clarinet and bassoon, and Ravel's Sonata for violin and cello both seemed rather thin music. Hindemith's Kammermusik engaged twelve players under Mr. Mitropoulos' direction.

"Very fast and wild," say Hindemith's indications for the first movement. An electric current of excitement seemed to run through the group as they began this, the final work of the evening.

From DEC 2 1 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Dorothy Kirsten Sings Role Of Heroine in 'Butterfly'

Last night's repetition of Puccini's "Madama Butterfly" at the Metropolitan Opera House brought the first opportunity in two seasons to hear Dorothy Kirsten as the ill-fated Cio-Cio-San, while Margaret Roggero sang Suzuki for the first time in the current operatic year. Miss Kirsten's understanding of her role, in its personality as well as in its music, was evident in the expressive range and vividness of her performance; her singing communicated every aspect of Butterfly's emotions in its sensitive use of her generous span of vocal and dynamic shading.

Apart from an occasional slight edge in the uppermost notes in the first act, the tone quality was pervasively appealing; "Un bel di" was presented in an appropriate atmosphere of reverie. Miss Roggero was a sympathetic and solicitous attendant, singing with warmth while not invariably with clarity. Daniele Barioni's Pinkerton was vocally pleasing; John Brownlee's Sharpless was marked by musically singing and expressive persuasion. Madeline Chambers, Alessio De Paolis, George Cehanovsky, Osie Hawkins and Calvin Marsh completed the cast. The orchestra played evocatively under Dimitri Mitropoulos' direction, realizing nuances of volume and color.

The applause was deserved, but ill-timed at two points; it deprived listeners of much of the orchestral close of the first act and drowned out the music after Sharpless' departure. F. D. P.

From DEC 2 8 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Season's First 'Carmen' Sung At the Met

Bizet's "Carmen" had its first performance of the season at the Metropolitan Opera House last night with singers, including Rise Stevens in the title role, who had been heard in their various assignments in previous years. Dimitri Mitropoulos, however, had not conducted "Carmen" before in this theater. The musical interpretation under his direction was well balanced; the orchestra played lucidly and fine points of dynamic and expressively shading were commendably revealed. But at times there seemed to be a need for more momentum in a presentation which was very reputable, but did not quite succeed in giving a sense of freshness to hearers familiar with the score.

Miss Stevens' Carmen has a definite personality; it is individual, authentic and emotionally communicative. With expressive color and considerable warmth, her singing suggested more care and musicianship than before in tone production, but it was still occasionally handicapped by some opacity of timbre and ruffling of the vocal surface. Richard Tucker was in good voice, singing Don José with persuasive and dramatic intensity; a rather unnecessary degree of obvious operatic emotion marked the close of the Flower song. Lucine Amara sang Micaela with clear and appealing, while sometimes slightly hard, tone in the first act, while George London's Escamillo and Norman Scott's Zuniga were vocally effective and well characterized. Heidi Krall, Margaret Roggero, George Cehanovsky and Alessio De Paolis completed the cast.

From DEC 1 1 1956
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Tribute to Cantelli

To the N. Y. Herald Tribune: One of the fitting tributes to Signor Cantelli was the New York Philharmonic concert in Carnegie Hall on Nov. 29, with the performance of Richard Strauss' tone poem "Death and Transfiguration" in Cantelli's memory. Maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted the masterpiece superbly. The orchestra outdid itself and reached a peak in precision and interpretation. The audience was so moved, with the added realization that Cantelli might have stood on the podium at that moment in a scheduled performance, that there were many moist eyes and subdued sobs.

LOUIS CARP, M.D.
New York, Dec. 3, 1956.

N. Y. Chamber Ensemble Conducted by Mitropoulos

The New York Chamber Ensemble gave the first concert in its series of three at the Z. M.-Y. W. H. A. Kaufmann Auditorium last night with a program which ranged from Beethoven and Mozart to present-day music. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted the twelve musicians who played Paul Hindemith's "Kammermusik No. 1" at the close.

This organization, composed mainly of Philharmonic-Symphony musicians, can play virtually any kind of chamber music, and is particularly valuable in giving opportunities to hear works which are not of a standard concert type in their scoring. Yesterday's list was pervasively tuneful, while sprightliness marked Francis Poulenc's brief Sonata for trumpet, horn and trombone, played by John Ware, Joseph Singer and Edward Herman. This vein, with a wider range of color and invention, also appeared in Darius Milhaud's Suite for violin, clarinet and piano, played by Leon Temerson, Stanley Drucker and Leonid Hambro in an admirably balanced and evocative interpretation. The Hindemith work, which had an accordionist, Joseph Biviano, among its performers, began with a festive sonorous bustle.

Beethoven's Duo No. 3 in B flat for clarinet and bassoon, played by Stanley Drucker and Manuel Ziegler, is a pleasant minor work showing indebtedness to earlier masters. John Wummer, Mr. Temerson, David Kates and Heinrich Joachim played Mozart's Quartet for flute, violin, viola and cello, which has a particularly ingratiating melody for its opening movement. The folksy and swift-paced finale was the most memorable section of Ravel's Sonata for violin and cello. The various performers' standard of instrumental tone was high, and the prevailing unity was also notable, especially in view of what must have been limited rehearsal time.

F. D. P.

From DEC 1 9 1956
VARIETY
New York, N. Y.

Licia Albanese as a velvet-voiced, highly satisfying Japanese in the Met's first 'Madama Butterfly' of the season (8) and overall the production was distinguished. For once the conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos, achieved the opera's need, musical accompaniment, and not symphonic interpretation. This time there was no trench warfare.

Daniele Barioni, one of the youngest members of the Met, justifies his presence vocally as the cad naval lieutenant but exposes his inexperience when shifting weight repeatedly just before bracing for high notes. Very black-haired and quite nice-looking in his whites, he was plausibly naval, provided you mean the Italian Navy.

Clifford Harvoot made the U.S. Consular Services seem very attractive with his fine baritone. Land.

From DEC 2 8 1956
NEWS
New York, N. Y.

By DOUGLAS WATT
While Leonard Bernstein was up at Carnegie Hall last night leading Dimitri Mitropoulos' Philharmonic-Symphony and large vocal forces through Handel's "Messiah," Mitropoulos himself was down at the Met conducting his first "Carmen." And a splendid job he did of it, too.

As a matter of fact, this first "Carmen" of the season was exceptionally good all around. While Mitropoulos kept the orchestral score pulsating and yet in its place, a fine cast expressed the vocal music forcefully. In addition to Rise Stevens, who gave her familiar performance in the title role, there were the excellent Richard Tucker as Don José, the beautiful voice of Lucine Amara gracing the part of Micaela and George London's rich baritone delivering Escamillo's music.

From DEC 2 8 1956
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

'CARMEN' IS LED BY MITROPOULOS

He Conducts Opera in First
Performance of Season—
Rise Stevens in Title Role

"Carmen" had its first performance of the season at the Metropolitan Opera last night with a new conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos.

Mr. Mitropoulos' first "Carmen" was an astonishing demonstration of how much a change of conductors can influence even so familiar and well-routinized an opera as this one.

Not all the changes were an improvement. The fanfares, for example, which figure prominently in the overture and first act, and which the Metropolitan players are capable of performing with clockwork accuracy, were slurred over last night. Playing, and singing, too, at other points lacked precision.

Mr. Mitropoulos, however, is not and never has been, so far as one listener's memory goes, a precisionist. His great gift is that of infusing into a performance the spark of musical excitement without which an opera languishes and dies. If "Carmen" last night was not a model of metronomic correctness, it was very good theatre.

Rise Stevens' performance in the title role is familiar. Her Carmen is an assortment of rather staid theatrical effects rather than a characterization. But she is thoroughly at home in the role and performs it with great assurance.

Richard Tucker performed forcefully and to generally good effect as Don José. The ending of the duet with Micaela is spoiled by the fact that Mr. Tucker has not mastered the "messa di voce" from full-voice to half-voice. The undisguised falsetto of the final A natural sounds odd. Elsewhere, Mr. Tucker's performance was highly creditable.

George London made a stylish Escamillo, and sang it very effectively. The role is a difficult one, being too high for a bass and too low for a baritone; but Mr. London was equally ready with the B flat below the staff and the F above it.

Lucine Amara sang prettily as Micaela. Others in the cast were Norman Scott, Clifford Harvoot, Heidi Krall, Margaret Roggero, George Cehanovsky and Alessio de Paolis.

J. B. Toulre, mezzo-soprano.

Death Of Toscanini Is Mourned

NEW YORK, (UP)—The world paid mournful tribute today to the maestro.

Arturo Toscanini died in his sleep yesterday morning at his home, the Villa Pauline, in the Riverdale section of the Bronx.

The world-famed conductor's body will lie in state today until Saturday when a Solemn Requiem Mass will be offered for him at St. Patrick's Cathedral. His remains will be flown to Milan, Italy, for burial.

Heads of state and leaders in the music world expressed their sorrow at the death of the tailor's son who became a symbol of music during a career that spanned more than half a century.

PRESIDENT Eisenhower expressed his regret at the death of the maestro.

The Italian flag was lowered to half staff at the La Scala Opera House in Milan and the orchestra stopped its rehearsal for one minute of silent tribute.

In New York last night Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted the orchestra at the Metropolitan Opera in one of Toscanini's favorite operas. The audience spontaneously rose and stood in silence as the orchestra began the prelude to the fourth act of Verdi's "La Traviata."

From JAN 1 1957
MUSICAL LEADER
CHICAGO ILL

At The Metropolitan By Shirley Cecilie Cash

Verdi's "Ernani" was presented in a brand new production authority. His voice came upon it. First of all, there is the vigorous and exciting conducting of Dimitri Mitropoulos. Then, there are the fine singers cast in the leading roles: Zinka Milanov, Mario del Monaco, Leonard Warren and Cesare Siepi. Credits must also go to Dino Yannopoulos for his fine staging; to Esteban Francés for the beautiful sets and costumes; and to Kurt Adler for his expert work as chorus master. Yes, there is much to be admired here.

From JAN 4 1957
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Tozzi Heard as Don Silva In Verdi's 'Ernani' at Met

The repetition of Verdi's "Ernani" last night at the Metropolitan Opera brought with it the first major changes of cast that have been made since the work's new production was premiered seven weeks ago. Giorgio Tozzi appeared as Don Silva for the first time with the company and Frank Guarrera sang his initial King Charles at the house. The otherwise familiar performers included Zinka Milanov as Leonora, Mario del Monaco as Ernani, James McCracken as Don Riccardo, George Cehanovsky as Jago and Helen Vanni as Giovanna. Dimitri Mitropoulos was again the conductor.

In almost every way, Mr. Tozzi quite proved to be the hit of the show. His basso is deep, unclouded, resonant as a gong and handled to perfection. No barker he, Mr. Tozzi produces tones that are ever rich of color and of a quality whose nap is rich and luxurious. Moreover, he sings an even scale, a fact amply illustrated by his resounding rendition of the "Infelice," and his registers are melted together with nary a hint of a break.

Likely in future Mr. Tozzi's importance to the Metropolitan will increase, or so it should. He is young, a credit to the opera house, and his musical instincts seem wholesome and sound. We will hear more of him; that much is sure.

For his part, Mr. Guarrera was placed in the rather disagreeable position of having to sing a role whose demands are apparently too extreme for his voice. Thus he was reduced to forcing, which, in turn, made him emit tones that were hard, colorless and somewhat thin in substance. In addition, Mr. Guarrera has yet to learn the trick of making a regal character sound regal and imperious through use of the voice alone. His King Charles, in consequence, was only a quasi-noise figure, a man who strutted with pomp but sang with little majesty.

FUND PLANS VISITS BY ISRAELI ARTISTS

A program to bring Israeli artists to this country and to set up scholarships for foreign students was announced by the American Fund for Israel Institutions at its annual dinner concert at the Waldorf-Astoria last night.

Fredric R. Mann, chairman of the board of the organization, presided at last night's event, at which Mayor Wagner was guest of honor. The \$100-a-plate event was attended by a capacity audience of 1,500.

The scholarship plan, as outlined by Samuel Rubin, president of the fund, will make available 100 scholarships of \$2,000 each to Arab, Israeli, Turkish, Greek, Indian and Burmese students.

The musical portion of the program was conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos, who led seventy-two members of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony in Meyerbeer's "Coronation March" and Glazunov's "Overture on Greek Themes."

Soloists were Daniel Barenboim, 14-year-old Israeli pianist, who played the Mendelssohn First Piano Concerto; Robert Merrill, baritone, and Jennie Toulre, mezzo-soprano.

From JAN 1 1 1957
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

'Tosca' Is Sung At Metropolitan

Even at the Metropolitan Opera, where grand opera is ever grand and musical standards are of the highest, it is a memorable event when a repertoire piece such as Puccini's "Tosca" can achieve the level of precision and dramatic excitement it did last night under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos.

Dorothy Kirsten ("Tosca"), Walter Cassel (Scarpia) and Gerhard Pechner (the Sacristan) were all making seasonal first appearances in their roles. They were stunning, every one, as was Giuseppe Campora in his part of Cavaradossi. But the breath-taking volatile production was a great achievement, and praise should include the conductor, the chorus masters, the stage direction, and the "spirit of the evening" as well.

Miss Kirsten, as a matter of fact, gave one of the most musically elevated and visually convincing impersonations of Tosca this reviewer has witnessed in recent times. Her every tone was full, richly provocative, and pure, while her stage deportment, far from being the flaccid flailing about which so often deforms the role of Tosca, was minutely controlled, elegant, and thoroughly believable.

Mr. Cassel, too, approached his characterization with a subtlety of detail quite unusual, making Scarpia into a fascinating and variegated creature of evil. His singing (as was the case with all the principals) was marvelously well matched to Mr. Mitropoulos' dynamic approach to the score and added still another element of vigor to an already vigorous evening.

L. T.

From JAN 8 1957
HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Israel Fund Awards 100 Scholarships

Samuel Rubin, president of the American Fund for Israel Institutions, announced last night that the organization this year will award 100 scholarships worth \$2,000 each to American, Israeli and other Middle East students to pursue studies in the arts.

Those from Israel will study in the United States, Europe or elsewhere, while those from other parts of the world will do their work in Israel.

Mr. Rubin made his announcement at the fund's tenth annual dinner concert at the Waldorf-Astoria at which Mayor Wagner was guest of honor. Artists who appeared included Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting seventy-two members of the New York Philharmonic Symphony; Robert Merrill, baritone, Jennie Toulre, mezzo-soprano and Daniel Barenboim, fourteen-year-old Israeli pianist making his American debut.

Fund Changes Name

Mr. Rubin also announced that in line with the fund's expanding program the organization's name has been changed to the America-Israel Cultural Foundation. The foundation plans to bring to the United States the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and the Inbal Dancers, one of Israel's leading dance troupes.

Mr. Rubin urged the establishment, through the United Nations, of a Middle East Economic and Cultural Development Authority as a step toward helping resolve tensions in that area.

Spyros P. Skouras, president of 20th Century Fox Film Corp., presented a silver Bible to Mayor Wagner.

From JAN 4 1957
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

TWO JOIN 'ERNANI' CAST

Tozzi and Guarrera Sing
Verdi Opera at 'Met'

The Metropolitan Opera's new production of Verdi's "Ernani" was presented last night with two cast changes, both in leading roles. Giorgio Tozzi sang the role of Don Ruy Gomez I Silva and Frank Guarrera was heard as Carlo.

Others in the cast were Zinka Milanov, Mario del Monaco, James McCracken, George Cehanovsky and Helen Vanni. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted.

Mr. Tozzi, in fine voice, made a good impression as Silva. Tall, handsome figure, a good actor, possessed of an extremely flexible, light-sounding bass, he stamped everything he did with his voice and, however, is a little too light for that production.

Mr. Guarrera sounded a bit husky, and his voice was not in perfect focus. Perhaps he tried to force in an attempt to match the stentorian tones of Miss Milanov and Mr. del Monaco. His voice, however, is a little too light for that production.

H. C. S.

Tributes to Toscanini Pour in

Tributes to Arturo Toscanini from leading musicians and government officials are pouring in from all over the world.

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER said: He spoke in the universal language of music, but he also spoke in the language of free men everywhere. The music he created and the hatred of tyranny that was his are part of the legacy of our time.

LEONARD BERNSTEIN, conductor-composer: I have no words to express the enormity of the loss. The world of music will never be the same.

SIR ARTHUR BLISS, British composer: Toscanini's nobility as a man, his humility toward the great classics and his idealistic standards in the performance of fine music secure him a place among the legendary musical figures of all time.

MAYOR WAGNER: He was the world's outstanding conductor, whose music was universal in concept and acceptance.

SIR ADRIAN BOULT, British conductor: Toscanini was supreme as an interpreter not only among conductors but among all musicians.

LOTTE LEHMANN, soprano: One of the greatest artists of all time has gone away.

BOYD NEEL, dean of the Royal Conservatory in Toronto: He was probably the outstanding conductor of all time—a unique man.

JAMES C. PETRILLO, president of the American Federation of Musicians: The death of the great Toscanini deprives the music world of an irreplaceable genius.

DIMITRI MITROPOULOS, musical director of the N. Y. Philharmonic - Symphony: The death of my beloved colleague means to the world the loss of a magnificent interpreter, and a man whose spirit has been an inspiring force for all serious artists.

PIERRE MONTEUX, conductor: The world has lost its greatest conductor.

VIRILIO FERRARI, Mayor Milan: Toscanini was the greatest among conductors of all time.

GEORGES HIRSH, administrator of the Paris Opera: It is a world loss. Toscanini was the greatest orchestral conductor.

LAUKYDZ MELCHIOR, tenor: Anybody who worked with Toscanini has had an enormous amount of development in himself through that association.

EUGENE ORMANDY, conductor, Philadelphia Orchestra: He was a perfectionist who would never accept mediocrity and who inspired everyone.

RUDOLF BING, general manager, Metropolitan Opera: We are deeply moved by the loss of the Maestro who first came to this country with the Metropolitan and who has already gone into history as the outstanding musician of our time.

ROBERT W. SARNOFF, president, National Broadcasting: The Maestro's genius will live on in the hearts of those who knew him and in the hearts of future generations through the recorded works he left us.

HENRI SAUGUET, French composer: One of the highest and most brilliant stars in the musical sky was extinguished today.

BRUNO WALTER, conductor: In him was greatness, and I am sure the memory of his glorious activities in the fields of dramatic and absolute music will live on in the hearts of us all.

DAVID M. KEISER, president, Philharmonic-Symphony: The Philharmonic-Symphony Society's pride in the brilliant years of its association with Arturo Toscanini is now equalled



TOSCANINI

by its sorrow at the death of the man who, perhaps more than any other person in our time, has symbolized the supreme peak in musical perfection.

FREDERIC R. MANN AND SAMUEL RUBIN of the American Fund for Israel Institutions: With the passing of Arturo Toscanini the world loses the greatness of a man who combined supreme artistic talent with the highest degree of humanitarianism. We shall always be indebted to him for his inspiring assistance in the founding of the Israeli Philharmonic.

JOACHIM TIBERTIUS, city councillor for culture in West Berlin: Toscanini was a man before whose temperament and sovereign interpretation we all have to bow our heads.

ILDEBRANDO PIZZETTI, Italian composer: With Toscanini we have lost the musical interpreter whom for 60 years all the world has looked upon as the greatest.

KOSAKU YAMADA, dean of Japanese composers: "I met Toscanini at the homes of violinists Mischa Elman and Efrem Zimbalist during 1918 and 1922 when I visited New York. Toscanini was so near-sighted that he almost held the music sheet to his eyes in reading the score. He had a remarkable memory. He would memorize any score at a single reading. He was a genius.

From JAN 23 1957
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music

Mitropoulos Sparks Met's 'Die Walkuere'

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

If there was any one reason why last night's performance of "Die Walkuere" sounded different from all others of recent decades, that reason was the conductor.

And that gentleman was none other than Dimitri Mitropoulos.

It has been said that the real hero of a Wagnerian opera is the orchestra; it might be said with equal truth that the real hero of last night's performance was the Maestro.

This was his first "Walkuere" at the Metropolitan, and a mighty impressive one it was. The vivid drive and continuity, the sumptuous tone, the combined tensions of inner and outer turmoil made for steady excitement.

With such glowing turbulence in the orchestra, Wagner is irresistible. Even where the action was slow, the monologues endless, the fixed stares a bit tiresome, the music welling up powerfully from strings and brasses was almost hypnotic.

The heroic note was also sounded last night in the singing of Otto Edelmann as Wotan. Here was a new Wotan of force and nobility, a god of commanding presence with commanding voice to match.

It was also a pleasure to greet Margaret Harshaw back into the seasonal fold as Brünnhilde. She is real Wagnerian material in the strength and intensity of her tones.

There was considerable ap-

plause for the two newcomers of the cast, both German, Marianne Schech, the Sieglinde, and Wolfgang Windgassen, the Siegmund. Both were of heroic build and heroic gesture.

They were, however, a bit less heroic of voice. Both possess pleasant, well-schooled voices of lyric texture. Mr. Windgassen's having the edge in quality. But one missed the large Wagnerian utterance.

Kurt Boehme returned after a season's absence to apply his booming tones to the Gruff Villain of Hunding, and Blanche Thebom was a striking vision of grace as Fricka. The staging showed the imaginative hand of Herbert Graf. Last night's "Walkuere" was the second performance in the current evening "Ring Cycle." The size and behavior of the crowd spoke well for both Wagner and his mammoth myth.

N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE: During the years before and during World War II, Toscanini became a living symbol of a free Italy, for he despised Mussolini and turned his back upon his native land until it had rid itself of Fascism. Similarly he went to Palestine to lend his unique prestige to an orchestra composed of Jewish refugees from Hitler's.

N. Y. TIMES (editorial): Arturo Toscanini was like a flaming sun which shed a vivifying light on music. His death does not mean that this sun has sunk forever. It irradiates all the performances imprisoned on disks and tape, reminding us of the purity and consecration of his musical faith.

WORLD-TELEGRAM (editorial): "Unlike many an eager musical genius, maestro Toscanini lived out a full, productive life and knew world-wide recognition and acclaim in his time. In parting, one reveres Toscanini as a man as well as a musician. One remembers with admiration his defiance of Mussolini and Hitler, his refusal to sacrifice his integrity to anyone."

HERALD TRIBUNE: There were two major debuts — Marianne Schech as Sieglinde and Wolfgang Windgassen as Siegmund. Both singers are from Germany, and both have the experience and routine of the roles.

The soprano is the more finished artist. Her voice is well-placed, has brightness and is under careful control except for several instances of singing sharp. She phrased with intelligence and made a touching figure of Sieglinde.

HERALD TRIBUNE: Herr Windgassen, a tall figure of a man, who looked the part of a Wagnerian hero, proved to be more welcome than the average run of Heldentenor. His voice has grown in size since this writer heard him at Bayreuth more than five years ago, but it has lost something in color. In the upper half of the register it has lyrical quality; below it is shaky and variable. It may be that he was forcing a bit, as is the wont of singers new to the huge dimensions of the Metropolitan. He should be told that it is not necessary to push to be heard. One suspects that he will improve; even as he is, he should be helpful to the Met.

Margaret Harshaw was luminous Brünnhilde, singing with temperament, beauty of tone and enkindling warmth. Otto Edelmann, who has no done Wotan here before, was, however, a bit less than the role.

There were two debutantes among the Valkyries—Gloria Lind and Carlotta Ordassy—but they will have to wait for an appraisal until they have roles that give them an opportunity to be on their own. It should be said, however, that they helped to form an exceptional group of Valkyries. The eight singers the Met assembled for these parts were of a quality rarely matched in any theatre, even Bayreuth.

Herbert Graf's staging was straightforward and tasteful. The old Lee Simonson sets have been freshened, and the one for the second act has some grandeur, in the old-fashioned style of doing Wagner.

Don't let them tell you that the music-dramas are exactly the same in the concert hall.

From JAN 23 1957
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

Music: A Powerful 'Die Walkuere'

'Met' Audience Shouts Approval of Opera

DIE WALKUERE, opera in three acts by Wagner; text by the composer; staged by Herbert Graf; sets by Lee Simonson; costumes by Mary Percy Schenk; conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. At the Metropolitan.

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

THERE is nothing wrong with Wagner that a good performance won't cure. "Die Walkuere," back at the Metropolitan after a season's absence, had such performance last night, and its torrential power swept all before it.

It is easy enough to declare that Wagner and the "Ring" have gone down hill in the esteem of today's listeners. But when one finds a full theatre listening raptly through a long evening and then shouting its approval at the end of each act, one is bound to have second thoughts. In certain circles Wagner may seem swollen and old-hat. But give him half a chance and he holds the audience in his grip as though he had woven a hypnotic spell around it.

"Die Walkuere" has been refurbished musically by the Metropolitan, which is presenting it in the course of two complete "Ring" cycles. It has been placed in the hands of Dimitri Mitropoulos, who did a fine job.

His pacing was well-considered, and there was subtlety in the unfolding of the score. Save for several passages where the conductor, in an excess of excitement, let the instrument drown out a singer, the orchestra was encouraged to play with sensitivity. The great curve of the music-drama, moreover, was never neglected.

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Marianne Schech, Wolfgang Windgassen in "Die Walkuere"

They have a special magic in the theatre, as Wagner meant them to have.

From JAN 23 1957
HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

'Die Walkuere' Is Revived At Met After Three Years

By Jay S. Harrison

"DIE WALKUERE"
METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE
Opera in three acts, music by Richard Wagner. The cast: Wotan.....Otto Edelmann
Brünnhilde.....Margaret Harshaw
Siegmund.....Wolfgang Windgassen (debut)
Sieglinde.....Marianne Schech (debut)
Hunding.....Kurt Boehme
Helmwiese.....Carlotta Ordassy (debut)
Grilde.....Gloria Lind (debut)
Rowseise.....Sandra Warfield
Grimmerde.....Martha Lipton
Wailtraute.....Margaret Rogers
Siegfrune.....Rosaling Elias
Schwertleite.....Beien Ampan

Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; staged by Herbert Graf; sets and lighting by Lee Simonson; costumes designed by Mary Percy Schenk.

About Richard Wagner one fact has always been clear—among composers he is a genuine giant. You may not care for his music, even going so far as to dispute the esthetic sovereignty of those personal features known as Wagnerian; and you may find him long-winded, pompous, oratorical and frankly somewhat absurd. But you cannot deny, try as you will, that Wagner is a technical titan whose craft in putting together measure upon measure and lighting them all up with brilliant harmonic and orchestral strokes is virtually without equal.

For this reason alone, "Die Walkuere," which the Metropolitan Opera revived last night after an absence of three years, is an enormously vital work to encounter every now and again. Indeed, on this occasion, it was

the vast vigor and ingenuity of the opera itself that held the ear, for the performance was at its best lukewarm and, during many moments of the first act, downright bad. And the cause of this, alas, can be traced directly to the evening's two debutantes, Marianne Schech and Wolfgang Windgassen, neither of whom, at this initial hearing, lived up to advanced reports.

What is even stranger, however, is that both singers seem more or less to be troubled by the same kind of vocal failings. Both, for example, are noticeably weak in their ability to color their voices, with the consequence that phrases dealing with diametrically opposed sentiments frequently emerged with the same tints and shades. In addition, Miss Schech's soprano rather lacked substance or the kind of ringing core that brings to Wagner's lines their due of majesty and grandeur.

Similarly, Mr. Windgassen's tenor is rather dry and sapless, lacking nothing of the basic metal that a heroic singer should possess. It is possible, of course, that having adjusted to the acoustics of the auditorium, Miss Schech and Mr. Windgassen can alter their present projective capacities to suit the roles they undertake. Let us at any rate hope so. For both artists seem

to be dealing rather tentatively with their assignments, as though they were not quite sure how much or how little sound to produce. What resulted would not have pleased Wagner.

On the other hand, the Bayreuth wizard might have found Otto Edelmann's Wotan much to his liking, as it was sonorous, grave and commanding arch-god that he made. The whole of the second act was sparked by the warmth and richness of his baritone and he literally filled the hall with his chain of depe-dyed tones.

As Brünnhilde, Miss Harshaw was thoroughly first, she, too, sending forth her swooping lines with considerable ease and assurance. Miss Thebom, despite a touch of hoarseness in the lowest register, made her Fricka glow with colors golden. Lastly, Mr. Boehme's Hunding was rather a bright spot in an act where vocal light was shed but rarely.

Dimitri Mitropoulos, who had not conducted "Walkuere" before at the house, seemed as perturbed during the evening's start as did his singers, and the orchestra played without the finish that is its usual way. Things took a happy turn, however, as the night progressed and by the arrival of the second act certain things in the pit where quieting down and looking up. Still, it was no performance to make a Wagnerian swell with pride, even though Wagner himself was very much the star of the show.

he manifests any sense along with the sex instinct. Baritone Otto Edelmann was just the man. Dressed flamboyantly in red and blue, he performed with a vocal mobility which benefited Wotan more than he deserved. He sang throughout with dynamic conviction and outstanding style.

After hearing Margaret Harshaw's wonderful Sieglinde last summer in a concert version of "Die Walkuere" at Tanglewood, we think her voice is better suited to this role than to Brünnhilde. She sang the latter part last night, nonetheless, with a glowing exuberance which was exciting, to say the least. But the lyricism of her quality goes more with a lady in love than with a warlike creature.

Kurt Boehme's Hunding and Blanche Thebom's Fricka were both creditable.

When Mitropoulos is in the pit, there is inevitably a driving electricity which peeps things up, even if the interpretation isn't the most deeply felt or profoundly communicated. Though his conception of the "Walkuere" was sensitive from the standpoint of exalting the melodic aspect of the score, it lacked the direct, dramatic approach which Wagner must have if the full power of the music is to be communicated. There were, however, glowing moments at points of climax.

From JAN 23 1957
NEWS
New York, N. Y.

Fine 'Walkuere' Heard at Met

By DOUGLAS WATT

Wagnerites have certainly been starved. A packed house last night greeted the first Met "Die Walkuere" in a couple of seasons with shouts and prolonged handclapping. Entering after any one of the curtains fell, an unsuspecting visitor might have thought Verdi was being performed.

And it was a stunning performance in most respects. Conducting the second of the "Ring" operas for the first time at the Met, Dimitri Mitropoulos was positively brilliant. The orchestra sang, now exultant and now tender, and without overriding the voices on stage.

In most of the vocal departments, as in the conducting one, it was a new production. Fortunately, the two important roles

of Siegmund and Sieglinde were in the hands of gifted debut performers—Wolfgang Windgassen and Marianne Schech, respectively. The tenor was the more impressive of the two, on the whole, delivering his music with ardor and an extremely attractive tone. But Miss Schech, despite some careless top notes and a hint of weariness here and there, was gratifying to hear also, particularly in her clear and forceful middle voice.

Blanche Thebom was fine as Fricka and both Otto Edelmann and Kurt Boehme were good as Wotan and Hunding, in that order. Margaret Harshaw, the Brünnhilde, wasn't in the best of voice, unfortunately. Her singing was often strident.

From JAN 26 1957
Christian Science Monitor
Boston, Mass.

Performances Offered In Two Cycles

By Miles Kastendieck

Wagner's "Ring of the Niebelungen" has returned to the Metropolitan after an absence of six years. Two cycles are now current: one scattered through subscription evenings, the other a bona fide Saturday matinee series which begins this afternoon. Whether or not absence has made the heart grow fonder, interest in both cycles has created such a demand at the box office that a third evening cycle may be announced.

As a unique experience in the lyric theater and a Metropolitan tradition for many years, the "Ring" comes back without big-name singers. The casting, however, has aroused interest, especially with four important debuts. The obvious enthusiasm displayed at two performances already suggests that Wagner's music is in itself a strong drawing card at the moment.

The performance of "Das Rheingold" was welcome primarily as the prelude to the trilogy. The interval of six years and a relatively "green" cast made it somewhat unlikely that the necessary magic would be there. With due respect to his knowledge of both the score and the tradition, Fritz Stiedry offered no special impetus.

Earnest Endeavor

Though the performance cohered toward the end, it never rose above earnest endeavor. This situation drew attention to the weaker elements in an opera which calls for perfect timing musically to create illusion. Scenically the sets of Lee Simonson remain satisfactory though they need more imaginative lighting.

Without bringing any special distinction to the performance, the cast of 14 sounded good, the Rhine Maidens better than usual. To make the scene under the Rhine more credible, ballet girls swam while the maidens sang. Gerhard Pechner as Alberich, Ramon Vinay as Loge, Kurt Boehme as Fasolt, and Hermann Uhde as Wotan sang dependably. Making his Metropolitan debut, Norman Kelley acquitted himself well as mime. Blanche Thebom, Marquita Moll, and Jean Madeira appeared in the leading feminine roles.

It remained for Dimitri Mitropoulos to bring "The Ring" into focus with his stirring performance of "Die Walkuere." This, too, became progressively better in each act. It was on a high plane right from the start.

An excellent cast became inspired by the surge of music emerging from the pit and gave an especially well-integrated performance. Making their debuts as Siegmund and Sieglinde respectively, Wolfgang Windgassen and Marianne Schech fulfilled the promise of the first act by singing more confidently in the second. Their voices were fresh and warm but not big; their concept of the role intelligent and articulate.

Memorable Singing

Otto Edelmann as Wotan and Margaret Harshaw as Brünnhilde contributed the memorable singing of the occasion. Seldom have the lower notes of Wotan's role or the conflict in his mind been more dramatically expressed, nor his wrath so vehemently enacted. Miss Harshaw has never sung better. The famous passages of her role rang out with stunning effect, and the farewell between Wotan and Brünnhilde became a singularly moving experience.

Kurt Boehme stood out as Hunding. Blanche Thebom and the Valkyrie maidens kept the standard high. There was no doubt that all of them were inspired by Mr. Mitropoulos' direction. An aroused audience applauded fervently, reserving its special ovation for him.

From JAN 25 1957
JOURNAL Beaumont, Tex.

ITALIAN 'OSCAR'

Dimitri Mitropoulos music director of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, has received the Orfeo d'Oro of the Italian city of Mantua, a much-prized "Oscar"

Mitropoulos Ignites 'Walkuere'

By MILES KASTENDIECK

WAGNER'S "DIE WALKUERE" came alive radiantly at the Metropolitan last night. An inspired performance under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos made one realize all over again how magnificent Wagner can be. Caught up in the surge of the music, an aroused audience shouted spontaneously as the first-act curtain fell and applauded rapturously thereafter.

It was a singularly moving performance. It had vitality, atmosphere, and drama. While Mitropoulos undoubtedly spurred on both the singers and the orchestra, it left the impression of a company performance. Everybody was good and everybody gave of his best. There has been greater singing in individual roles but no better integrated performance in a score of years.

In this dynamic interpretation

the orchestra thundered dramatically or spun beautiful lyric lines as Wagner dictated. The transparency of the playing made it possible to hear the lowest notes in the score clearly throughout the evening, a phenomenal achievement at the Met. It was evident that a man of the theatre was in command as conductor, paying homage to a great figure of the lyric theater as composer.

Rudolph Bing must have assembled as fine a quality cast as obtainable these days. Making their debuts as Sieglind and Siegmund respectively, Mari- anne Schech and Wolfgang Windgassen sang with distinction. They blossomed out in the second act after the tumultuous reception they received after

the first. Their voices may not be quite so opulent as some of their predecessors but their interpretation of their roles musically and dramatically proved unusually articulate.

Windgassen, particularly, created a convincing character. Both conveyed the youthfulness of their voices.

Memorable Act

This expressivity in roles could be detected in each singer's performance. Otto Edelmann portrayed a Wotan of tremendous stature, especially in his scenes with Bruennhilde. It is difficult to recall any fuller expression of wrath phrased in more musically fashion than his in the third act. Margaret Hilde, singing pure and true in the most famous passages, she, too, created character. Together they made the third act memorable.

Kurt Boehne gave Hunding primary position through his forceful presence. Blanche Thebom sang Fricka characteristically. The Valkyries sustained the high level of performance. Included in their number were two debutantes—Gloria Lind and Carlotta Ordassy.

The firm hand of Herbert Graf shone through the stage direction and accounted for much of the smoothness of the

performance. Lee Simonson's sets retain their pictorial value. Only the lighting needed correction.

This was a "Walkuere" to remember. May there be many more like it.

CARNEGIE HALL:

Goldmark, Milstein Team Up

By MILES KASTENDIECK

KARL GOLDMARK'S violin concerto and Nathan Milstein's entrancing and brilliant account of it completely captivated the Philharmonic-Symphony audience in Carnegie Hall last night. The world premiere of Jan Meyerowitz's symphony "Midrash Esther," chosen to inaugurate "International Music Fund Week," fell by contrast into secondary consideration.

The "revival" of the concerto is most welcome. Composed some 80 years ago, it sails down the main line of romanticism with unflinching sense of beauty and sincerity of feeling. It would be difficult to imagine its being more handsomely set forth than in the fullness of Milstein's art.

His elegance, his feeling and his virtuosity all served to illuminate the wealth of emotion and of craftsmanship that Goldmark poured into the work. The audience was so delighted that it broke into spontaneous applause after the first movement.

Off on a Spur

Some of its pleasure may have stemmed from only tolerant acceptance of the Meyerowitz. The symphony did not engage the attention or please the ear as did the Goldmark. For all its Biblical inspiration, it ran off on a spur from the main line.

Only when it made a joyful noise unto the Lord in the finale did its craftsmanship convey more than conscientious pursuit of an idea. At other moments the glimmer of communicative material went astray.

In returning to the Philharmonic momentarily, as it were, Dimitri Mitropoulos offered an interesting program. It began with Mozart's seldom-played "Divertimento for Strings, Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, and Four Horns No. 2" K. 131 and closed with Zandonai's symphonic episode from "Giulietta e Romeo."

The former might have been still more persuasive with less highlighting of the strings. The latter in its lush orchestration and its movie connotation fulfilled role of windup piece more successfully for conductor and orchestra than for artistic value. Virtuosity had its innings in the second half of this concert.

The inauguration of International Music Fund Week calls for the performance of contemporary works by 38 leading orchestras throughout the U.S.A., Canada and Europe. The occasion is sponsored by the International Music Council, a non-governmental organization created by UNESCO.

From FEB 1 1957

HERALD TRIBUNE

MUSIC

The Philharmonic

By PAUL HENRY LANG

CARNEGIE HALL

Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; soloist, Nathan Milstein, violinist. The program: Divertimento for Strings, Flute, Oboe, Bassoon and Four Horns, No. 2, K. 131, Mozart (Symphony, "Midrash Esther" (first performance) Jan Meyerowitz Violin Concerto in A minor, Op. 28 Goldmark Symphonic Episode from "Giulietta e Romeo" Zandonai

No one can say that the program presented last night by the Philharmonic under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos was a hackneyed one, or that it lacked in variety: a new symphony, a seldom if ever played divertimento, an equally seldom heard excerpt from an opera, and a once popular but by now somnolent concerto. The trouble is that the variety was fortuitous, and most of the fare was pretty bad.

Mr. Meyerowitz, whose symphony entitled "Midrash Esther" received its baptism, has talent of an imitative kind but with little if any personality. His music is steeped in a fin de siècle mysticism, and although this mysticism is supposed to be Hebraic, it sounds German. All of which goes to show that pure instrumental music simply cannot express such involved things as "rabbinical exegesis of the Book of Esther."

As a matter of fact, what we heard was an exegesis of Strauss and of Central European music of the turn of the century now in the public domain. The last movement, said to be concerned with the "spirit of Purim," sounded like Sadko dancing a quickstep with Schwanda.

Mr. Mitropoulos gave his loyal support to this rather futile music, and since he usually does well with neurotic stuff, the performance was quite good.

Last night he treated Mozart



Jan Meyerowitz, whose Symphony "Midrash Esther," received its first performance last night.

uncommonly well. The delightful divertimento was clearly played, with good tempos, and with a relatively light hand. Why, the conductor even reduced his orchestra—somewhat. The only jarring moments were caused by the horns who went on a sleigh ride.

Karl Goldmark was an Austro-Hungarian composer who enjoyed considerable reputation at the end of the last century. His music not only fitted in very well with the plush grandeur of the Victorian era, but in addition displayed an almost oriental lushness greatly relished by opera and concert goers.

While his violin concerto is not a great masterpiece, it was, with the Mozart divertimento, the only honest music heard last night. The invention is spontaneous and warm, the tone Mendelssohnian and pleasantly romantic, with a little Slavic-Oriental mixture, and the writing remarkably idiomatic.

Mr. Milstein played it admirably; with ample cantilena in the songful parts, and easy virtuosity in the runs. I only regret the occasional sliders he tosses and the pushing on the G string. This magnificent fiddler does not need such tricks, moreover, in such German romantic music the gipsy element is distracting.

Mr. Mitropoulos' accompaniment was accurate, well worked out, and atmospheric in the soft passages, but the tuttis were elephantine. Why us such an enormous orchestra to accompany a solitary fiddler? The contrast is painful. A fifty piece orchestra would have been more than enough.

The Zandonai piece that closed the curious program is hors d'oeuvre left out of the icebox for a couple of days. Who would want to eat that? And who would pick such a dud for performance by a first class orchestra?

New York 38, N. Y.

FEB 1 1957

From

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

Music: A New Symphony

Meyerowitz 'Midrash Esther' in Premiere



Jan Meyerowitz

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

A DIVERTIMENTO by the 16-year-old Mozart and a scintillating performance by Nathan Milstein, the distinguished violinist, helped to redeem a lackluster evening at Carnegie Hall last night.

Dimitri Mitropoulos returned to the podium with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony. It may be that the largely uninspiring program was coincidence rather than his fault. There was a commitment to help inaugurate International Music Fund Week by playing a new work, which turned out to be a disappointment. The decision to have Mr. Milstein play Karl Goldmark's A minor Concerto, an unassuming and agreeable through not stirring work, might have been made weeks ago. But why, or why, tack on noisy trash like Zandonai's symphonic episode from "Giulietta e Romeo"?

The new symphony was by Jan Meyerowitz, German-born composer who has been living in this country for some years. Called "Midrash Esther," it draws such inspiration as it has from the Biblical story and the rabbinical commentary on it. Mr. Meyerowitz has not furnished a literal program, but has indicated what he has in mind by subtitled three of the movements: "Haman," "Esther and Ahasuerus" and "Purim."

Music, of course, has an obstinate way of saying one thing to a listener while a composer meant another. Aside from the brief introduction, which had moments of archaic feeling, Mr. Meyerowitz's work conveyed little of his subject to these willing ears. Haman was tumultuous but neither frightening nor ferocious. The

Esther-Ahasuerus section disclosed an attenuated love. And the "Purim" movement, though it had a touch of eclecticism, was boisterous rather than vibrant or joyous. And if Mr. Meyerowitz's score is to be judged without his touchstones in mind, it remains unrewarding—thickly scored and thoroughly old-fashioned.

The Goldmark concerto is also old-fashioned, but it carries conviction. Its romanticism is a natural expression of the composer. This is a work more familiar to violin students these days than to concert audiences, and one would not want to hear it often. But Mr. Milstein gave it a polish worthy of masterpiece. He played with dash and brilliance, and in the introspective and sentimental slow movement his performance had a largeness of line and dignity of feeling that made it seem deeper than it is.

Mr. Mitropoulos began the evening with Mozart's D major Divertimento (K. 131) and led it in a well-balanced performance. The four horns had some rough going, but on the whole the charming piece was played engagingly. It was minor Mozart, but how welcome in retrospect by the evening's end.

From JAN 26 1957

World-Telegram & Sun

New York, N. Y.

MUSIC

Wagner Is Still the Master

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

HAVING BEEN on the sick list for a while, I missed the opening of the evening "Ring Cycle" last Friday night and only caught up with it in the second lap at Tuesday night's "Die Walkuere."

This may sound like sour grapes, but for me the "Ring" has always begun with "Die Walkuere." Much as I respond to the massive power of Wagner's orchestra in "Das Rheingold," my attention wanders after a while.

Frankly, I wasn't quite sure how I would react to "Die Walkuere" Tuesday night. Like many others, I went through a saturation period with Wagner at the end of which I found myself reverting to the Italians with renewed ardor.

It may be that the little rest Wagner was given at the Met has done him and us a lot of good. It may be that I have been dieting too long on Puccini and Verdi. The fact is I fell victim to Wagner's magic again.

Now that magic, as has been pointed out again and again, lies in the orchestra. There the master speaks in picturesque and fiery accents, creating a kind of mass hypnosis through a wonder-working incantation of color.

I could understand why the crowd that packed the Met on Tuesday responded the way it did. The local Wagnerites have been on starvation rations of late, and they seemed in a mood of frenzied jubilation Tuesday.

They seemed to sense, too, that "Die Walkuere" was being brought back to them with an added something—the fresh, incisive impact of the restless genius of Dimitri Mit-

ropoulos, who was conducting it there for the first time.

Among the many qualities that the maestro applied to the performance were two especially vital to Wagner—a depth and breadth of symphonic vision, and an overpowering sense of drama.

These sustained the pulse of interest even when the elaborate mythical mechanism of the story failed to impress as of old. "Die Walkuere" is one of those "look" operas in which everybody out-stares everybody else. It is the music behind those looks that counts.

There has been a trend in recent years to give whole acts from Wagner's operas as part of orchestral programs. Sometimes entire operas are run off in concert form, spread out over two programs.

This is proof again that symphonic conductors feel a strong pull toward Wagner's scores and grow impatient with the few standard excerpts. There is also a growing public for Wagner in the concert hall.

Still, the place for him is the opera house. There the action is so designed that even when it strains the attention and credulity, the music floods it with enchantment. Gigantic nonsense becomes gigantic drama.

The shrewdly trimmed return of the "Ring" in a double evening and matinee cycle is further indication of Rudolf Bing's astute vigilance. There was no Flagstad this time to glamorize the revival.

Mr. Bing waited for a time when Wagner could do it on his own, plus the company's best resources of available talent. The timing was excellent. It now looks as though obitu-

aries of the "Ring" were only wishful thinking among the anti-Wagnerites.

From JAN 24 1957

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

TWO BOW IN ROLES IN 'TOSCA' AT 'MET'

In the "Tosca" performed at the Metropolitan Opera last night, Martial Singher made his first appearance with the company as Scarpia and Osie Hawkins sang his first Sciarone.

Mr. Singher's Scarpia is an interesting conception. Vocally the role is a strenuous one, and there were occasions when the baritone had not quite the weight of tone it demands: at "Tosca, tu mi fai dimenticare Iddio!" and the bill of particulars against Cavaradossi in Act II. On the other hand, Mr. Singher brought to the role the elegance and suavity that are a part of Scarpia's character, but which are missed by nine out of ten players who essay the part.

Mr. Hawkins sang Sciarone capably. Others in the cast were Delia Rigal, Jan Peerce, Clifford Harvuot, Salvatore Baccaloni, Paul Franke, Calvin Marsh and George Keith. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted.

J. B.

WORDS and MUSIC

By Harriett Johnson

Milstein Excels in Goldmark Music

Nathan Milstein, still looking like a boy, is hardly a stranger to local Philharmonic-Symphony audiences, having appeared as soloist with the ensemble more than 50 times since his debut in 1929. Yet, his playing of the Goldmark Violin Concerto in A Minor last night at Carnegie Hall projected, more than ever, the impetuous fire of youth combined with the spectacular, breathtaking skill allowed only a master of his instrument.

The concerto, written by a Hungarian who loved 19th century Vienna, may be dated in some respects, but its glowing apostrophe to melody and its brilliant writing for the instrument are still good to hear. As Goldmark was a violinist himself and didn't write this piece until he was 48, it represents a mature conception by one who appreciated all of the potential of this miracle of instruments. So, having a miracle man to perform it last night, the work was made to shine better than it might have.

One engrossed listener commented that watching Milstein's bow arm made him dizzy. It went so fast. The violinist's tone was velvet and vibrancy combined, while his virtuosity has never seemed more phenomenal. The audience was thrilled and gave him a deserved ovation.

With Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting, the major work before the intermission was the premiere of the symphony, "Midrash Esther," by Jan Meyerowitz. The work represents an expression of the composer's religious feelings as inspired by rabbinical dissertations on the significance of the biblical story.

"Midrash Esther" has various sections played without pause, and it is obviously written by a man who knows his craft. There is much to respect and admire in the music, and it deserved a more grateful reception than the "boos" with which it was greeted by a few listeners at the work's conclusion. There have been much worse pieces played by the Philharmonic that have been received without such immediate verbal displeasure.

The middle adagio, which evokes the love of Esther and Ahasuerus, was the least expressive. Mitropoulos appeared to overplay the "contrasting capricious elements," however, at the expense of the love themes, and consequently gave an overweighted impression which detracted from the mood.

While the Meyerowitz piece irritated some, this listener was so inclined by the closing bombastic Zandonai Symphonic Episode from "Giulietta e Romeo." Such music would be better heard in a stadium where the sky is above to take the racket and a beverage is at hand to temper the impact.

NEW YORK POST, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1957

VINAY JOINS CAST IN 'DIE WALKUERE'

Sings Role of Siegmund at 'Met' First Time—Acting, Lyric Voice Are Praised

Ramon Vinay sang the role of Siegmund for the first time at the Metropolitan Opera House yesterday afternoon in a lively performance of Wagner's "Die Walkure."

Mr. Vinay's Siegmund was a credible and sympathetic figure instead of the strutting braggart the Volsung hero so often is allowed to be. His acting was alert and sensitive. He contrived to make the first act wrestling

of the sword from the tree a moment of dramatic suspense. In the death announcement scene of the second act his replies to Brunnhilde and his refusal of the joys of Valhalla had a touch of real nobility. With an artist of his ability and with Margaret Harshaw as Brunnhilde, one wished it had been possible for the Metropolitan to present this scene uncut.

Mr. Vinay was in good vocal form. He used his essentially lyric voice with restraint that preserved its attractive quality and gave it good carrying power. Only two or three times during the afternoon, notably in his act one invocation of father "Waelse," did he force his tones, which promptly grew harsh and wandered from pitch.

If Mr. Vinay can restrain these occasional outbursts he should be one of the better Metropolitan

tan Siegmunds. And good Siegmunds are not easy to find.

With the exception of Mariquita Moll, who substituted for Margaret Roggero as one of the Valkyries, the remainder of the cast all had sung their roles here earlier this season. They included Marianne Schech as Sieglinde, Blanche Thebom as Fricka, Otto Edelmann as Wotan and Kurt Boehme as Hunding. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted.

rom FEB 4 1957

HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

New Morton Gould Work Has Carnegie Hall Debut

By Francis D. Perkins

The Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, playing Saturday night in Carnegie Hall under Dimitri Mitropoulos' direction, gave the first performance of Morton Gould's "Jekyll and Hyde Variations" and then accompanied its first cellist, Laszlo Varga, in Schumann's Concerto in A minor. By the end of the program, Mr. Mitropoulos had been conducting for nearly seven hours during a day in which the afternoon's "Die

Walkure" at the Metropolitan had followed a morning rehearsal. Mr. Gould's new work, dedicated to its indefatigable conductor, consists of a theme and thirteen variations and, it is noted, is less concerned with illustrating Stevenson's story than with adapting its idea to musical practice. This is done by ingenious musical means, including contrasts and variants within the variations themselves.

The duality implied in the title also seemed to apply to the work's contrasts of mood and color, its alternation of calm melodic episodes with more pungent and turbulent ones and a quiet epilogue after a forceful, irate climax. Not all the deftly wrought structural features seemed immediately apparent, and the attentive hold of the music was sometimes uneven but it showed notable skill and effectiveness in its array of hues and expressive metamorphoses. Mr. Mitropoulos, who showed no hint of fatigue, and the orchestra gave the novelty and admirably vivid interpretation. Mr. Varga set forth the Schumann concerto, including a cadenza by Diran Alexanian, in a romantic spirit with understanding musicianship, technical expertise and an appealingly lyric, flexible tone. Repetitions of Mozart's Divertimento in D (K. 131) and an episode from Zandonai's "Giulietta e Romeo" completed the program.

rom FEB 12 1957

HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

2 Sing New Roles In Met's 'Carmen'

New to the cast of last night's "Carmen" at the Metropolitan were Ettore Bastianini, who sang his first Escamillo there, and Calvin Marsh, who appeared for the first time this season in the part of Morales. Another change was made in the role of Don Jose—Richard Tucker replaced the previously scheduled Kurt Baum.

In the highly spiced and quite overdone tavern scene Mr. Bastianini proved almost a steady influence. He was in character, of course, and he looked and sang well. But he refused to be overwhelmed by Carmen, though he did make a pass or two at her, and that was all. In other words, he behaved like the proud champion he was embodying.

Rise Stevens' impersonation of the gypsy might profit immeasurably by judicious pruning of the "cute" business she is forever doing. In other respects, her Carmen portrait has come a long way since she first essayed it.

Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted with the accent on color and rhythm and, well, Bizet.

From FEB 10 1957

HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

QUESTION 9: "Is the world today producing any composers of the stature of Bach and Beethoven?" asks Miss Jane Burroughs, of Pullman, Wash.

DIMITRI MITROPOULOS, conductor, New York Philharmonic: The answer to such a question is very simple. Do our newest buildings today resemble the Parthenon in Athens or the famous temple in Luxor? No, because our times don't require that kind of architecture. I think that in our country today we have buildings of which we can be very proud without having to compare them with the Parthenon. Each artist, whether he paints or builds or composes, creates that which his times require.

Similarly, I think the best of our present-day composers are as good as Bach or Beethoven. The difference is that today's music reflects our times.

From FEB 23 1957

BILLBOARD
Cincinnati, Ohio

FEB 23 1957

SAINT-SAENS: DANSE MACABRE; PHAETON; LE ROUET D'OMPHALE; LA JEUNESSE D'HERCULE (1-12)—The Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York, Dimitri Mitropoulos, Cond. Columbia ME 5164. Lovers of "program music" seek out disks like this one. The coupling of the four highly popular shorter works of Saint-Saens under the title of the most popular "Dance Macabre" is sensible and the public should respond. Musically, the performance under Mitropoulos' baton is an appropriately rousing one—full of orchestral pyrotechnics. The sound is excellent.

From FEB 22 1957

TIMES
New York, N. Y.

WORK BY BERLIOZ HEARD AT CONCERT

Mitropoulos, Back With the Philharmonic, Conducts 'Symphonie Fantastique'

Dimitri Mitropoulos returned to the New York Philharmonic-Symphony last night for a new three-week stint at Carnegie Hall. His program included his first New York performance of Berlioz' "Symphonie Fantastique" and Lalo's "Symphonie Espagnole" with Zino Francescatti as the solo violinist.

The Philharmonic's note that Mr. Mitropoulos had never led the "Fantastique" here before made one realize that it was surprising he had not. With its intensely dramatic content, its dark, throbbing romanticism and its moments of almost frenzied excitement, it is the sort of work one would have expected from him far sooner.

Mr. Mitropoulos' performance of it was an absorbing one. Perhaps the prevailing somber colors might have been lightened in some places for greater contrast. But the reading always was thoughtful and controlled and the mood of inward reverie was sustained so that even such movements as "The March to the Scaffold" and the "Witches' Sabbath" were not what they sometimes are, examples of external melodramatics.

The reading seemed doomsday-haunted from the beginning, and that opening, for all its subdued dynamics, had a tension that continued throughout. Because there was so much tonal restraint in the earlier sections, the March and the finale did not have to be pushed over into the realm of sheer noise to achieve the right impact. The large audience applauded the performance with enthusiasm.

Mr. Francescatti, who is in his fourteenth season as a soloist with the Philharmonic, was in excellent form, which meant that he played the familiar Lalo work with that combination of warmth and elegance that is a hallmark of his art. The accompaniment was inclined to be drab, but whenever the violinist was playing one was swept along by the flow of the lyricism, the sweetness of the tone and the musicianship of the finely spun-out phrasing.

The opening selection was planned as "A salute to the people of Buenos Aires." It was a performance of Overture to the Creole "Faust" by the Argentinian composer Alberto Ginastera. It is intended to suggest a gaucho at a performance of Gounod's "Faust." To this listener, though, the five-minute work suggested that the gaucho had spent more time listening to Copland's "El Salon Mexico."

R. E.

Bergen Evening Record
Hackensack, N. J.
FEB 9 - 1957

Five New Guests

Five conductors who have not previously been guest conductors with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra have been engaged to take part in its 1957-58 season. They are Ernest Ansermet, Andre Cluytens, Rafael Kubelik, Fernando Previtale, and Robert Show. Thomas Schippers, who has had brief engagements in two seasons prior to the present one, will return for a two-week period. In addition to Dimitri Mitropoulos and Leonard Bernstein, who will have responsibility for the major portion of the season, Aaron Copland will have one-half of a program as conductor of his own works.

From FEB 15 1957

Benefit Concert Planned By Greek Seminary Choir

A benefit concert will be given in the Hunter College auditorium on March 2 by the choir of the Holy Cross Orthodox Theological Seminary, Brookline, Mass. Under direction of Christos Vrontides, the choir of thirty-five will present a program of Byzantine liturgical and Greek folk music with Alexander Scourby as narrator. An exhibit of Byzantine and contemporary art by young Greek-Americans will also be presented. The committee includes Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Goulondris, Mr. Dimitri Mitropoulos, Miss Helen Nikolaidi, Mayor Wagner, Mr. and Mrs. Spyros Skouras, Mr. Christian Palamas, Greek Ambassador to the United Nations; Mr. Constantine Triantafyllakos, Greek Consul-General in New York; the Rt. Rev. Athenagoras, Bishop of Ella, and Michael, Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Church of North and South America.

From FEB 16 1957

World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

A New Tosca at Met.

Antonietta Stella, the Metropolitan's young new acquisition of the Italian wing, sang her first "Tosca" last night to an obligato of repeated ovations. Also in the cast were Gianni Poggi (Mario) and Walter Cassel (Scarpia). Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted.

Extremely easy to look at, Miss Stella, who sports a fresh, young voice of appealing quality, was just as easy to listen to. The acting was restless and impetuous, leaving nothing in doubt and little to the imagination.

Mr. Cassel was forceful as Scarpia, and so was Mr. Poggi as Mario, particularly in the roof-raising cry of "Vittoria!" The portly little fellow certainly put his heart into it.

From FEB 24 1957

HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.



CONDUCTOR-COMPOSER CONFERENCE—Dimitri Mitropoulos, right, looks over the score of Gail Kubik's Third Symphony, which will receive its world premiere at the Philharmonic-Symphony concert on Thursday night in Carnegie Hall.

From FEB 22 1957

HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Mitropoulos on Podium At Philharmonic Concert

By Francis D. Perkins

Dimitri Mitropoulos returned to the Carnegie Hall podium in last night's concert of the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, and devoted all but nine minutes of his program to works by French composers: Lalo's "Symphonie Espagnole" with Zino Francescatti as the solo violinist, and Berlioz' "Symphonie Fantastique." A little French music was also heard, intentionally, in Alberto Ginastera's Overture to the Creole "Faust," performed as a salute to the people of Buenos Aires and recorded for broadcasting in the Argentine capital.

Mr. Ginastera's overture, which won an Argentine prize fourteen years ago, is based on a poem that tells of a gaucho who goes to a performance of Gounod's best known opera in Buenos Aires—presumably at the Teatro Colon. Of the expected citations from "Faust," only two seemed readily apparent, a four-note figure from the first scene, which is deftly employed in a contrapuntal episode, and the opening chorus from the Fair scene, invested with non-Gounod harmonies.

One or two stately, broadly

melodic sections might reflect the rural visitor's impressions of his surroundings; the closing more indigenous music might be taken to imply a visit to a dance hall after the opera. The overture is effective in its way, especially in its scoring, but its admirable performance could not disguise a too episodic character.

Mr. Francescatti's interpretation in the Lalo work had expected merits, including technical mastery and fluency and a tone which, apart from a few less lucid measures in the first of the four movements played, was noteworthy for clarity, flexibility and lyricism. With musicianship, there was also momentum, but the differentiation of mood had its limits; the atmosphere implied in the title was not fully disclosed. The orchestral co-ordination had color and was well co-ordinated, but the performance as a whole did not banish realization of the familiarity of the music.

The Fantastic Symphony is also familiar, but it made a fresher impression. Mr. Mitropoulos had not conducted it in New York before this, but one could expect an evocative interpretation from him in a work particularly well suited to his talents, and this expectation was fully realized.

The orchestral playing was vivid in range of color and sonority, revealing the emotional and dramatic resources of music which was exceptional in its time, and still is. It was the interpretation of a conductor with evident devotion to this symphony, and a persuasively communicated understanding.

From FEB 20 1957

VARIETY
New York, N. Y.

Top Longhairs in Mills' 'Concerts on Film' Dates

Irving Mills' longhair film library, presented as "Concerts on Film," will get a Carnegie Hall, N. Y., showcase March 31. Impresario Harry D. Squires is presenting the filmed layout which will binstein, Jascha Heifetz, Jan Peerce, Nadine Conner, and Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting the N. Y. Philharmonic with Deems Taylor as narrator. House top for the filmed concert will be \$2.75. Squires is planning to tour the filmed concert packages into colleges and other cities.

Mills, as head of the Mills Picture Corp., is distributing the films in 16m and 35m gauges. The library, including performances of some 20 top longhair musicians, was acquired from various major studios.

From FEB 25 1957

TIMES

Jekyll and Hyde Variations, by Morton Gould, premiered by the New York Philharmonic. The piece, consisting of a theme and 13 variations, wittily—if obviously—evokes the opposing moods of the Stevenson story with calm, melodic passages alternating with turbulent climaxes. In an epilogue of glib, quiet harmonies, Gould mirrors the release through death of Stevenson's tortured hero.

An 18-minute, four-part symphonic jazz suite by veteran jazzman Lionel Hampton, 41, entitled King David and premiered under Dimitri Mitropoulos in Manhattan's Town Hall. Inspired and flavored by Hampton's recent tours of Israel ("I visited King David's tomb, and a chant just came to me"), the music tells in a plaintive harp opening of the Old Testament tribulations of the Jews, "blows down the Walling Wall" in a mighty, jumping blast of brass, moves through a lively vibraphone dance to a deafening, full-orchestra crescendo of triumph.

From FEB 25 1957

TIMES
New York, N. Y.

FANTASY BY MANN HAS ITS PREMIERE

NewWorkbyHeadofJuilliard String Quartet Played by Philharmonic-Symphony

Robert Mann, the talented leader of the Juilliard String Quartet, blossomed out as a composer Saturday night when Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic-Symphony played the premiere of his Fantasy for Orchestra. The work, about fifteen minutes long and in one movement, was performed in memory of Mrs. Alma Morgenstern. Mrs. Morgenstern, who died in 1953, was a friend and sponsor of modern composers.

Although it does not sound like a strict twelve-tone composition, the Fantasy certainly flirts with twelve-tone procedures. It is quite dissonant and its melodic line features wide-spaced skips. No pronounced melodic powers seemed in evidence. There were, as there generally is in contemporary American music, plenty of rhythmic devices and a good knowledge of orchestral resources.

What with its busy qualities and its moody feeling, the Fantasy was in effect an elaborate mood piece with, possibly, a hidden program. One could easily imagine it as the background music of a very expensive grade A film (Hollywood composers go in for plenty of dissonance, too). The emphasis was more on technique than anything very personal to say, Mr. Mann was present and was cordially received.

Mr. Mitropoulos opened the program with Schubert's Fifth symphony. It received possibly the fastest workout on record, and sounded even faster because Mr. Mitropoulos omitted nearly all of the repeats. The soloist of the evening was Jean Casadesus in Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto. The young pianist played conscientiously and clearly, though without much imagination.

H. C. S.

From FEB 25 1957

World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Novelties Offered By Mitropoulos

Having missed Dimitri Mitropoulos' return to the Philharmonic podium Thursday night, I caught portions of both weekend concerts, including two novelties and Jean Casadesus' playing of Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto.

Saturday night's premiere was a "Fantasy for Orchestra" by young Robert Mann, first violinist of the Juilliard String Quartet. This was advanced music of bold style and fierce tension, a little long but strong and assured—and different.

Yesterday afternoon I heard Alberto Ginastera's ingenious "Overture to a Creole Faust," confirming earlier impressions of the fresh and probing gifts of this Argentine composer. The premiere was a sort of Hemispheric salute.

Mr. Casadesus gave an appealing, if not too profound, account of the Beethoven classic. Mr. Mitropoulos was his masterly self in ranging from composer to composer and bringing out the best of each—and of the orchestra.

L. B.

San Diego, Calif.
Tribune

FEB 4 1957

CURTAIN CALL

- 'Valkyrie' Reception Mixed
- Rose Bampton Surprises
- Versatility Tested at Met

By BRUNO USSHER

WEEKEND RADIO RICHES: Radio fans bending an ear eastward had ample reasons for gratification and disappointment in the course of three events. Saturday's "Valkyrie" from the Metropolitan Opera was a mixture of very good and annoyingly poor singing.



USSHUR

One of the most pleasant surprises during that broadcast was Rose Bampton's unheralded singing of short episodes from the Wagnerian music-drama during the Goldovsky intermission program. The soprano not only sounded lovely, but there was keen interpretive intelligence in her "solos." One should like to hear her again in recital. Sunday brought an oddly mixed program from the New York Philharmonic under the busy baton of Dimitri Mitropoulos, who had led also, a similar evening concert (non-radio) and the aforementioned "Met" afternoon Wagner presentation.

This program proved a test of versatility for maestro and players. It began with the rarely heard "Divertimento" No. 2 in D-major (K-131) by a 16-year-old, but wonderfully ripe Mozart knowing his technique and feelings. It might be called elaborate chamber music as it calls for solo flute, oboe, bassoon, four French horns, and strings. This serene and smiling work was exquisitely played.

Next came a radio premiere of Morton Gould's "Jekyll and Hyde" variations. Here is a dextrous, deliberate exercise in changing theme, rhythm, harmony and instrumentation without conveying emotional drama. The composer himself warns the listener against seeking any thought-association with the Stevenson novel in the 13 variations.

It is busy, but sterile tonal schizophrenia, except for keeping an orchestra very much occupied. If one can judge by radio applause then it seemed that the Carnegie Hall audience also was baffled, relieved, and respectful when Gould's modern dualism resolved itself in the welcome unison of silence.

Nathan Milstein's solo in the Carl Goldmark Violin Concerto found this virtuoso at his best in this melodic showpiece. But would not Respighi's "Concerto Gregoriano" or the Dohnanyi Concerto have given the concert, as a whole, more substance than this rather shallow Goldmark opus?

Saturday's broadcast of "Valkyrie" cannot be judged fully, because much of its music-dramatic impact depends on visual theater. It struck me often as lacking in heroic stature. Margaret Harshaw, in the title role, is a thoughtful rather than an exciting favorite daughter of a god. She sang well enough as a whole. Otto Edelmann's Wotan had general style, but he labors vocally, his voice often vague, gay and unresonant. This part demands mighty resilience of delivery.

Blanche Thebom was a properly indignant Fricka, protectress of marriage, but tremulous singing robs the part of majesty. Almost consistently fine singing came from Ramon Vinay's Siegmund, but it did not suggest ecstasy. He gave conviction to the episodes in the second act. Marianne Schech's Sieglinde was often lovely and evocative.

Kurt Boehme's Hunding was one of the best in that sinister role heard in many a season. It is a short but significant role and had the right articulation this time. As for the eight lesser Valkyries, they had good moments, but more often they squealed with little regard for diction.

Wagner's "Valkyrie" demands much orchestrally and director Mitropoulos gave a clear-textured and frequently emphatic reading. The ensemble sound however, was rarely rich and seldom suggested that grandiose atmosphere so typical of eloquent Wagner.

rom FEB 4 1957

TIMES

PHILHARMONIC PLAYS NEW WORK BY GOULD

Morton Gould's "Jekyll and Hyde" variations for Orchestra received its world premiere by Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic-Symphony on Saturday evening in Carnegie Hall.

The work is a theme and thirteen variations lasting about twenty minutes. It presents a somewhat more modern Gould than we have been hearing of late; at least, some of the harmonies were decidedly on the acerbic side. As usual, the orchestration was done to a fare-thee-well. There is little Mr. Gould does not know about instruments and their potentialities. In all probability there is no

specific program to the work; the title probably is intended to cover the duality of the thematic material. But the material itself is scarcely memorable; and not all the stunning orchestration in the world could hide the essential banality of the music. The composer was present and took several bows.

Laszlo Varga, the first cellist of the orchestra, appeared as soloist in the Schumann "Cello Concerto. He gave a competent performance, stressing the lyrical side of the music. The program also contained Mozart's Divertimento in D and the symphonic episode from Zandonai's "Giulietta e Romeo," both of which had been played earlier in the week. This listener stuck around to see if the Zandonai was as bad as everybody said it was.

H. C. S.

From FEB 13 1957

TIMES PICAYUNE
New Orleans, La.

Today's Music

New Orleans.

Editor, The Times-Picayune:

I read with great interest Sir Thomas Beecham's remark to the effect that "Music all over the world has degenerated. It was once a thing of beauty and delight. Now it is a public nuisance. Very little of lasting value is being accomplished now. Everybody, of course, knows that, but nobody will say so openly."

That remark stands out in sharp contrast to another by Dimitri Mitropoulos, who, when asked whether the world of today is producing any composers of the stature of Bach and Beethoven, is quoted as replying: "The answer to such a question is very simple. I think the best of our present-day composers are as good as Bach or Beethoven."

Mr. Mitropoulos attributes whatever differences there may be to the times in which we live. Perhaps the difference may be attributed to these two distinguished judges. This reader, whose opinion is worth absolutely nothing, will go along with Sir Thomas.

GEORGE W. MORTON.

Music

Tebaldi Captivates In Role of Tosca

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Another variation on the theme of Tebaldi—this time "Tosca"—produced a packed house and a vociferous one at the Metropolitan last night.

Granted the extraordinary appeal of Mme. Tebaldi, her ravishing voice and consummate artistry, I for one would have preferred a little restraint on the part of the torrid Tebaldians last night.

Heroine-worship is one thing, but adulation of last night's kind is a nuisance, particularly when the conductor has to turn around and quiet the crowd in the middle of a musical phrase.

The demonstration after "Vissi d'Arte"—the most beautiful rendering I have yet heard—was understandable up to a point; beyond that it became an imposition on Puccini. Maestro Mitropoulos and Mme. Tebaldi herself.

Then Again . . .

Having expressed this rebuke, I must confess there were times when I was strongly tempted to join the demonstrators. The vocal power and, let's admit it, theatrical and vocal shrewdness of the woman were irresistible.

This was a Tosca who commanded attention and respect from the first. She was regal in appearance, regal in raiment and regal to hear. If she took a slow tempo now and then, that is an indulgence we can afford to grant her.

I thought the somewhat slenderized Jussi Bjoerling vastly smoother in tone last night

than he has been in past seasons. He made of the tortured Cavaradossi quite a convincing study in rugged courage and endurance in the second act.

The Scarpia of Leonard Warren was again a powerful blend of towering rage and polished malignancy, expressed through carefully gauged dynamics of voice and gesture.

The rotund Salvatore Baccaloni was a portly penguin of a Sacristan, relished alike for his waddling gait and savory humor of diction. Alessio De Paolis was superb as Spoletta the Spy.

Conductor Cheered.

The real backbone of last night's performance was again the incisive conducting of Dimitri Mitropoulos. The score hummed with drama and life and that ominous sense of impending horror so strong a keynote of Puccini's genius.

Besides rating high eulogy for his share of the performance, Mr. Mitropoulos deserves a citation for gallantry in the face of last night's stormy and prolonged interruptions.

MIRROR
New York, N. Y.

FEB 2 8 1957

'Tosca' Heard With 1st Team

By DOUGLAS WATT

Since neither of last night's three principals—Renata Tebaldi, Jussi Bjoerling and Leonard Warren—is any great shakes as an actor, this Met showing of "Tosca" cannot be set down as a very rewarding dramatic experience. But since all three possess uncommon voices and since Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted a characteristically fiery performance in the pit, the evening had its musical rewards.

It is always a pleasure to hear Miss Tebaldi and despite the fact that she moves about the stage like a float she makes a striking appearance. There were even moments, all in the second act, when her plight seemed real. At any rate, no Scarpia would have a chance with this Tosca, even in hand-to-hand combat, so the murder scene followed the odds nicely. Miss Tebaldi did a bit of yelling here and there, but her singing was impressive and her "Vissi d'arte" was beautifully expressed.

Jussi Returns

This was Miss Tebaldi's first Tosca this year and the occasion marked Bjoerling's first appearance of the season. Singing Cavaradossi, his tenor sounded at its best—true, forceful and exciting. Still, it is not a very large voice

and it was drowned out frequently by Miss Tebaldi and the orchestra.

Warren did his usual artistic job, vocally. And with his large head, short neck, barrel torso and slender legs, he made quite a sinister-looking Scarpia. But his mannered acting robbed the part of any real urgency.

Salvatore Baccaloni contributed his familiar portrait, rich in comic detail, of the sacristan and Alessio De Paolis went through his paces as Scarpia's slimy stooge, Spoletta, for perhaps the 1,000th time. Clifford Harvuot was a fervent Angelotti.

If Mitropoulos overpowered him a bit in the "Te Deum," his performance on the whole was vocally and histrionically distinguished. Baccaloni, as the Sacristan, and Alessio De Paolis, as the twisted Spoletta, were other standouts.

BUT IT WAS the magnetic Tebaldi in the title role who dominated the event. Here was acting and singing in the grand manner. Her voice often sent shivers up and down the spine, and her miming was cut from the bolt of hypnotic theatre. When she came to that great test for sopranos, "Vissi d'arte," she took it as though communing with herself rather than as an essay in vocal pyrotechnics. It was tremendously moving, and many in the audience were wiping tears from their eyes. However, when dramatic and vibrant singing was demanded, Mme. Tebaldi met her challenge in stride. Never did the Mitropoulos baton muffle her voice. Let's face it, Italy's Renata can create an evocative mood or make the sparks fly. Faults and limitations she has, but she is magnificent.

We thought Dino Yannopoulos remarkably successful in blending the artistic talents at his disposal into an exciting, suspenseful "Tosca." His groupings within the handsome Frederick Fox settings were excellent.

ACCORDING to the late Lionel Barrymore, Victorien Sardou based the play from which Giacosa and Illica fashioned the libretto, on a script which his father, Maurice, penned for Helena Modjeska. Le grand Maurice sent a copy to the one and only Sarah Bernhardt, who passed it along to Sardou, and that master craftsman used the material sans fee or credit.

When Barrymore chided the divine Sarah for her perfidy, during one of her American tours, she haughtily observed that it didn't matter if a great playwright used a lesser one as a stepping stone to triumph. Authors and composers had been guilty of such practices in the past, and would be in the future.

Perhaps Mme. Bernhardt was right. For out of a Barrymore idea, via the ministrations of Sardou, Giacosa, Illica and Puccini, came an operatic gem: "Tosca," an incomparable work of its kind.

At the Metropolitan

By Shirley Cecille Cash

Leonard Warren gave a moving performance in the title role of "Rigoletto," on Dec. 26. This difficult role requires a fine voice and real dramatic conviction. Mr. Warren fulfilled the requirements nobly. Performing as Gilda for the first time this season, Hilde Gueden impressed us with the sweetness and purity of her voice and her reliability. As the Duke, Jan Peerce performed with fine artistry. Fausto Cleve conducted capably.

On Jan. 16, "Madama Butterfly" was a dramatic triumph, thanks to Dimitri Mitropoulos in the pit and Dorothy Kirsten in the title role. The dynamic conductor kept the color-rich score moving at a brisk clip. Mme. Kirsten created a sensitive

FEBRUARY, 1957

"Carmen," Dec. 27, E—The first "Carmen" of the season brought to the podium Dimitri Mitropoulos as conductor, and on stage a familiar cast headed by Rise Stevens in the title role with Richard Tucker as the deluded lover. George London was, we believe, singing his first Escamillo in some time and a very gorgeous dynamic figure he made. The traditional tale attached to this opera informs us that the score was not well received until an alert conductor doubled the speed of the Overture and imparted a brilliance that has never been lost. So, when eminent and erudite Mr. Mitropoulos indicated a reading emotionally warm but somewhat lacking in the precision and fast beat of former directors, he gained atmospherically but dimmed the sparkle.

Rise Stevens is one of the best of the current Carmens. She never vulgarizes her role but is always the alluring, unpredictable gypsy girl. She used her notable voice on this occasion with significant color and one felt that the "gear shifts" in scale were mainly for reasons of characterization. Tucker's beautiful tenor voice was telling and had at times a soaring, luminous quality. Like most of the dramatics, he hesitates to utilize his pianissimos. London made a plausible Escamillo and he sang with glowing tone and musicianly impact. Lucine Amara, the Michaela, made the most of a somewhat pallid assignment. The tessitura of the first act duet did not lie well for her, but the star aria was well sung and, as usual, stopped the show. Norman Scott was a commendable Zuniga, and the supporting roles were capably handled by Heidi Krall, Margaret Roggero, George Cehanovsky, and Alessio De Paolis. All in all, a good show. M.C.

MUSICAL COURIER

FEBRUARY, 1957

New York

Editor and Critic: SHIRLEY CECILLE CASH, 42 Cloverfield Road, So. Valley Stream, N. Y. Tel: LOcust 1-8192
Other Critics: Harry L. Fuchs, Sherman Gottesman, Walter F. Loeb

With the Orchestras

Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic-Symphony presented on Jan. 31 such varied composers as Mozart, Meyerowitz, Goldmark and Zandonai. Of much interest was the world premiere of Jan Meyerowitz' Symphony "Midrash Esther," based on the book of Esther in the Bible. The four movements, Introduction, Haman, Esther and Ahasuerus and Purim, were played without pause. In a decidedly contemporary idiom, the work was lyrical and expressive. The slow movements were contemplative, the fast movements full of zest. The hit of the evening was Nathan Milstein's playing of Goldmark's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. This showpiece is demanding in every aspect of the performer's technique. Mr. Milstein played with dazzling virtuosity and always maintained beauty of tone and musical line. . . . The program on February 3 repeated the Mozart Divertimento and the Goldmark Concerto, but included Morton Gould's Variations, "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." Unfortunately, the variations were mostly Hyde with very little Jekyll. . . . For two weeks, the week-ends beginning on Feb. 7 and Feb. 14, Bruno Walter conducted the Philharmonic-Symphony, and brought to a close his regular guest conducting activities with this orchestra. On Feb. 7, his chief offering was Bruckner's Symphony No. 9, a performance of intensely spiritual profundity. Maestro Walter brought forth every majestic sweep of the music and the orchestra rose to new heights to reflect his spirit. The men were also in complete rapprochement with the conductor in Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony and Weber's Overture to "Der Freischuetz." On Feb. 14, Dr. Walter featured works by Mahler, three Songs for Soprano with Orchestra and the Second Symphony. Maria Stader was soprano soloist in both works, and Maureen Forrester, contralto, and the Westminster Choir also contributed their services in the Symphony. The program opened with Beethoven's "Prometheus" Over-

ture. Both Miss Stader and Miss Forrester were very fine in their assignments, contributing a great deal to the total effect of grandeur and beauty. These superlative performances make us regret that Dr. Walter will no longer be a regular guest conductor with the Philharmonic. But he does not close the door completely, for his farewell statement says, "should you ask for my services for an extraordinary occasion, it will make me happy to comply."

On Feb. 9, Andre Kostelanetz conducted the fourth and last of his four special concerts with the Philharmonic. A highlight of the program was an orchestral transcription of Act I of Puccini's "La Boheme." . . . The small-fry attending the Philharmonic Young People's Concert, Feb. 16, heard Regina Resnik, mezzo-soprano, as soloist in the first U. S. performance of Prokofiev's "The Ugly Duckling." Preceding the performance, John Langstaff told the story while illustrated slides were shown. There were also works by Chadwick, Brahms, Mendelssohn, Walton and Wagner, with Wilfrid Felleiter conducting throughout in fine style. . . . Mitropoulos conducted Berlioz' "Symphonie Fantastique" for the first time in New York at the Philharmonic concert, Feb. 21. He was completely in his element, and the vivid work pulsed with energy and verve. Even the contemplative portions were electric. Earlier in the program, we heard Ginastera's Overture to the Creole "Faust," and Lalo's "Symphonie Espagnole" with Zino Francescatti as the soloist. He was in excellent form and made his instrument sing joyously.

Robert Coleman's THEATRE:



'Tosca' Is Even Better With Top Stars

• Tebaldi, Warren, Bjoerling, Baccaloni stir appreciative audience.

Within two hours after tickets went on sale at the Metropolitan Opera House for Wednesday evening's performance of "Tosca," the boxoffice racks were clean. Renata Tebaldi, Leonard Warren, Jussi Bjoerling and Salvatore Baccaloni on stage, and Dimitri Mitropoulos on the podium, spelled a sell-out in quick order.

The first-nighters came to enjoy the opera, and to cheer their favorites in the cast. They were willing to settle for less than an ideal "Tosca"—and they did. At Bjoerling's first appearance the applause was deafening and prolonged, and when Tebaldi swept majestically on the roof almost blew off. Such was the din of approval.

MAESTRO Mitropoulos is a dynamic conductor. He seeks to play a score as the composer wrote it, to make few compromises. But he is not adamant. He respects artists, and tries to support them within the limits of his conception. In this instance,

he was bent on doing justice to the tasteful and dramatic Puccini score.

Interest centered primarily on Bjoerling's return to the Met as the ill-fated Cavaradossi. It is not a happy duty to report that some of the power has gone from the voice of this fine tenor. For much of the evening, he was singing with heart and skill. Which was quite enough for his devoted admirers.

Warren, in excellent form, was effectively suave as the cunning Baron Scarpia caught in the toils of his own lust and treachery.

Miss Tebaldi, Bjoerling Sing in Met's Ninth 'Tosca'

By Francis D. Perkins

Renata Tebaldi sang the title role in Puccini's "Tosca" for the first time this season at the Metropolitan Opera House last night, with Jussi Bjoerling, who had not been heard before on this stage in the current operatic year, as Mario Cavaradossi and Leonard Warren as Scarpia. The noted Italian soprano, who is the sixth Tosca to appear at the Metropolitan in the work's nine performances thus far, was acclaimed with vocal and manual fervor; the plaudits after "Vissi d'Arte" occupied a minute and three quarters.

Dimitri Mitropoulos, who conducted, signaled for silence to let the show go on after the applause which greeted Mme. Tebaldi's first appearance of the evening. Mr. Bjoerling's arrival somewhat earlier had also halted much stimulating singing.

Mme. Tebaldi's voice exhibited the power, generous span of color, dynamic control and emotional persuasion that are its now well known characteristics. Its expressive hues consistently reflected the dramatic situation. Poignancy marked the vocal timbre in climaxes of the stormy scenes with Scarpia; "Vissi d'Arte" began with a sense of almost exhausted quietness followed by artistically and steadily-waxing volume and tension.

Her tone was at its best here and often elsewhere, although her top notes occasionally had a slight edge. Visually, her impersonation was convincing while not over-acted.

Mr. Bjoerling's singing was well phrased and expressively evocative. There was some tautness of tone production in his upper notes in the first act, but

the quality of his voice was appealing; ample passion and denunciation marked his defiance of Scarpia. Mr. Warren's singing, which did not always represent his voice at its best, was persuasive in an effective if not unusually memorable impersonation.

Salvatore Baccaloni, Alessio De Paolis, George Cehanovsky, Louis Sgarro and George Keith completed the cast. The general atmosphere of the performance under Mr. Mitropoulos' conductorship fully revealed the color, momentum and dramatic force of the score.

Music

Rudolf Serkin at Carnegie

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

The miracle on last night's Philharmonic program in Carnegie Hall was the slow movement of Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto.

Partaking in the miracle, besides the Philharmonic, were the soloist Rudolf Serkin and the conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos, not to mention the greatest miracle-worker of them all—Beethoven.

There is nothing like this andante in all concerto literature—the subdued mystery, the economy of notes, the poise and beauty simply stated and sublimely achieved. That was the mood of last night's performance, too.

Two Miracles.

Fortunate indeed are those of us who heard the miracle performed twice in three days—Tuesday night with Bruno Walter and Dame Myra Hess; last night with Mr. Mitropoulos and Mr. Serkin. They will remain equally unforgettable.

The Andante came between allegro and Rondo similarly

perfect in plan and execution last night and only less memorable because less sublime. It sufficed for Beethoven to touch sublimity for a few moments.

Bracketed between the concerto and Schubert's Fifth Symphony, which opened the program, was the premiere of an American score which was as distant from the one as it was from the other.

Kubik's Third.

This was the Third Symphony of the Oklahoma-born composer Gail Kubik. With the very first measures we were in a world of rasping, jagged modernism where strange cries pierced the night and peace was an antiquated word.

How far those stabbing rhythms of the first movement seemed from the eager chatter of Schubert and the awesome serenity of Beethoven's an-

dante. Yet the symphony has every claim to serious attention.

Headlong Snarl.

This is especially so after Mr. Kubik works himself out of the headlong snarl of the first movement and advances to a strongly built slow movement and a sprightly frolic of a finale.

Starting with an orderly, prolonged trumpet soliloquy, the slow movement gathers momentum to a tense crisis, after which it relaxes in subtle stages. The finale could probably make its concert way alone.

Mr. Mitropoulos, fresh from Wednesday night's turbulent "Tosca," conducted with marked fervor and intensity, alert and compelling in the widely separated schools of last night's music.

From MAR 1 1957

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

Music: A New Symphony

Kubik's 3d Introduced by the Philharmonic

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC SYMPHONY, conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos; Rudolf Serkin, pianist. At Carnegie Hall. Symphony No. 3 (first performance). Gail Kubik Piano Concerto No. 4 (first performance). Beethoven

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

A NEW symphony by an American should be an occasion not only for the composer but for the ever hopeful public. Gail Kubik, whose Symphony No. 3 had its premiere at Carnegie Hall last night, did what he could to make a brave noise, and Dimitri Mitropoulos and the New York Philharmonic gave his music a rousing reading.

It is not a deep or even a particularly gratifying symphony, but everything works and sounds. Mr. Kubik has been around absorbing the practical side of his craft. He has written extensively for films and radio, has done an opera and turned out a good deal of absolute music. He has also won a bagful of prizes, including the Pulitzer and Prix de Rome.

Mr. Kubik has employed three themes from scores he wrote for these films—"Twenty-one Miles," "Air Pattern Pacific" and "The World at War." There is nothing against this procedure, and indeed the two used in the slow movement have just enough character to merit an effort at salvage.

These "bit players" turned "leading characters," as Mr. Kubik describes them, help to make this section the most rewarding of the work. They are allowed to speak with simplicity and directness; they do not engage one's affection, but they have a cool dignity.

The first and third movements are in the busy style so familiar in much contemporary music. Mr. Kubik knows how to keep his material in motion; he knows how to build up superficial excitement. But neither the big orchestra he uses nor the tumult he generates can conceal the fact that this music has little to say.

From APR 4 1957

HERALD TRIBUNE

New York, N. Y.

MUSIC

The Philharmonic

By PAUL HENRY LANG

CARNegie HALL

Pension Fund Benefit, conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; pianist, Renata Tebaldi, soprano. The program: Overture, "La Battaglia di Legnano"; Aria, "Tacea la notte"; "Il Trovatore"; Overture, "Tosca"; "Pace, pace, mio Dio"; "La Forza del Destino"; Overture, "Vespri Siciliani"; Ballet Music, "Macbeth"; Aria, "Salce, salce"; and "Ave Maria"; Overture, "Giovanna d'Arco"; Overture, "Nabucco"; Verdi

Pension Fund concerts are supposed to be immune from criticism for even the most uncompromising fanatic of truth realizes that the occasion is a worthy one and every one wants to see the fund grow to respectable proportions. The distinguished musicians making up our Philharmonic give the best of their years to art at ridiculous salaries, and while any guitar strummer can make a fortune in a few months with matinee calls, these fine artists have little to look forward to once their wrists and fingers cease to be nimble enough for Beethoven or Debussy.

Last night's concert was a sure-fire affair: an all-Verdi program with Renata Tebaldi the featured artist. Yet the critic did not have to pull his punches: Mr. Mitropoulos was in good form and so was his orchestra.

The conductor started the first number, the overture to "La Battaglia di Legnano," as if he were in the opera pit, by quietly beating a whole measure before the first attack of the orchestra. The brasses entered with precision, and precision remained with them and the rest of the orchestra throughout the evening.

But besides precision there

was life and excitement in the various orchestral numbers and fine ensemble work in the accompaniments. Mr. Mitropoulos knows this music and does not hesitate to play the earlier Verdi with all the fire and brimstone he demands, though the delicate passages received just as careful attention. The orchestra sounded grand.

Miss Tebaldi was not at her best, though her second best is still pretty good. Her pianos and pianissimos were delectable, but when she let her big voice soar into the upper strata of the soprano's domain it became a bit edgy and penetrating. I imagine that finding herself not only close to but virtually in the middle of the orchestra made her throw in her reserves of which she has plenty. And, of course, she is used to a much bigger barn than Carnegie Hall.

But when she intoned the palpitating "Salce, salce" of Desdemona the old magic returned, instantly seizing the audience. Few of today's singers can hit a seventh or an octave with such fluid grace, and though Miss Tebaldi stood on a concert stage, dressed in an evening gown, it was not difficult to believe that she was the doomed wife of the Venetian general, filled with tragic forebodings.

A nice evening it was and, judging from the looks of the house, a profitable one for the pension fund. Both Miss Tebaldi and Mr. Mitropoulos generously contributed their services free of charge.

CARNegie HALL:

Symphony Has World Premiere

By MILES KASTENDIECK

DIMITRI MITROPOULOS and the Philharmonic Symphony gave the world premiere of Gail Kubik's Third Symphony in Carnegie Hall last night.

It is a typical product of the 20th Century: intellectual orchestral, and earnest. Two notable products of the 19th Century provided contrast: Schubert's Fifth Symphony and Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto.

Kubik strives hard. As a craftsman he has worked out his music logically. Preoccupied with instrumental color, he has created a piece for an orchestra rather than a piece of music. He has explored the possibilities of the brasses, opening boldly with horn music and giving the trumpet the main theme of the second movement.

Little Substance

In detail there is much to follow as the angular themes work their way through the score. He handles his orchestration knowingly. The energy and spirit of the finale, entitled "Masquerade," achieve a kind of gaiety, possibly a little faded. But of substance in the three movements there is little. For the material acquires no special profile. Interest centers in what is being done with it not what it expresses.

By extraordinary (?) coincidence the Beethoven G Major concerto had been heard 48 hours earlier played by Myra Hess, Bruno Walter and the Philharmonic. The interpretation of Rudolf Serkin and Mitropoulos was quite different yet wholly within the compass of the work.

Poetic Magic

Brilliance and poetry became singularly juxtaposed in this performance. Serkin's rhythmic drive, in perfect rapport with Mitropoulos, highlighted the concept of the music. For all its brilliant aspect, however, he created his own poetic magic in the slow movement. The performance was a demonstration of artistic integrity rarely experienced.

As in the Beethoven, so in the Schubert Mitropoulos appeared to be thoroughly attuned to the music last night. In top form he fashioned most satisfying performances. The musicians responded accordingly. This was a splendid concert.

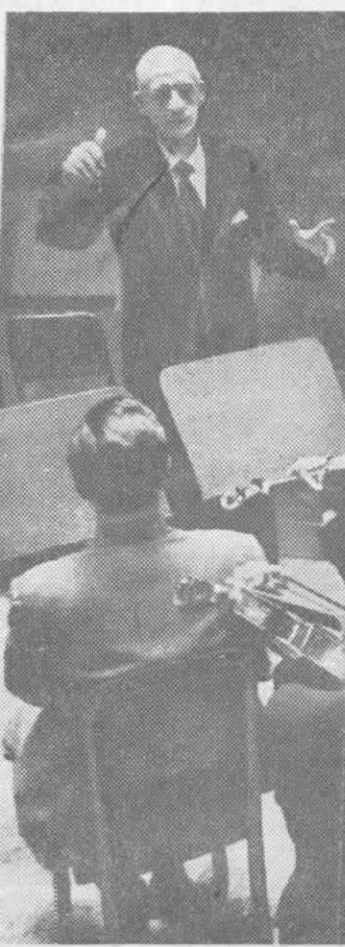
L. I. DAILY PRESS
Jamaica, N. Y.

MAR 1 - 1957

Jamaican to Sing With Greek Choir

Nicholas Vangelopoulos of Jamaica will sing with the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological Seminary choir, tomorrow at Manhattan's Hunter College. The concert will commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Massachusetts seminary, where Vangelopoulos is a student.

Archbishop Michael, head of the Greek Orthodox Church of North and South America, is honorary concert committee chairman. Other members include Spyros Skouras, president of 20th Century Fox Studios; Dimitri Mitropoulos, New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra conductor, and Mayor Wagner.



Dimitri Mitropoulos, left, conducts members of the New York Chamber Ensemble next Sunday evening at the Lexington Avenue Y. M.-Y. W. H. A. The musicians will present three premières.

From MAR 1 1957

HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

MUSIC

The Philharmonic

By PAUL HENRY LANG

CARNegie HALL

Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; soloist, Rudolf Serkin, pianist. The program: Symphony No. 3 in B flat major... Schubert Piano Concerto No. 4 in G major... Beethoven

The Philharmonic last night presented a new American symphony, Gail Kubik's No. 3. A symphony is a serious affair, and with the fat romantic ones it became the form of music most highly regarded by audiences. I regret to say that the seriousness of purpose, the logic of procedure and the spaciousness of architecture all present in the other two symphonic works on the evening's program, were absent in Mr. Kubik's work.

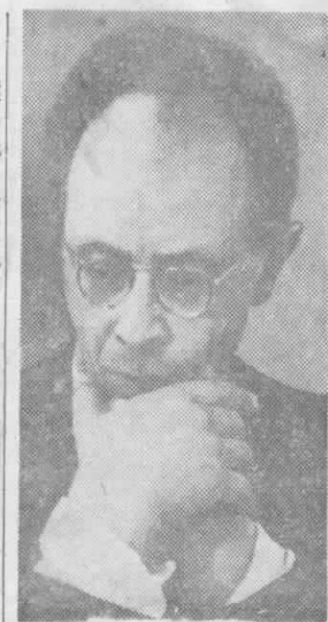
The symphony is a musical edifice made of bricks. The individual brick is not impressive, but once walls and buttresses are constructed of them the individual brick too reveals its significance. In all good symphonies we discover this interesting phenomenon, but Mr. Kubik's symphony does not use bricks, only wire lath with stucco spread on its surface.

The work had all the traditional requisites; a short introduction, a "sonata allegro," a brooding slow movement and a finale-scherzo, and the thematic convolutions could be followed without any difficulty, but nowhere a genuine idea, a salient feature, or a twist or turn that was not taken from the manual of orchestration.

Schubert's little symphony in B flat, written at the age of nineteen, is a genuine Viennese product in the classical vein, yet it is Schubert from beginning to end. The delightful composition, written for a school orchestra, has neither trumpets nor drums, and calls for a very modest orchestra; it simply cannot stand banging or pushing. Mr. Mitropoulos had about twice the size of the orchestra needed for this bit of enlarged chamber music, but neither banged nor pushed. In fact, I seldom heard him exact such nice balance from his players.

The first movement was too fast, but after that he settled down to exquisite music making; the tempos became accurate, the phrasing elegant, and the sonorities delectable. The last movement was a real allegro vivace, fast but not hasty, and every note clear and concise.

Beethoven's G major piano concerto, his fourth, is his greatest. The "Emperor," another great one, is perhaps more popular, but it is also more docile than the G major, which really



Rudolf Serkin

comes to grips with the problem of the concerto. It seems that after a tremendous try to coerce the concerto into a more unified symphonic structure—it was the double exposition, one for the orchestra, and another one for the solo, that vexed Beethoven—he once more returned to the traditional concerto in the "Emperor," then abandoned the genre forever.

Mr. Serkin knows exactly what is at stake and never for a moment does he relax the all-encompassing artistic vigilance for which he is so much admired. The fast movements he played with the required virtuosity, but the rippling runs also told a story, and the cascading thirds and sixths carried on a lively conversation with the orchestra. The middle movement was tender and full of warmth. It resembled a sunlit hollow between two peaks where spring comes now, and may go into never-ending winter a moment hence.

Mr. Mitropoulos, who in this particular concerto must assume the rank of co-regent, accepted the exalted role. The tutti were precise, and the very large orchestra was neither too assertive nor too subservient for the role of equal partner.

Nevertheless, the forest of bows did get the conductor in trouble in the wondrous slow movement. While Mr. Serkin did his best to coax ethereal tones out of the piano, the massed strings were heavy and coarse, and the pizzicatos came down like a drizzling rain. But Mr. Mitropoulos recovered, and the rest of the concerto offered undiluted pleasure.

From MAR 5 - 1957

World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music

Albanese Is Heard At Met

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

After the frenzied tumult of last week's Tebaldi demonstration, the Metropolitan settled down to a nice quiet "Tosca" last night.

Featured in the title role of the Puccini thriller was that sterling little artist of the Italian tradition, Licia Albanese.

Miss Albanese applied to the part the fine sense of theater and dramatic illusion that has always been one of her most cherished attributes.

Daughter of the Theater.

One had only to watch her in the realistic business of the knife at the table before the killing of Scarpia to know that this was a true daughter of the theater.

One, of course, missed the vocal impact of other Toscas, the voice being subdued and withdrawn at times.

But there were moments enough when the tones rose in easy brightness over the turbulent surface of Puccini's orchestra.

Young and Slender.

I might add that I don't remember when Miss Albanese looked so young and slender and attractive. This was a very believable Tosca.

Jan Peerce was his thorough artistic self as Mario Cavardossi, carefully blending voice and feeling and acting with genuine force.

I missed the malevolent note in Martini's Scarpia—perhaps more in the voice than in the gestures. Yet his is a deft artistry of style.

Gifted Character-Singer.

Of the others, I'd like to single out Alessio de Paolis this time. This gifted character-singer makes of Spoleto a creeping epitome of odious spying.

Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted with his usual intensity and zeal.

There was no sensation at "Tosca" last night, which, for a change, was just as well. The crowd heard Puccini instead.

MARCH 8, NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND

Music

Mitropoulos Conducts Visit to Strauss' Home

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

The bland joys and amiable frictions of the late Richard Strauss' home life came up for compelling review on the Philharmonic program conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos in Carnegie Hall last night.

This, of course, was the "Sinfonia Domestica," the only symphonic score ever composed on the day-to-day harmonies and disharmonies of the married state. Here Strauss admitted the world into his household.

The performance was again proof of Mr. Mitropoulos' ability to give freshness and vision to every detail without

losing sight of its relevance in a cumulative web of time. A life-line of unity held it excitingly together.

Composer's Reappraisal.

The music of Strauss is undergoing constant reappraisal these days. A brief retirement from view of each of the scores seems to give it renewed life on its return. So with the "Sinfonia Domestica."

It would have supposed a half century had sufficed to exhaust its symphonic felicities. Yet here it was back again last night rich and diversified in appeal—a homespun fabric of vast color and strength.

The firm assertion of the "husband" theme in the fugal dispute of the finale depicts Strauss as having the best of the argument—a domestic triumph which Strauss, as Irving Kolodin suggests, achieved only in music.

If Mr. Mitropoulos was able to put a creator's fervor into every measure of Strauss' music, he was no less the composer's second self in the American premiere of Gunther Schuller's "Dramatic Overture,"

Strong Texture.

Here was another new American score of strong texture and

fierce tension, using a 12-tone row with marked daring yet shrewd design—all of it lucid and vibrant in Mr. Mitropoulos' reading.

Tension of the more classical kind governed the performance of Beethoven's "Emperor" concerto featuring young Eugene Istomin as piano soloist. The dynamic frame and rhythmic impulse evolved naturally and dramatically. Mr. Istomin, equipped with fervid tone and wide-ranging technique, took some passages over-impetuously, sometimes pounding the solo line out of shape. Mainly, it was a forceful and appealing performance.

From MAR 9 1957

Christian Science Monitor

Boston, Mass.

When Dimitri Mitropoulos returned to the Philharmonic he brought with him several first performances of new works. Among them were Gail Kubik's Third Symphony, a work of distinctive craftsmanship and preoccupation with orchestration; and Robert Mann's "Fantasy for Orchestra," keyed to orchestral sonorities in a kind of experimentalism common some 20 years ago. Both his piano soloists chose Beethoven for their concertos—Rudolf Serkin, the Fourth; Jean Casadesu, the Third. In fascinating contrast to the performance of the Fourth by Myra Hess and Bruno Walter some 48 hours earlier, Mr. Serkin and Mr. Mitropoulos, finding perfect rapport in a different concept of the music, gave a totally engrossing account of it.



Dimitri Mitropoulos, left, conducts members of the New York Chamber Ensemble next Sunday evening at the Lexington Avenue Y. M.-Y. W. H. A. The musicians will present three premières.

STATEN ISLAND, N. Y., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 1957

The Philharmonic Takes a Ferryboat Ride...



TEBALDI REHEARSES "TOSCA" FOR MITROPOULOS

A New Pet at the Met

All season long U.S. opera fans have been waiting to choose their favorite in the struggle between two world-famous prima donnas who are vying for top perch in the grand operatic roost. Vivid, high-strung, New York-born Maria Callas started off the season at the Metropolitan Opera House with some exciting acting and flashy singing. Then, at mid-season, Renata Tebaldi, a Milanese with a gentler manner, came on in a lavish new production of Verdi's *La Traviata*.

With a large voice she controls easily in the softest of song passages, Tebaldi was at her impressive best in *Traviata's* anguished death scene (left). A few days later, after rehearsing with Dimitri Mitropoulos, she was on stage again in the title role of Puccini's *Tosca*. Soaring through *Tosca's* tunes at a notably slow tempo, she was able to make the most of her resplendent top tones. For her night's work she drew 21 curtain calls. This was six more than Callas collected in the same show, and on this basis established herself as the Met's pet.



SINGER'S REWARD after the second-act aria in *Tosca* rehearsal held in a Metropolitan studio is a compliment and a hand kiss from Mitropoulos.

From
ADVANCE
Staten Island, N. Y.
MAR 1 3 1957

Tuneful Fact

Staten Island still is the smallest of the five boroughs, population-wise, but it has become big time in one field at least—music.

That point became delightfully apparent once again with the appearance here of Dimitri Mitropoulos and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony orchestra.

This latest master stroke by the Staten Island Community Concert Association, the only one in the five boroughs, drew a full house to the Paramount Theatre and created a memorable evening.

While these wonderful concerts sponsored by the association are now an accepted part of the borough's cultural life, we still feel their significance should be pointed up.

The concerts prove Islanders will "go" for first-class programs. It has been hinted, darkly, that Islanders were provincial and, if they did break out of their shell, felt they had to go to Manhattan for anything worthwhile.

Mediocre programs will flop here as elsewhere. Our neighbors have not fallen for a phony culture. But give them the best, and their money's worth, and you'll have trouble hiring a hall big enough.

From MAR 8 1957
HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Schuller Work Heard at Carnegie

By Francis D. Perkins
Two musicians who were born in New York in 1925 figured in last night's concert of the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra in Carnegie Hall, where Gunther Schuller heard the American premiere of his *Dramatic Overture* and Eugene Istomin was the soloist in Beethoven's fifth Piano Concerto, known as the "Emperor." The instrumentalists under Dimitri Mitropoulos' leadership completed the program with Richard Strauss' "Symphonica Domestica."

Mr. Schuller, son of a Philharmonic violinist and first horn in the Metropolitan Opera orchestra, is already known here as a composer. His five-year-old "dramatic overture" shows that his orchestral knowledge is anything but limited to his chosen instrument. His musical ideas, based on a twelve-tone row, do not employ it too rigidly and reveal their relationship; an impression of definite musical profile, while often pronounced, was still variable.

The opening, deliberate episode, surging gradually in dark-toned orchestral voices under long sustained high notes, had a persuasive emotional atmosphere as well as striking contrast of hues. The faster paced music which followed had spirit, color and momentum, but its course did not always suggest a definite destination.

Mr. Istomin's technical grasp of Beethoven's last piano concerto was thorough, apart from one or two debatably played measures. His interpretation told of musicianship and knowledge of the style and individuality of the music. It had pervasive spirit and a notable absence of affection or mannerism.

With vigor at appropriate times, his tone was always musical; dynamic shading was sensitive and judicious. In the first movement Mr. Istomin conveyed the music's essential expressive dignity and vitality; this was an auspicious, if not a complete realization.

From MAR 20 1957
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

COMPOSER WINS AWARD

Gordon Sherwood to Receive \$1,000 Gershwin Prize

Gordon Sherwood of Ann Arbor, Mich., is this year's winner of the annual \$1,000 George Gershwin Memorial Award for composers sponsored by B'nai B'rith Victory Lodge, Inc., in cooperation with B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation. The winner was incorrectly named in yesterday's New York Times as Reginald Hall, who was last year's winner.

Mr. Sherwood won the competition with his "Introduction and Allegro" for orchestra, which will have its first performance on Sunday afternoon, May 5, at Carnegie Hall by Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic-Symphony.

Mr. Mitropoulos was honorary chairman of the contest board of judges, which also included Dr. Carleton Sprague Smith, Robert Russell Bennett, Morton Gould, Howard Hanson, Peter Menin, Vincent Persichetti and Walter Piston.

From MAR 1 1 1957
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

Music: New York Chamber Ensemble

Works by Bloch and Smit Introduced

NEW YORK CHAMBER ENSEMBLE, Dimitri Mitropoulos and Vittorio Rieti, conductors. Doris Okerson, mezzo-soprano; Leonid Hambro, pianist. At the Ninety-second Street Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association. Quiet for clarinet and strings... Weber Serenata (first New York performance)..... Rieti Four Motets for flute, voice and violin (world premiere)..... Smit Suite Modale for flute and piano (world premiere)..... Bloch Serenade for twelve solo instruments..... Francaix

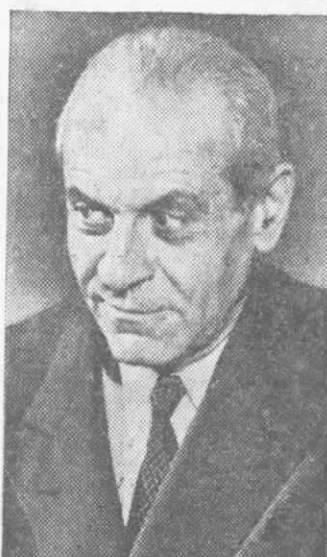
By HOWARD TAUBMAN

WHAT do musicians do in their spare time? Make music, of course. In the case of the New York Chamber Ensemble, which is made up of members of the New York Philharmonic, the extracurricular activity has the double objective of providing the players with latitude for personal expression and of enabling them to share a neglected repertoire with an adventurous public.

In its third and final concert of the season at the Lexington Avenue "Y" last night, the ensemble introduced new works by Ernest Bloch and Leo Smit, gave a first New York performance to a piece by Vittorio Rieti and played rarely performed compositions by Arthur Berger and Jean Francaix. All this was a reflection of interest in the contemporary scene. There was also Weber's Clarinet Quintet, Op. 34, to recall the springtime of romanticism.

Bloch's Suite Modale for flute and piano was completed last year as the composer, who is in his late seventies, rejoiced in a burst of creativity. The music is reminiscent of the impressionism and the Paris which influenced Bloch in his early years. The texture of the two instruments recalls this period. The writing has admirable directness and economy, and the mood is introspective. John Wummer and Leonid Hambro played with taste and sensitivity.

Smit's Four Motets for two flutes, voice and violin were composed in 1955. The verses are English translations by Sylvia Wright of German folk lyrics, and the setting has the flavor of music several centuries old. If the composer did



Vittorio Rieti

not quote old tunes, he created an antique atmosphere. The two flutes and violin join delicately with the voice in an evocation of the past. Doris Okerson, mezzo-soprano, sang with restraint, and she was well supported by Mr. Wummer and Paige Brook, flutists, and Leon Temerson, violinist.

Mr. Rieti conducted his own Serenata, which was written in 1931. There is a sprightliness in the piece, particularly in the fanciful passages for the woodwinds. The rhythms in the end movements have buoyancy, and the slow movement is unpretentious and affecting. One has heard much less attractive stuff in the past two decades, and one wonders why this Serenata was bypassed in New York.

The requirement of a solo

Rieti Serenata Has Local Premiere

violin and an orchestra of eleven players could not be that forbidding. Of course, the violin part is not in grating except for the slow movement, and Mr. Temerson's approach was modest. For that matter, so was Mr. Rieti's, but behind the modesty there was a decisive mind.

Miss Okerson, Mr. Brook, Stanley Drucker, clarinetist, and Martin Ormandy, cellist, were the performers in Berger's "Three Poems of Yeats." This is one of the composer's early works. The instrumental scoring is imaginative, but the vocal writing does not rise to the opportunity that Yeats' poems offer. These poems are wry, but they are also lyrical.

Mr. Drucker played with agreeable color and style in the Weber quintet. His string-playing colleagues let the clarinet dominate the performance. Their playing betrayed the orchestral musician's habit of self-effacement.

As if to prove beyond question that these men cared more for music than self-display, they ended the program by playing the Francaix Serenade under the leadership of Dimitri Mitropoulos. The conductor of the Philharmonic, like the members of the New York Chamber Ensemble, thinks nothing of following an afternoon concert at Carnegie Hall with an appearance of this sort. It is his way of endorsing the ideals that animate these musicians.

From MAR 2 2 1957
JOURNAL Beaumont, Tex
ANTENNA TIME

Murrow to Visit D. Mitropoulos

TELEVISION (c-color)

DIMITRI Mitropoulos, musical director and conductor of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, and Cartoonist Chester Gould will be visited by Edward R. Murrow tonight on Person to Person, 9-10 p. m., Channel 11.

From MAR 2 3 1957
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

2 NOTED SINGERS SIGNED BY 'MET'

Sena Jurinac, Nicolai Gedda Will Take Leading Roles in Barber's New 'Vanessa'

Two singers of international fame have been engaged by the Metropolitan Opera for the 1957-58 season. They are Sena Jurinac, Yugoslav soprano, and Nicolai Gedda, Swedish-born tenor.

Both artists are scheduled to take leading roles in "Vanessa," the new Samuel Barber opera with libretto by Gian-Carlo Menotti, which will have its premiere at the Metropolitan in January, 1958.

Although listed by the Metropolitan as a soprano, Miss Jurinac has sung many mezzo roles. She was born in Travnik, Yugoslavia, and studied in Zagreb, making her debut as Mimi in "La Boheme" at the Zagreb Opera in 1942.

Miss Jurinac has been a member of the Vienna State Opera since 1944. She also has appeared in opera houses throughout Europe and has the reputation of being a Mozart specialist.

Mr. Gedda, of Swedish-Russian extraction, made his debut in 1952 at the Stockholm Opera. The same year he was engaged by La Scala in Milan. He has sung throughout Italy, at the Salzburg Festival, in Paris, Covent Garden and other European opera houses.

Like Miss Jurinac, he has participated in many full-length opera recordings that have made his work known to American listeners.

Solo tympanist Saul Goodman tunes one of his kettle drums. | Concert Association officers greet Dimitri Mitropoulos.

Mitropoulos Draws Island Plaudits for Beethoven Work

By HELEN T. BUEGLER

Carnegie Hall literally came to Staten Island last night, in the persons of Dimitri Mitropoulos and more than 100 men of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony orchestra, and never has the Island heard such symphonic music played as it did at the Paramount Theatre!

Playing under the auspices of the Staten Island Community Concert Association, Mitropoulos led his musicians almost by the hand through more than two hours of some of the most famous—and most widely known—music in the repertoire.

First, there was the Richard Strauss tone poem, "Don Juan," with its weaving themes clearly defined, telling the story of Lenau's poem "Don Juan," a man in pursuit of the woman who was all women in one. Next, the delicacy of Schubert's "Symphony No. 5 in B Flat Major," with strings, woodwinds and horns joining in the weaving of the lovely melodies.

Changing its program, the orchestra—strings, woodwinds, and horns—played Mozart's "Divertimento for Strings, Flute, Oboe, Bassoon and Four Horns." This, by way of substitution for the Schuller "Dramatic Overture," which the orchestra introduced last week in Carnegie Hall.

THEN, the piece de resistance of the evening, a reading of Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony in C Minor" as it has seldom been heard, Beethoven, a man of rebellion, wrote into his music those inner turmoil which were tearing him apart.

Mitropoulos, a man known in the music world for his refusal to adhere to the cut-and-dried, esteemed for essaying new things, got from Beethoven just about everything which the composer must have had in his heart when he composed the "Fifth."

Starting with the characteristic "V" symbol of three short and one long note, then carrying it through the modulations and tossing it back and forth between strings and winds, the symphony moved into the melancholy strains of the second movement, marked "Andante con moto." Finally, the scherzo and the crashing adagio, winding up in the march theme which precedes the final thunderous chords.

Here was music, every note of which was familiar to most, and

most major themes of which had been heard at one time or another by all, interpreted with every fiber of the man with the baton and communicated to every man in the orchestra. This was music to bring forth bravos.

RESPONDING to surging thunderous applause, Mitropoulos once more raised his baton, for an encore. Again, he went to Beethoven, this time the "Coriolanus Overture," and it was a reluctant audience which left the theatre.

Here was a crisp clarity of line in every mood—the singing of the violins, the crooning of the cellos, the staccato of the horns, the sweet high tones of the reeds, the crashing of tympani. Here was an orchestra responding instantly to the wish of its man at the helm.

There was never a lag. There was neat, perfected workmanship throughout, but never was there a feeling of a rote performance. It was an evening of music to please the most exacting musician and music lover.

Greeting Mitropoulos when he arrived in the van of his musicians were Robert V. Reagan, president, and Miss Helen T. Buegler, secretary of the Concert Association.

From MAR 2 8 1957
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

DINNER FOR HEART FUNDS Will Be Held at Waldorf

The names of distinguished Americans to be cited for their contributions to humanitarian causes at a dinner dance in the Waldorf-Astoria on April 24 have been announced by Mrs. William C. Breed, chairman. Proceeds of the gala, which is called a Salute to the Heart of America, will be given to the Heart Fund. George Leib has been appointed chairman of the men's committee, and Cyril Ritchard, actor, master of ceremonies.

Those selected to be honored include Mrs. Clare Boothe Luce, Mrs. William Randolph Hearst, James J. Farley, Bernard M. Baruch, Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, Under Secretary General of the United Nations; Dimitri Mitropoulos, Arthur Ballantine, Spyros P. Skouras and Dr. Paul Dudley White.

From BILLBOARD
Cincinnati, Ohio
MAR 30 1957

VAUGHAN-WILLIAMS: SYMPHONY NO. 4 IN F MINOR (1-12")—Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York; Dimitri Mitropoulos, Cond. Columbia ME 5152..... \$5.98 This recording apparently was made at roughly the same time that was presented by the Philharmonic in Carnegie Hall recently. It drew unstinting praise from the critics. Mitropoulos has few peers in complex modern scores like this and the another fine recording of this work is available, that does not minimize the values offered here. The hi-fi qualities are such that they ought to give this the commercial success of the Shostakovich 10th conducted by Mitropoulos. The Don Quixote-ish Scherzo would make a clinching demo band.

'Concerts on Films' In Slow New York Start; Carnegie Hall B.O. NSG

The decision by impresario Harry Squires to come into New York's Carnegie Hall with a collection of old longhair films as a concert attraction was a bold one, but it didn't pay off Sunday night (31) when only about 500 customers turned up. Squires is launching a broad tour for "Concerts on Films," a library of short musical features starring the top-flight names in the longhair world and owned by Irving Mills, publishing exec on the Coast.

Carnegie Hall is not the most favorable place for this type of attraction which might be very effective in smaller auditoriums. While C. H. has an excellent acoustical reputation for live performances, it's not so for film soundtracks. In the "Concerts on Films" shorts, the voice tracks were completely lost in the bouncing echoes of the hall. It was okay for the musical performances.

The "concert" comprised four shorts of uneven calibre. Best of the group was one with Dimitri Mitropoulos and the N. Y. Philharmonic Orchestra in a rehearsal sequence. The maestro's expressive face and hands and the skillful camera work made this worth the price of admission which was scaled from \$1.25 to \$2.75. Another excellent short spotlighted Jascha Heifetz as the man and the artist. A third short featured Jan Peerce and Nadine Conner in operatic duet, while the opening film was a somewhat corny piece on pianist Artur Schnabel.

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of this concert is that as many people turned up as did to pay to see some old films on the same evening that Rodgers & Hammerstein were giving away a musical and Leonard Bernstein was explaining Bach, both for free on television.

HERALD TRIBUNE New York, N. Y. Philharmonic Names Bernstein

Leonard Bernstein will be in charge of the musical direction of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society's Young People's Concerts next season at Carnegie Hall, it was announced yesterday by David M. Keiser, the society's president. Mr. Bernstein will conduct three of the five Saturday concerts, scheduled for Nov. 23, Jan. 18, Feb. 1, March 8 and April 19.

Mr. Keiser made his announcement during the intermission of the Philharmonic-Symphony's concert yesterday afternoon from Rochester, N. Y. Beginning next fall, Mr. Bernstein will share the regular conductorship of the Philharmonic with Dimitri Mitropoulos, its present music director.

'Such Sweet Thunder' to Be Heard at First of 4 'Music for Moderns' Concerts

"Such Sweet Thunder," a concert suite composed by Duke Ellington at the request of the Stratford (Ont.) Shakespeare Festival, will have its world premiere at Town Hall Sunday evening, April 28. The suite will be heard during the first of four concerts of "Music for Moderns."

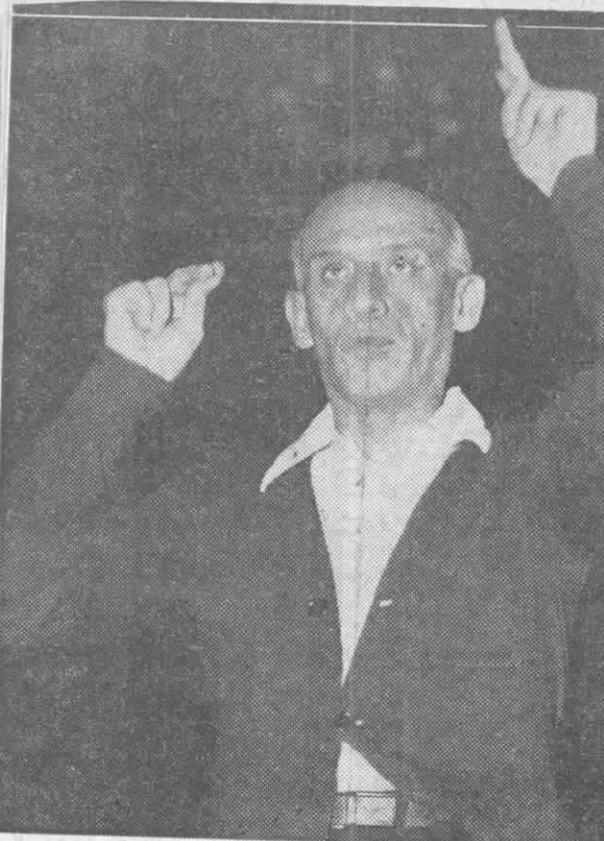
"Such Sweet Thunder," based on characters and events in Shakespeare's plays (the title is from Act IV, Scene 1, of "A Midsummer Night's Dream") will be performed by Mr. Ellington and his orchestra.

On the same program Anahid Ajemian, violinist, will be soloist with the Music for Moderns Orchestra, Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting. In the first public New York performance of Kurt Weill's Concerto for Violin and Wind Orchestra.

The second concert, on May 12, will offer Debussy's Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp, played by John Wummer, flutist, Walter Trampler, violist, and Edward Vito, harpist; selections from Erik Satie's "Sports et divertissements" played by William Masselos, pianist, with commentary by Virgil Thomson; and music from the forthcoming French film "Sait-on jamais" played by the Modern Jazz Quartet.

The May 19 concert will be a joint recital by Mahalia Jackson, gospel singer, and Martial Singher, baritone. The final concert of the series, on May 26, will offer the first performance of Fred Katz' "Concerto petite," played by Miss Ajemian and the Chico Hamilton Quintet; the first performance of Alan Hovhaness' "October Mountain," played by Carlos Surinach and the Music for Moderns Percussion Ensemble; and Carlos Chavez' "Tocata for Percussion" and Mr. Surinach's "Ritmo jondo," played by the percussion group.

CHRONICLE Houston, Texas



CONDUCTOR FOR THE MET

Among the highlighting features of the Metropolitan Opera Co.'s appearances here May 13 and 14 will be conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos on the Met's guest podium. Long associated with the New York Philharmonic and Minneapolis Symphony orchestras, the Greek conductor will direct the company's orchestra in "Carmen," starring Rise Stevens, and "Tosca" with Renata Tebaldi. The two productions will be sponsored by Edna W. Saunders.

From APR 17 1957
HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

40 Soloists To Be Heard With the Philharmonic

Forty soloists will be heard with the Philharmonic - Symphony Orchestra during its 1957-58 season which opens Thursday night, Oct. 10, in Carnegie Hall, it was announced yesterday by Bruno Zitrato, managing director.

Among the pianists listed, Gyorgy Giffra, Philippe Entremont, Lillian Kallir and Andre Tchaikovsky will make their first Philharmonic appearances; the others are Jacques Abram, Rudolf Pirkusny, Glenn Gould, Clara Haskil, Myra Hess, Louis Kentner, Eugene List, Gulomar Naveas, Artur Schnabel and Rudolf Serkin. Arthur Gould and Robert Fizdale, duo-pianists, will make their Philharmonic debut in a recently discovered concerta by Mendelssohn.

Among Violinists
The violinists are John Conigliano, Mischa Elman, Johanna Martzy, Yehudi and Nathan Milstein and also Josef Fuchs, who will be heard with Lillian Fuchs, violinist, in a Mozart-Sinfonia Concertante. Laszlo Varga, cellist, will also be a soloist, and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano, will make her Philharmonic debut in works by Mozart and Richard Strauss.

Inge Borkh, soprano, will be heard for the first time with this orchestra in Strauss' opera, "Elektra" under Dimitri Mitropoulos' direction, with Frances Yeend, Blanche Thebom, David

Lloyd and Giorgio Tozzi in other leading roles. Robert Shaw will conduct Haydn's oratorio, "The Creation," during the 1958 Easter season with Adele Addison, John McCollum, Mack Harrell, Paul Ukena and Louise Natale as soloists with the orchestra and the Robert Shaw Chorus.

In Honegger's "Jeanne d'Arc au Bûcher," with Leonard Bernstein conducting, Felicia Montalegre will narrate the title role. Miss Addison, Leontyne Price, Mr. Lloyd, Lorenzo Alvaray and Martial Singher will be soloists with the Westminster Choir. Carl Sandburg will be narrator in a concert under Andre Kostelanetz' direction.

Other Conductors
The two principal conductors, Messrs. Mitropoulos and Bernstein, will be in charge for seven weeks each. Andre Cluytens will conduct for four weeks, Fernando Previtali for three, Ernest Ansermet, Rafael Kubelik and Thomas Schippers for two weeks each and Mr. Shaw for one. Aaron Copland will share a program with Mr. Mitropoulos.

Mr. Kostelanetz will conduct a special Saturday night series of four concerts. Franco Alfari, associate conductor, will direct two concerts and Mr. Bernstein will conduct three of the five Young People's concerts. The Kostelanetz series has been placed on a subscription basis.

Records In Review

Dimitri Mitropoulos Shines With The Best

By J. ALBERT FRACHT
Conductor Charleston Symphony

GIVE DIMITRI MITROPOULOS something new and his star shines with the best. He conducts the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York on Columbia ML-5138 in a performance of the "Symphony No. 4 in F Minor" by Vaughan Williams.

The composer has been accepted as the dean of English composers and the "Fourth Symphony" is a splendid example of Williams at his finest. It has remarkable depth, is constructed on magnificent lines and is worthy of all our attention. Certainly Mitropoulos and his orchestra make the most of this important page in modern English history.

TWO IMPORTANT moderns are featured on RCA Victor LM-2083 by Charles Munch and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Both works were commissioned by the Boston Symphony to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Symphony Orchestra. One of these, the "Fantasies Symphoniques" (Symphony No. 6) by Martinu won the annual award by the New York Music Critics' Circle for "the best new orchestral work" made known to New York that year. The other work is one of Piston's best, which is saying considerable and is his "Symphony No. 6."

We recommend this record highly to our readers who are interested in pursuing music that is provocative and standard making for the day.

WILLIAM STEINBERG and his Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra play Wagner on Capitol P-3688, and in so doing offer a fine addition to the Easter holidays with an excellent performance of the "Prelude and Good Friday Spell." For added treasure they play the "Siegfried Idyll" and the Prelude to Die Meistersinger.

OUR EASTERN SHORE had better heed warnings that continue to come from the coast. On Capitol P-3685 we find the Roger Wagner Chorus singing a group of songs

that in spirit and content, fit well under the heading of the album, which is, "House of the Lord."

The collection was born to fit the need of several denominations beginning with "The Lord's Prayer" and continuing with music for the Greek Orthodox, Hebrew, Roman Catholic, and ending with the "Prayer of Thanksgiving."

EMANUEL VARDI, violinist, created a sensation years ago in New York with his fabulous technique. He may now be heard on MGM E-3432 playing several new works that are certainly something for our interest. We note with approval that Vardi is using his abilities as a stepping stone for excellent thinking. Bravo, and that goes too, for his collaborators, Conductor Solomon and the MGM String Orchestra.

PAUL KLETSKI and the Philharmonia Orchestra on Angel 35313 make full use of Hi-Fi and its boundless horizons in a performance of the "Symphony No. 1, in E Minor, Op. 39," by Sibelius. It's all startling and exciting to say the least.

HAPPY DAYS for devotees to the art of de los Angeles. She has never sung better than on her newest RCA Victor LM-1920. But why not? Verdi, Puccini, Rossini, Mascagni, Catalani and Boito are her daily bread and inspiration. The title of the record is as natural as the rest, "de los Angeles in Opera."

ANGEL RECORDS has two offerings as well for those who know what they want and are to be commended for their good taste in the old and the new. Gieseking playing the "Sonatas Nos. 30 in E, Op. 109, and No. 31 in A-Flat, Op. 110" by Beethoven, on record 35363. And on Record 35415, we find one of Carl Orff's happiest creations, the "Carmina Burana." An all-German cast under Conductor Wolfgang Sawallisch, that is excellent. The composer supervised the production, and everything naturally, is exactly as it should be.

Ο ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ ΘΑ ΔΩΣΗ ΣΥΝΑΥΛΙΑΣ ΕΙΣ ΠΟΛΕΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΙΤΑΛΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΥΣΤΡΙΑΣ

ΘΑ ΕΛΘΗ ΠΙΘΑΝΩΣ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΕΛΛΑΔΑ

Ο Δημήτριος Μητροπούλος συνεχίζει την θρησκευτική καλλιτεχνική δράση του με νέες περιποιήσεις. Ο διάσημος Έλληνας μουσικός θα δώση έφετος σειράν συναυλιών εις διαφόρους πόλεις της Γαλλίας και της Αυστρίας. Εις την Φλωρεντίαν θα διευθύνη την έκτακτον του έργου «Ερ- νάνς», εις δε τὸ Μιλάνον θα δώσῃ συμφωνικὴν συναυλίαν. Ἀκολουθῶν θα μεταβῇ εἰς Σάλτσμπουργκ, ὅπου δὲ διευθύνῃ τὴν «Ηλέκτραν» τοῦ Ρίχαρντ Στράους, εἰς πεντε κατὰ σειράν συναυλίαν, εἰς καθάς ἐπίσημην καὶ δύο συναυλίας μετὰ τὴν «Εντοίμωσιν» τοῦ Στράους καὶ ἔργα συγχρόνως ἅ ἡμερικανῶν συνθέτων. Τὴν ἰδίαν περίοδον, ὁ Κάρολος θα διευθύνῃ εἰς Ζυρίχην συναυλίαν, ὅπου μετὰ ἔργα Γερμανῶν συνθέτων, εἰς τὴν Βιέννην ἐξ ἑλλοῦ, ὁ Μητροπούλος θα ἐπισκεφθῇ τὴν «Ηλέκτραν» καὶ θὰ δώσῃ συναυλίαν μετὰ ἔργα Μότσαρτ. Τέλος εἰς τὴν Λοκέρνην θα μεταβῇ τὸν ἐκεί ἑορτῶν διαβύλων τὴν πρώτην συμφωνίαν τοῦ Σούμαν μετὰ τὸν μεγαλὸν Γάλλον πιανίσταν Καστανέζος.

Ἐν τῷ μεταξύ πληροφοροῦμεθα ὅτι τὸ προσεχὲς ἔτος ὁ Μητροπούλος θα μεταβῇ πάλιν εἰς τὸ Ἰσραὴλ ὅπου ἐπ' ἐκείνην τὸν ἐγκαινίων τοῦ ἐν Τελ Ἀβίβ νέου μουσικοῦ κτίριου θὰ διευθύνῃ σειράν συναυλιῶν. Τὸ ταξίδιον τοῦ θὰ τὸ συνδυάσῃ ἐνδεχομένως μετὰ ἐπισκεψὶν τοῦ εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα.

Ο Ἕλληνας μαέστρος θὰ ἐπιστρέψῃ ἐκ τῶν ὁκταβίων εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα διὰ τὴν διευθύνῃ τὴν ἐναρκτήριον παράστασιν τῆς Φιλαρμονικῆς καὶ τὴν πανηγυρικὴν πρώτην τῆς Μητροπόλεως.

From APR 20 1957
Christian Science Monitor
Boston, Mass.

Orchestral Roundup

By Miles Kastendieck
New York

On tour for the first time in two years, the Philharmonic-Symphony has been making one-night stands through New York State. It has visited Kingston, Schenectady, Utica, Syracuse, Buffalo, Toronto, Rochester, and Corning. The Schenectady visit was the first in almost 40 years. After a week's rest, it returns to Carnegie Hall to finish the season.

The weekend before it left, Paul Paray returned to complete his three weeks of guest conducting. He had as soloist Zino Francescatti in the Brahms Violin Concerto. Mr. Francescatti gave a glowing account of the concert, admirably seconded by Mr. Paray.

Mitropoulos Concert

Dimitri Mitropoulos took the orchestra on tour. His only other recent appearance was at the second pension fund concert at which Renata Tebaldi was the soloist. A Verdi program made the evening wholly operatic in character. Mr. Mitropoulos conducted the overtures to "La Bal-taglia di Legnano," "Forza del Destino," "I Vespri Siciliani," "Giovanna d'Arco," and "Nabucco." The unfamiliar overtures and the ballet music from "Macbeth" brought freshness to the concert, for Miss Tebaldi chose to sing the well-known arias from "Trovatore," "La Forza," and "Otello."

The concert served to underline Miss Tebaldi's conscious artistry, a tendency all too familiar in her performances at the Metropolitan. What she chooses to do with an aria is quite open to criticism, but the quality of her voice and of her singing makes amends in part. Mr. Mitropoulos was quite in his element and became as much

the hero of the evening as Miss Tebaldi was the heroine.

The announcement that the line-up of conductors for the Philharmonic's 116th season will be quite different suggests that the orchestra's affairs have taken a turn for the better. Mr. Mitropoulos and Leonard Bernstein will share the season as principal conductors. Ernest Ansermet, André Cluytens, Rafael Kubelik, Fernando Previtali, and Robert Shaw will make debuts as guests. Thomas Schippers will return as a guest conductor.

APR 21 1957

POST
Houston, Texas

Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Opera

One of the really distinguished conductors of opera in the field today, Dimitri Mitropoulos, gained that distinction in a very short time after taking up this particular line of work rather late in his career.

He first became prominent as a strictly orchestral leader and was so occupied with symphonic music that he did not find time to conduct a major opera until 1950, when he presided at a performance of Richard Strauss' "Elektra" at the Florence May Festival.

That event was the beginning of intense operatic activity in Europe for the renowned Greek conductor. At La Scala in Milan he directed Berg's "Wozzeck," Verdi's "La Forza del Destino" and Puccini's "Girl of the Golden West," finally making his debut with the Metropolitan Opera Company in New York with another performance of a Strauss composition.

This was the dramatic "Salome" which Mitropoulos conducted on Dec. 15, 1954, on

a bill with the ballet, "Vittorio," set to the music of Verdi. Later that season he returned for Verdi's "Un Ballo in Maschera," and since then he has constantly added to his repertoire with the Met.

Among the works which he has added are "Boris Godunov," "Manon Lescaut," "Tosca," "Madame Butterfly" and "Carmen." He has also officiated at operatic performances in other European centers, such as the Salzburg Festival, and he is to conduct "Manon Lescaut" soon at the Vienna State Opera.

Mitropoulos' reputation in America, of course, also rests securely on his operations as conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony and later as musical director of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony.

When the Metropolitan Opera comes to Houston next month, Mitropoulos will be on hand to conduct both performances to be seen here—"Carmen" on May 13 and "Tosca"

PLANS ADVANCED FOR MUSIC FETE

La Guardia House to Benefit
by Event in Carnegie Hall
to Be Held Wednesday

Plans are being completed for the La Guardia Memorial House Music Festival of the Nations, "Around the World in New York," which will take place next Wednesday in Carnegie Hall.

Committees working for the success of the event have been meeting in Carlton House. Mayor Wagner is honorary chairman, Mrs. Fiorello H. La Guardia and Newbold Morris are co-chairmen of sponsors, and Alexander Hamilton and Mrs. Edward M. Warburg are co-chairmen of the benefit committee.

The festival will feature the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos and Alfredo Antonini; Sammy Davis Jr., Jan Peerce, Leontyne Price, Cesare Siepi and other performers, Fannie Hurst will be the narrator.

Tickets may be obtained from Miss Jessie Fanshawe at 136 East Sixty-fourth Street.

La Guardia Memorial, a non-sectarian, nonpartisan social center in the East Harlem area, was founded in 1898 as Haarlem House. Edward Corsi is chairman of the board of directors of the settlement, which promotes music, the drama, arts and crafts and conducts classes in English and citizenship for the foreign-born.

It also provides clubs for parents, lectures, public forums and athletics and social activities for teen-agers and sends about 1,000 underprivileged youngsters to the country in the summer.

Members of the benefit committee include Licia Albanese, Bruno Zitrato, Max Ascoli, Mrs. Wendell Willkie, Mrs. Spyros Skouras, Robert Benjamin, Mrs. DeWitt Stetten, Walter Binger, John M. Schiff, Mrs. Draper Boncompagni, David Sarnoff, Maj. Alexander P. de Seversky, Angier Biddle Duke, David Rockefeller, Miss Hurst, Mrs. Lionello Perera, Ezio Pinza, Mrs. Oswald B. Lord, Mrs. Har- Stanley Isaacs, Robert Moses, old V. Milligan and Mrs. James B. Mabon.

From APR 25 1957
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

BENEFIT MUSICAL SHOW

'Around World in New York'
Aids La Guardia House

"Around the World in New York," a musical program featuring the Philharmonic-Symphony under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos and Alfredo Antonini, was presented at Carnegie Hall last night.

Soloists included Leontyne Price, Miklos Schwalb, Yi-Kwei Sze, Cesare Siepi, Gerhard Pechner, Frank Poretta, Nestor Chayres, Sammy Davis Jr. and Stewart Foster.

Other performers were Italian, Polish, Latin-American, Ukrainian, Israeli, French and Norwegian singing and dancing groups. The event was for the benefit of La Guardia Memorial House.

COMPLETE NEW YORK STATE SERVICE

KINGSTON PRESS Thursday, April 18, 1957 N. Y. Philharmonic Greeted in Kingston, Capacity Audience

BY W. W. FREDENBURGH

A very pleasant evening of some of the world's loveliest music was enjoyed by a capacity audience Monday Apr. 8 when the Community Concert Association presented its final concert of the season at the Community Theatre.

The attraction was the one hundred and seven men New York Philharmonic Orchestra under the inspired and energetic leadership of Dimitri Mitropoulos, playing a program featuring Richard Strauss, Beethoven and Brahms.

Although the conducting technique of Mr. Mitropoulos differs greatly from that of many of our great conductors, as long as he gets what he wants from his men, that is what counts. Monday night both conductor and orchestra were in top form, giving beautiful renditions of the works performed, bringing out their characteristics and emotions portrayed.

The Strauss number, inspired by the poem of Nikolaus Lenau, with its dissonances and powerful themes was very interesting.

The Beethoven Symphony, while not one of his greatest, was very beautiful with its melodies and attractive rhythms—all joy, sunshine, happiness.

The Symphony in D Major by Brahms was a great favorite with the audience, with the French horn announcing the main theme, repeated in changed form and heard again in the Coda. This work, melodious and with its rich modulations brought the set program to a close, but resulted in an ovation to Mr. Mitropoulos and the orchestra. After several recalls the director responded with the orchestra playing Verdi's "La Forza del Destino" as an encore.

A few newspaper people had an opportunity to meet Mr. Mitropoulos a few minutes before the Concert. They found him cordial, gracious and cooperative. In answer to questions referring to teenagers, the noted conductor said, "When I was a teenager, I didn't like classical music." "When people are young they like everything that appeals to their age. As they grow older and more mature, then they begin to appreciate and understand the depths of classical music and its meaning. So it was with me." Then smiling, he continued, "Of course, many people never do grow up." Speaking of composers, particularly those in Russia, he was emphatic in declaring that "music knows no boundaries—it knows no politics. Music is music. A man composing a number is a man first. He feels emotions just as we all do and these emotions he translates into musical form. Shostakovitch, who today, is behind the Iron Curtain, is a musical genius. His government has no say in his expression of art. It is the same the world over."

Asked as to his preferences in music, Mr. Mitropoulos replied that he had no preferences for any particular type. "I derive pleasure from it all, jazz, modern and old masters. Each composition to me spells out a meaning. If it is dramatic I try to be more dramatic—if romantic, I try to be more romantic. I love it all." Time was up—concert must begin.

From APR 28 1957
NEWS
New York, N. Y.

The season's second Philharmonic-Symphony working rehearsal open to student members of the city's senior high school orchestras and bands takes place this afternoon at Carnegie Hall from 1 to 3:30, with Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting. The first open rehearsal, Dec. 26, drew a full house and this time, too, all the seats were grabbed up as soon as the invitation was extended.

APR - - 1957
MUSICAL LEADER
CHICAGO ILL.
New
Editor and Critic: SHIRLEY CECILLE CASIL, 42 Cl
Other Critics: Harry L. Fuchs, SI
With The Orchestras

An exquisite reading of Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto featured the Philharmonic-Symphony program, Feb. 28, with Rudolf Serkin at the piano and Dimitri Mitropoulos on the podium. Serkin has perfectly disciplined technique, the singing tone quality, the fire and passion in interpretation. Mitropoulos gave good support, and also conducted the premiere of Gail Kubik's remarkably attractive Symphony No. 3, and Schubert's Symphony No. 5. . . A beautiful reading of Glazunoff's Violin Concerto was the result of the happy combination of Erica Morini as violin soloist and Max Rudolf as guest conductor. Miss Morini has sensitivity of nuance, lyricism, and patrician taste. The balance of the program was nicely varied, with Haydn's Symphony No. 86, Dello Joio's "Variations, Chaconne and Finale," and the Overture to Wagner's "The Flying Dutchman" . . . Eugene Istomin gave a youthful, virile performance of Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto, March 7, with the Philharmonic, Mitropoulos conducting. The piano tones rang out in huge, rugged tones. Here was an interpretation that was anything but introspective. It had a clean vigor that produced a stirring appeal. The program opened with the U. S. premiere of Gunther Schuller's "Dramatic Overture," a work written in a twelve-tone "row," contemporary but not ultra-modern. The evening concluded with a heartfelt performance of Strauss's "Sinfonia Domestica."

Mitropoulos has chosen an all-Verdi program for the concert which he will conduct on April 3 for the benefit of the Society's Pension Fund, with the soprano Renata Tebaldi making her Philharmonic debut as soloist.



CONDUCTOR MITROPOULOS

From APR 25 1957
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

NOTABLES ATTEND HEART FUND BALL

Dewey Gives Awards to 12
for Services Rendered to
Humanitarian Causes

Many distinguished guests attended the Salute to the Heart of America Ball last night. The dinner-dance was given for the benefit of the Heart Fund.

Proceeds of the fete, which was held in the Ball Room of the Waldorf-Astoria, will further the New York Heart Association's program of research, community services and education.

During the evening, former Gov. Thomas E. Dewey read citations and presented gold watches to a group of men and women "for their contribution to humanitarian causes." The recipients were Mrs. Clare Boothe Luce, Bernard M. Baruch, Mrs. Lytle Hull, Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, Mrs. William Randolph Hearst, James A. Farley, Eddie Cantor, Dimitri Mitropoulos, Bruce Barton, Spyros F. Skouras, Dr. Paul Dudley White and Arthur Balantine.

The ball, which was sponsored by Buitoni Foods, the Bulova Watch Company, Cartier, Inc., and Schenley Industries, was preceded by a reception in the West Foyer for honor guests and those who received awards.

Mrs. Dwight D. Eisenhower was honorary chairman of the event and Mrs. Richard M. Nixon, Mrs. John Foster Dulles, Mrs. Averell Harriman and Mrs. Robert F. Wagner were honorary vice chairmen.

Mrs. William C. Breed, benefit chairman, and Mrs. Preston Davies, special projects committee chairman, were among those who entertained at the ball.

Their guests included Mrs. Ballantine, Mrs. Hull, Mr. and Mrs. Dewey, Mr. Mitropoulos, Mrs. Lyon Slater, vice chairman of the dance; Dr. and Mrs. Bunche, Mrs. Luce, Sir Pierson Dixon, Mr. Skouras, Carl W. Whitmore, Mayor and Mrs. Wagner, Mr. Barton, Dr. A. Wilbur Duryee, Mr. Farley and Mrs. William Randolph Hearst Jr.

Also among the hosts were Mr. Davie, Mr. and Mrs. Lowell Weicker, Mr. and Mrs. William Langley and Mrs. William Woodward, Gen. and Mrs. Ralph K. Robertson, Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Gimbel, Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Wyman, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Rosenstiel, Mr. and Mrs. Giovanni Buitoni, Mr. and Mrs. Miltiades Kyrtis and Mr. and Mrs. Sophocles Zoullas.

Others who had tables included Mrs. Norbert Bogdan, Mrs. Edgar Leonard, Mrs. Clark Williams, Mrs. Owen Cheatham, Mr. and Mrs. Roderick Tower, Mrs. Elizabeth N. Graham, Mrs. Lionel F. Straus, Mrs. Pierre David Weil, Mrs. Albert Lasker, Lauder Greenway, Mrs. Ann Rentschler, Mrs. Richard West and Mrs. Henry Hubschman Jr.

From APR 28 1957
HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Dimitri and the Duke



A new series entitled "Music for Moderns" begins this evening in Town Hall. Today's concert includes the world premiere of Duke Ellington's "Such Sweet Thunder," to be played by Mr. Ellington's orchestra under his direction, and Kurt Weill's Violin Concerto, which will be conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos with Anahid Ajemian as the featured soloist.

From APR 26 1957
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

Music: Kentner With Philharmonic

Pianist Heard in Local
Orchestral Debut

By ROSS PARMENTER

LOUIS KENTNER, Hungarian-born British pianist, whose recital debut here last November was one of the notable successes of the season, scored a second success last night when he appeared as the soloist with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony at Carnegie Hall.

The concert was his New York orchestral debut, and the work he played was the Brahms Second Piano Concerto. It is a composition conceived on a huge scale and it was a joy to hear it played by a pianist able and willing to meet it on its own terms. For Mr. Kentner is a pianist in the grand manner, who commands a huge tone and can play with a big singing line.

With his aquiline profile, the great dome of his forehead and his hair worn long at the sides, he looked as if he were born to play Brahms. He sounded as if he were, too, for he made the massive chords ring out, while all the time his playing sustained the work's ebb and flow of surging

melody. The orchestra, led by Dimitri Mitropoulos, quickly sensed that this was a pianist who could match a big symphonic ensemble, and thereafter it played without fear of drowning him. And yet, not all the playing was heroic. The third movement was tenderly songful, as it was meant to be; and the finale had an infec-

Louis Kentner

From APR 29 1957
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music: 'For Moderns'

Mitropoulos, Duke In Joint Concert

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Dimitri Mitropoulos and Duke Ellington divided conductorial honors on last night's "Music for Moderns" program in Town Hall.

The concert, described as "Twelve Tone to Ellingtonia," was the first in a series of four programs sponsored by Anahid Ajemian and George Avakian with the idea of bringing various trends together under one roof.

Mr. Mitropoulos opened the program with an American concert premiere of the late Kurt Weill's violin concerto, composed in 1924 in the Twelve-tone system made both famous and infamous by Schoenberg and Berg.

After the intermission, the jovial and dynamic Mr. Ellington led his own symphonic huddle in the world premiere of a Shakespearean suite conceived by himself and Billy Strayhorn.

Sensitive Reading.

The concerto, a vital, searching, and highly individualistic score, unlike anything Weill wrote for Broadway, was given an alert and sensitive reading by Miss Ajemian, a lady with a persuasive bow.

Conducting a 14-piece ensemble,

Mr. Mitropoulos brought out the work's rich fund of color and theme and rhythm. At his inspired bidding each of 14 musicians sounded like a first-class virtuoso.

Mr. Ellington's suite—titled "Such Sweet Thunder" (from "A Midsummer Night's Dream")—enjoyed the urbane commentary of its composer, besides his conducting and his gay embroideries at the keyboard.

New Things to Say.

The suite was commissioned for this summer's Shakespearean festival in Stratford, Ontario. It comprises "vignettes and miniatures" based on dual impressions of Caesar, Iago, Lady Macbeth, and others.

The Suite proved that Mr. Ellington is still finding new things to say in the jazz medium and saying them in his own way. His Shakespearean researches have paid off in fresh new color and pungent rhythms.

Typical of Mr. Ellington's running commentary was the remark that he suspected "Lady Macbeth had some ragtime in her soul." His revealing character study showed she had, that and a few other things besides.

From MAY 4 - 1957

World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music

But Public Loves Puccini... His Operas Most Often Sung in U.S.

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Whatever the gloomy deans of music may say, the American public seems to have voted Giacomo Puccini the operatic composer of the year.

Reports show that "La Boheme" built up the highest national total of performances of all operas in the field, and "Tosca" outdistanced by several lengths every other opera in the Metropolitan repertory.

There are those savants whose pet avocation it is to belittle the genius of Puccini and dismiss his works as the ultimate in clamorous melodrama. The public is somehow never swayed by their lofty pronouncements.

The fact is that further study of Puccini's scores, heightened by the appeal of such inspired personalities as Dimitri Mitropoulos and Renata Tebaldi, has only served to point up the remarkable power of the Italian composer.

Beyond the Moment.

It may be that one should be on one's guard against the wild surges of public acclaim, that one should be wary of mistaking the momentary appeal of a dazzling performance for the intrinsic splendor of the music. Suppose we subtract the added power brought to the operas of Puccini by the searching and dynamic vision of a Mitropoulos and the golden gifts of a Tebaldi. We still have left the miracle of the operas themselves.

These operas — "Boheme,"

"Tosca," "Madama Butterfly"—have an attraction that goes far beyond the moment. They satisfy the spectator in a deep and commanding way, both as gripping personal drama and as memorable music. They are in the finest tradition of the theater.

There is nothing quite like the romantic glow of the end of the first act of "Boheme," and one has to go to the last act of Verdi's "Otello" for anything like the build-up of suspense and tension in the second act of "Tosca."

Irresistibly Dramatic.

That act alone probably explains the powerful hold "Tosca" continues to have on the public. It is a compelling tableau of pantomime and conflicting drives, irresistibly heightened by the music.

It is very likely that the scene would strike us as ludicrous today in Sardou's original play. It is Puccini's genius that has lifted it to lasting universal impact. "Tosca" now inhabits a world of supreme tragedy.

This growing affection for the works of Puccini is far from a temporary craze. There generations of opera fans have already succumbed to his power, and today there is probably even keener awareness of the master's magnificent gifts.

Puccini was no ivory tower artist experimenting beyond the reach of the public. He sought and needed communication with the world. Having

fathomed the secrets of melodic and dramatic appeal, he exploited them to the full range of his genius.

It speaks well for the American public that it has so unreservedly taken this Italian to its heart. Puccini is the voice of eternal youth and romance in opera, of hopes fulfilled and thwarted, of a pathos beyond tears.

Such is the man who was first in the hearts of our opera-going countrymen this season.

From MAY 6 1957
TELEGRAPH
New York, N. Y.

Dimitri Mitropoulos and Duke Ellington played at the Music For Moderns Town Hall Concert. A 2:00 p.m. rehearsal was scheduled. They begged that it be made an hour later because they had a "very important appointment." Their secret 'til now: they are both big western movie fans and both were dying to see a particular cowboy picture that was on TV that day.

From MAY 3 - 1957
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music: The Philharmonic

Walton Cello Concerto Has Carnegie Premiere

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Gregor Piatigorsky joined forces with Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic in the New York premiere of a cello concerto by Sir William Walton in Carnegie Hall last night.

The performance was a brilliant one from all three points of view—the soloist's, the conductor's and the orchestra's, which, of course did no harm to either the composer's point of view or the public's.

Like so much of this gifted Briton's music, the concerto is vigorous, well-made stuff, bristling with fine effects of color and rhythm and sparkling with melodic epigram. Sir William Walton hasn't lost his clever touch.

The concerto is only broadly patterned on traditional forms,

Sir William as always, preferring to choose paths of his own in reaching goals of his own. The work has a kind of self-made motivation, fresh and daring.

If Sir William hasn't lost his touch, neither has Mr. Piatigorsky. His fingers wove through the sinuous solo line last night with easy confidence and expressive beauty. This is his concerto in more ways than one.

Sir William has thus been lucky a third time with a string concerto. William Primrose gave his Viola Concerto a beautiful sendoff years ago. Later the performance of Dallapic-

Jascha Heifetz did as much for the violin concerto.

Sir William also owes Mr. Mitropoulos a good deal for last night's performance. The concerto evolved with that compelling fervor and searching inner drive that make a Mitropoulos premiere an exciting event.

Earlier, Mr. Mitropoulos brought back the "Corsair" overture of Berlioz in a reading that amounted to a complete revival and rediscovery of its dazzling romantic visions. What splendid playing!

Further testimony of the man's consummate artistry was the performance of Dallapic-

cola's Divertimento for Violin and Orchestra entitled "Tartini-ana." John Corigliano was the sensitive soloist.

This is Mr. Dallapiccola's personal alliance with the genius of Tartini—music of deft interweaving of the old and new, warm with affection and a feeling for traditional Italian melody.

Mr. Mitropoulos brought out all its rich diversity of theme and variation, of pivotal idea and expansion. It was a refreshing review of the classical ideal in terms of the present.

Mendelssohn's "Scotch" symphony closed the program.

From APR 26 1957
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music: Kentner Featured

Brahms at Carnegie Hall

Mitropoulos Conducts Philharmonic

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

A stirring performance of Brahms' Second Piano Concerto climaxed the Philharmonic program conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos in Carnegie Hall last night.

Featured soloist in the monumental score was Louis Kentner, 52-year-old British pianist who only made his American debut early this season—to the unqualified rapture of a Town Hall audience.

Mr. Kentner was again the artist of heroic scope and expressive power. His hands moved sturdily through turbulent passages and inscribed memorable poetry in moments of haunting reverie.

He is a pianist of the very first rank, this visitor from Europe, with a technic so assured that it becomes almost irrelevant in the overall effect

of dramatic and poetic grandeur achieved.

Brahms' Second Concerto is often called "a symphony with a piano obbligato"—actually a complimentary allusion to the massively integrated fabric in which Brahms weaves all elements inseparably together.

But let nobody be fooled by the word "obbligato." This concerto imposes terrific demands on the hands, heart and brain of the pianist. It also imposes a special sense of teamwork.

The beauty of Mr. Kentner's share of the performance was that by remaining within the prescribed limits of a larger unity. It revealed the greater artist and the more accomplished pianist.

Now that he has at long last broken the ice by giving us both a recital and an appearance with orchestra, we can only hope Mr. Kentner will make the Atlantic crossing a regular feature of his seasonal schedule.

If anybody doubted Mr. Mitropoulos' power to evoke

the very essence of Brahms. There was a magnificent all-around performance of the concerto last night to set any such doubt at rest.

Beethoven's Eighth.

Much of the same thing might be said of his reading of Beethoven's Eighth Symphony. The mastery of design and structure was as conspicuous a part of the reading as the sense of inner and propulsion.

A brilliant account of Elliott Carter's ebullient and expertly scored "Holiday Overture" opened the program.

From MAY 6 1957
HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

2 Young Musicians Appear In Debut at Carnegie Hall

By Francis D. Perkins

Two young musicians made first Carnegie Hall appearances in the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra's week-end concerts. Gordon Sherwood, the twenty-seven-year-old winner of the twelfth annual George Gershwin Memorial contest for young American composers, was called to the stage for bows yesterday afternoon after Dimitri Mitropoulos had conducted the first performance of his "Introduction and Allegro." Ray Dudley, Canadian pianist, was heard here for the first time with orchestra on Saturday night, when Franco Auriti was the conductor in Rachmaninoff's Third Concerto, in D minor.

Mr. Sherwood's work, which has brought him a cash prize of \$1,000 as well as this Philharmonic premiere, is the closing part of a symphony, but it is also self-sufficient, and tells of a promising talent in its ten-minute course. Despite its double title, it is a single thematically unified movement. The introduction is immediately absorbing, with its dark-hued, expansive sonority of lower orchestral voices and fertile ideas. These measures are spacious and eloquent with a luminous somberness which avoids opacity. The allegro also shows skill in its scoring, with logic and economy in its musical development. But it seemed less exceptional. It has a definite expressive atmosphere, but here the preceding emotional force became a motor force which, while effective, was more conventional. The work as a whole, admirably and intelligently played, left the reviewer with a wish to hear more of Mr. Sherwood's music.

Gregor Piatigorsky reappeared as soloist yesterday afternoon in Sir William Walton's new cello concerto, and Mr. Mitropoulos completed his program with Beethoven's Eighth Symphony and Tchaikovsky's "Capriccio Italien."

From MAY 6 - 1957
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music: Philharmonic

Composer Pianist in Car

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

A prize-winning American composer and a Canadian pianist—both in their twenties—made their Philharmonic debuts in Carnegie Hall over the weekend.

The winner was Gordon Sherwood of Ann Arbor, Mich., the prize the \$1000 awarded annually by the Gershwin Memorial Foundation, the winning composition an "Introduction and Allegro." The world premiere was heard yesterday.

Saturday night marked the first local appearance with the orchestra of Ray Dudley, a widely acclaimed award-holder in his native Canada, who had made his Town Hall debut earlier in the season. Mr. Dudley played Rachmaninoff's Third Concerto.

The twenty-seven-year-old Mr. Sherwood is the twelfth

winner of the Gershwin Award. By an odd coincidence, last year's winner, the eleventh, was his Ann Arbor roommate of the past four years, Reginald H. Hall.

The "Introduction and Allegro" comprise the concluding sections of a symphony. They are related thematically, at least one of the themes of the first part being expanded and elaborated in the Allegro.

It is forceful music of a kind, a bit rowdy in places and somewhat loosely put together, but affirming a strong taste for thematic and rhythmic drama, and an ability to keep things moving.

Dimitri Mitropoulos, ever the champion of new talent, gave the Sherwood score a vivid reading, bringing out its full burden of tension and individuality. One was left with a curiosity about the rest of Mr. Sherwood's symphony.

COMPLETE NEW YORK
STATE SERVICE

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 1957

Schumann Memorial Foundation To Sponsor Tour

The Schumann Memorial Foundation, one of whose earliest concert promotions was an appearance at the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School of the Mannes-Gimpal-Silva Trio, is to sponsor a trio of its own, to be known as the Schumann Memorial Trio. This unit, being formed now, is to be given a concert tour each season, but of such limited duration that its members' usual commitments will not be materially upset. Just what musicians will make up this trio is a matter now in the hands of the Schumann Memorial Foundation's Advisory Council. This Advisory Council is comprised of Dr. Rudolph Ganz, president-emeritus of the Chicago Musical College of Roosevelt University; Dr. Sir Ernest Campbell MacMillan of the School of Music of Toronto University; Dr. Dimitri Mitropoulos of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra; Dr. H. G. Owen, Dean of Rutgers University down at New Brunswick, N. J.; Felix Schumann, a great-grandson of Robert Schumann and now living in Germany; Robert Sommerhoff Sr., a grand-son of Robert Schumann; Dr. Sigmund Spaeth, the well-known author of books on musical subjects; Dr. Alfred Wallenstein, conductor-emeritus of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra; and Dr. Livingston Welch, president of the Hunter College Opera Association down at New York City.

Each member of the group listed is to nominate one pianist, one violinist, and one cellist to the trio. At the moment of writing only three slates of nominees are missing. Once organized a suitable booking agent will be selected and promotion begun. To further general knowledge of the Schumanns it is planned that in each contract involving the new trio there will be this line: "There shall be one composition of either Robert or Clara Schumann or Beethoven's 'Archduke Trio' on the program." That the Beethoven composition should be so listed is because when this work was first published—in a very beautiful, art edition—the publisher gave the first copy off, properly autographed, to Mme Clara Schumann, which fact makes the close tie-in suggested; and, incidentally, the copy mentioned was presented to the Schumann Memorial Foundation by Robert Sommerhoff when he first became acquainted with Mrs. June Dickinson's efforts to make his grandfather's works familiar to all Americans.

MUSIC AND MUSICIANS

By PAUL HENRY LANG

Fewer Concerts, More Rehearsals

The April 25 concert of the Philharmonic provided a rather pleasant surprise in the excellent performance of Beethoven's Eighth Symphony. As is common knowledge, this great orchestra is not quite what it used to be; its luster is a bit pale, its precision not within tolerances accepted by organizations of its rank, and its spirit not as buoyant as it might be. Yet, every once in a while among the routine or just so-so performances, suddenly we hear one that recalls the "old" Philharmonic.

On the above mentioned occasion, I was struck by the good tone, the ensemble work, and notably the precision displayed in the Beethoven symphony; Mr. Mitropoulos was relaxed, giving cues only when necessary, the men were given their head, and the conductor even directed from the score. All this added up to a flexible, well-balanced, and thoroughly enjoyable performance.

Curiously, right after this demonstration of really first class orchestral music making, the Philharmonic settled back to entirely uneventful playing, supporting Louis Kentner's remarkable performance of Brahms' Second Piano Concerto with a routine accompaniment that had neither spirit nor spark. One naturally asks, why should the orchestra sound fresh and pliable in the Beethoven, heavy and unimaginative in the Brahms?

Rehearsal Is Vital

A little inquiry disclosed the fact that the Beethoven work was played several times on a recent tour of the Philharmonic, thus receiving proper preparation and considerable attention, whereas the Brahms concerto had been gone over once. Sure enough, the repeat performance of the concerto, the next day, was a far better one. The moral is very simple to deduce: rehearsals are vital.

This orchestra is composed of musicians to whom the technical difficulties of the Brahms concerto offer not the slightest problem; they can play it, or anything of this sort, without any rehearsal and make no untoward mistakes. But this is not an artistic feat, only routine playing of the notes. No two soloists play a concerto the same way, therefore conductor and orchestra must become familiar with the visiting artist's concept in order to keep him congenial company. This cannot be achieved through the usual conference between conductor and artist, followed by a perfunctory "playing through" of the composition; the orchestra must hear the soloist in action, and must work on its own part as if it were a symphony—which it is, only more difficult.

Our Philharmonic has a taxing schedule: concerts on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, for twenty-eight weeks, with at least two programs per weekend. On the weekend under discussion it played three different symphonies, a modern American overture, two concertos (one a United States premiere), another overture, and a

great big noisy Bach transcription. This cannot be done from week to week in a consistently artistic manner unless there are solid rehearsals every day.

Proper Ratio

As far as its local audience is concerned, the Philharmonic operates under a great handicap anyway. When the Boston or Philadelphia orchestras come to town they play programs that have been through the crucible, so to speak: after the home performance or performances. Therefore we hear well-set and polished offerings. The Thursday concerts of the New York Philharmonic—the ones that are first reviewed—do not present the orchestra at its best; unfortunately, by Sunday, when it is well settled, the interim performances having served as quasi public rehearsals, the concert is no longer news from the point of view of accepted journalistic practice.

Who sets the pace for the rehearsals, and how is the ratio of concerts to rehearsals established? It seems quite evident that the ratio is faulty, that there should be more rehearsals and fewer concerts.

Every one knows, of course, that rehearsals cost money and fewer concerts diminish income, but the Philharmonic-Symphony Society will have to make up its mind just what kind of an orchestra it wants. On its recent European tour, when the orchestra played well-rehearsed programs a number of times, every one recognized it for what it potentially is: one of the world's greatest orchestras. But

the home audience gets a different impression and only occasionally do we get a glimpse of the true Philharmonic.

At stake are artistic principles and reputation; ordinary business arguments will provide neither answer nor solution, and the Board of the orchestra will have to come up with some imaginative thinking. It is unfair to subject this fine orchestra to double jeopardy: inadequately rehearsed performances and competition with the well-tried offerings of the visiting groups. Let them give three concerts instead of four and use the extra time gained for rehearsing.

And by the way, if and when the Board discusses these things, it would be very useful to balance managerial advice with musical opinions.



From
MAY 10 1957
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

MUSIC FOR CHORUS HEARD AT CONCERT

Walton, Foss, Kodaly Works
on Opening Program of the
Philharmonic's Last Week

One of the many definitions of music calls it "controlled noise." We had that in plenty last night at the beginning of the final week of Philharmonic-Symphony programs in Carnegie Hall. The controlled noise in question came from William Walton's "Belshazzar's Feast," sung by Giorgio Tozzi, bass, and the Schola Cantorum backed by the Philharmonic forces.

It was a lot of fun to encounter once again Sir William's very proper account of high jinks in the Babylonian court of Belshazzar. The scoring remains brilliant, the carefully cultivated barbarism makes a heck of a racket, and there is some exciting propulsive writing. The performance last night was excellent. Mr. Tozzi was in fine voice, and the chorus did not get lost in the tangle of sound; and Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted with appropriate vigor.

Two new works were on the program. Niels Viggo Bentzon's "Variazioni Brevi," the only non-choral work of the evening, received its first American performance. The score shows a fine feeling for orchestral sound, plenty of rhythmic impulse, a good number of contemporary clichés and a rather inhibited melodic sense.

Lukas Foss, who was present at the concert, heard the world premiere of his "Psalms" for chorus and orchestra. This thirteen-minute, one-movement work is strongly eclectic in nature, with elements of jazz, Copland and other sources. It does not represent a fully matured musical speech, but it does have its effective moments. Solo sections were capably sung by two members of the Schola Cantorum, Paul Gavert and Eleanor Parker.

The most gripping music of the evening came with Kodaly's "Psalms Hungaricus," with David Lloyd as the fine tenor soloist. Kodaly's music has no superficial excitement or surface slickness. It strikes deep with a minimum of orchestral apparatus. It differed from everything else on the program in that it was not the work of a composer out to please an audience or exhibit his virtuosity with orchestral and choral materials. Rather it was the work of a composer who was expressing himself—clearly, intensely and very, very personally.

H. C. S.

From MAY 10 1957

HERALD TRIBUNE

Philharmonic Concludes Thursday Concert Series

By Jay S. Harrison

PHILHARMONIC-SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CARNEGIE HALL
Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; soloists, David Lloyd, tenor; Giorgio Tozzi, bass; and Schola Cantorum. The program: "Psalms Hungaricus," by Kodaly; "Variazioni Brevi," by Bentzon; "Psalms" for Chorus and Orchestra, Foss (first performance in the U. S.); "Belshazzar's Feast" (first performance).

The Philharmonic-Symphony, as if to atone for its current neglect of contemporary music, last night concluded its Thursday series at Carnegie Hall with a program devoted to four works that have grown out of our time and are a part of them. Under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos, the orchestra offered a modern classic, Walton's "Belshazzar's Feast"; a novelty, Kodaly's "Psalms Hungaricus"; a world premiere, Lukas Foss' "Psalms" and an American debut, Niels Viggo Bentzon's "Variazioni Brevi." While, indeed, such an assortment is not likely to gain many converts to the contemporary cause among rear-guard Philharmonic subscribers, it did bring joy to those weary of the filling, if bland, diet habitually ladled out at these events.

To begin at the beginning, Bentzon's "Variazioni Brevi" struck me as an extremely forceful work—compelling, urgent, and uncompromising in its sternness.

The piece is as taut as a watch spring and wastes not a note on pleasant colorations or thematic fripperies. Thus, it is a rather unlovable work, though this is unimportant. It is not meant to charm the senses or seduce the ear; Mr. Bentzon, a leading Danish composer, has no truck with musical softness. As a writer, he is all muscle and nerves, all strength and energy. The "Variazioni" are flinty, eerie, spindly and, despite a certain gaucheness in the scoring, they strike quite wonderful dissonant sparks. Clearly, Mr. Bentzon's is a powerful voice, a voice to which rhetoric is alien and bombast anathema.

Alas, all the "Variazioni" are not the "Psalms Hungaricus"; it is not. It is a dreary work whose appeal, I imagine, must be confined to Kodaly's countrymen, for its musical message is dilute and impersonal. A Hungarian, however, able to find a point of association with the text might quite surely respond with ardor to the sentiments expressed therein. Myself, I found the keeping of the piece attenuated and its over-all meaning unclear; moreover, the performance was a mite gray and indistinct, David Lloyd, as the tenor soloist, being especially unsuited to imbuing his part with the passion of utterance patently desired by the composer.

Lukas Foss' "Psalms" were written on a commission from the Stockbridge Bowl Association of Stockbridge, Mass., with the specification that they begin with the line, "I will lift mine eyes unto the hills." And it is never less than apparent that Mr. Foss has tried devilish hard to lift them. As in so many of his works he attains to genuine nobility of expression and on occasion achieved his aim. The current piece, for example, contains several moments of true grandeur, but they are interspersed with episodes that hover close to the banal.

Mostly, I believe, it is the "Psalms" harmonic structure that keeps them from growing aurally incandescent. It is flabby, heavy, swollen and, though the choral writing is handsomely idiomatic, when combined with the orchestra the sonority of the whole turns quite dense and impenetrable. The work, in short, is not nearly so fresh or fragrant or verdant as the Berkshire Hills that presumably inspired it. It is cluttered and fussy, and the elemental dignity of the text finds no counterpart in its musical nature.

With the exception of the opening work, all of the evening's offerings called upon the services of the Schola Cantorum, and the bald truth is that the group, on former occasions, has covered itself with far more honor. Withal its singing was rather raucous and shrill and its balances off-center. Still, for all its faults the program, with its wealth of contemporary goods, was a tonic for the jaded palate.

From MAY 11 1957
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music: Commuting Conductor

Wide Range of Mitro Robert Bagar: Music Loses a

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

If one name more than any other has been deeply imprinted on the local music scene, it is that of Dimitri Mitropoulos, who brings the Philharmonic season to an end tomorrow afternoon.

As one looks back over the last seven months, one is staggered at both the quantity and the quality of activity of this restless and dedicated artist. New York is fortunate indeed to have him.

The end of the Philharmonic season is a reminder that Mr. Mitropoulos' direction of the city's proudest symphonic possession was only part, though a substantial and fruitful segment, of his wide-ranging activity.

The Metropolitan has come to claim his services in increasing benefit to the opera repertory. Each opera conducted by the maestro has become a new and refreshing experience for all of us.

Nor was this all. Mr. Mitropoulos, between symphonic and operatic assignments, might at any time be found in some other concert hall championing the cause of music for smaller ensembles and opening new doors to enlightened jazz.

There were weeks this season when the man conducted four, five, even six days in a row, commuting between the Met and Carnegie Hall and filling in with other functions

From MAY 12 1957

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

LONG WAY TO GO

The Task of Rebuilding Philharmonic Is Hard

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

THE most heartening thing about the 115th season of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, which is ending today, is that at long last there was an awareness that the venerable institution needed revitalizing.

That awareness was to be noted in the activities of the board, in modest changes in management, in the way the 1957-58 season was being planned. There is reason for hope, but the time is not yet for hosannas. A great deal remains to be done beyond what is promised, and one can only trust that there will be the vision and determination to proceed with the job until the Philharmonic has recovered its position of artistic eminence.

It was evident a year ago, when an exhaustive analysis of the Philharmonic's status and prospects was made on this page, that not a great deal in the way of change could be expected in the 1956-57 season. Commitments had been fixed, and the Philharmonic Society would require time to think about its future and consider reforms. In the meantime, those of us who yearned for a better day for the orchestra would have to be patient.

There were programs and performances during the 115th season when every bit of patience had to be invoked. As in the bad, old days of recent years one encountered slovenly playing, dull, turgid and superficial novelties and unworthy soloists. There were evenings when it was difficult to calculate who was more bored—performers or audience.

High Adventure

Fortunately, there were other evenings when one was reminded how high an adventure concert-going could be. The two weeks of Bruno Walter's guest leadership were momentous, and his interpretation of Mahler's "Resurrection" Symphony was unforgettable. The week in which Igor Stravinsky conducted his own music was an event. The conducting of several important American works by Leonard Bernstein brought excitement into Carnegie Hall. Paul Paray and Georg Solti contributed commendable professionalism to their stints as guest conductors. Dimitri Mitropoulos made music when his deepest affinities were engaged.

The season as a whole was scrappy. It was unpredictable, it had no design. Blame that in part on the old, indifferent habits of planning. Blame it also on the tragic accident that cut short the life of a gifted young conductor, Guido Cantelli, who was to be responsible for a substantial part of the season.

How does the future look? A little better. There will be more new faces on the podium next season than in many a year. Ernest Ansermet, André Cluytens, Rafael Kubelik, Fernando Previtali and Robert Shaw will conduct the Philharmonic for the first time. One can only say with respect to so familiar and distinguished a musician as Mr. Ansermet: Why in the world did we have to wait so long for him? Other guests will be Thomas Schippers and Aaron Copland. The latter is getting part of a program; he could well be entrusted with more.

Joint Responsibility

As to the decision to make Mr. Mitropoulos and Mr. Bernstein jointly responsible for the overall destinies of the orchestra, one cannot prejudge the outcome. But the principle of such a divided command needs some discussion.

The Philharmonic has designated Mr. Mitropoulos and Mr. Bernstein as "Principal Conductors." Each will be in charge of seven weeks of concerts. Mr. Bernstein will also take over as musical director of the Young People's Concerts, which may turn out to be a progressive move.

Presumably Mr. Mitropoulos and Mr. Bernstein have had a vital hand in laying out the 1957-58 season. Presumably they have been consulted about programs and soloists. In the latter category, by the way, a distinct improvement is in store for next season; promising new figures and important established ones, neglected in recent years, have finally received invitations to appear.

The divided command leaves one uneasy on an essential point: Who is to be responsible for orchestral discipline and morale? Who will see to it that standards of execution will be raised to their old estate and not permitted to deteriorate again?

Certainly not Mr. Mitropoulos. He has had ample opportunity and has failed. One does not question his sympathies for certain modern schools and his gifts of temperament and personality. But he appears to have neither the interest nor the special talent for the meticulous training or sustained leadership which inspires an orchestra to live up to its highest potentialities, whatever the music.

Mr. Bernstein has yet to prove that he has the single-minded dedication for such an achievement. This is not to say that he is incapable of it. He is a born conductor. Will his work and absorption hold up over a long haul? Next season will not provide the test.

It is to be assumed, however, that Mr. Bernstein will allow himself more time to prepare for his Philharmonic duties. One does not suggest that he skimped his programs during the past season. Nevertheless, it is hard to see how, with his composing for the Broadway theatre, his television appearances and Heaven knows what other activities, he could always marshal his best forces for his orchestral concerts.

The musical leadership of an orchestra like the Philharmonic should be, in all conscience, a full-time job. Whoever receives the assignment in the end should be prepared to devote the entire year to it. Granted that there will and should be guest conductors and that the permanent director should have the opportunity to refresh himself by appearing as guest with other ensembles. But the musical director's best faculties and the greater part of his time should be at the disposal of his own orchestra, as they are in the case of men like Eugene Ormandy and Charles Munch.

The board should have these considerations in mind as it contemplates the future. It is obvious that 1957-58 will be a transitional season in many ways. On its results may depend the choice of the Philharmonic's next musical director. The decision should not be hasty. If still another transitional year is in order, with other possibilities to be canvassed, the board should not hesitate to be patient.

Momentous Choice

The board is likely to have the choice of a new manager shortly. Here, too, it should be thoughtful and wise. It should seek someone unencumbered by other interests and loyalties, someone who knows music and musicians, someone who can give it the advice it has been seeking lately outside its own organization.

There is no doubt about the goodwill and energy of the top leadership of the Philharmonic Society. But the task before it is arduous. The Philharmonic still has a long way to come before it has recaptured its unassailable rank as the best. And it has an even longer road to take before it has adapted itself to cope with the problems and needs of a new day.

From MAY 10 1957
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music: 'Belshazzar's Feast'

Walton Opus Played at Carnegie Mitropoulos Conducts the Philharmonic

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Sir William Walton, who was in the local news last week with the premiere of a cello concerto, was again in the news last night with a mighty reading of "Belshazzar's Feast."

The hosts on both occasions were Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic, strongly supported this time by the Schola Cantorum, and Giorgio Tozzi, bass. The performance was in every way striking.

This early score of Walton's is made to order for a conductor of Mr. Mitropoulos' powerful sense of drama and for an orchestra and choir like last night's capable of wide range of color and flexibility.

Mr. Tozzi was also just right for the ringing prophetic power of the solo line, and of course Carnegie Hall was the ideal place, in spacious acoustics and broad perspective, for the tonal enactment of the awesome Biblical vision.

Although Walton has moved in many directions since writing this masterpiece in his late twenties, "Belshazzar's Feast" remains his passport to world fame. Its pages are a veritable feast of haunting and incisive music.

It is still further recognition of its enduring impact that Mr.

Mitropoulos chose "Belshazzar's Feast" as the very last work of the Philharmonic season. It was also the crowning score of a largely choral program last night.

Merging of Cities.

Earlier on the bill, Philharmonic patrons were also stirred by a highly dramatic rendering of Kodaly's "Psalms Hungaricus," a work commissioned in 1923 to commemorate the semi-centennial of the merging of the cities of Buda and Pesth.

There is strong national sentiment to this score. The text is vivid with the personal and patriotic aspirations of a Sixteenth Century Hungarian poet, while the music reflects the bold vitality of a brave and richly endowed people.

As tenor soloist David Lloyd eloquently voiced the pleas and denunciations of the Biblical Psalmist, and again Mr. Mitropoulos held firm rein on the mounting chant of soloist, choir and orchestra.

From MAY 13 1957
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

Mitropoulos Conducts the Philharmonic In Final Program of Its 115th Season

The Philharmonic-Symphony ended its season at Carnegie Hall yesterday afternoon with a concert under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos.

The orchestra performed Kodaly's "Psalms Hungaricus," with David Lloyd, tenor, as soloist; Walton's "Belshazzar's Feast," with Giorgio Tozzi, bass, as soloist, and Foss' "Psalms" for chorus and orchestra. The chorus was that of the Schola Cantorum.

The concert, the 5,693 in Philharmonic history, ended the orchestra's 115th season. The orchestra played a total of 125

concerts, of which 113 were subscription and non-subscription concerts, young people's concerts and pension fund benefit concerts at Carnegie Hall. The orchestra also gave a concert in Staten Island, two young people's concerts on Long Island, and nine out-of-town concerts in cities of New York, Connecticut and Ontario. Conductors for the season were Mr. Mitropoulos, Bruno Walter, Leonard Bernstein, Paul Paray, Georg Solti, Igor Stravinsky, Heitor Villa-Lobos, Max Rudolf, Franco Autieri and Wilfrid Pelletier.

From MAY 13 1957
CHRONICLE
Houston, Texas

Metropolitan Opera Singers Arrive Today

American's greatest band of troubadours—the renowned singers of the Metropolitan Opera—arrives in Houston today.

They will begin a two-performance run here at 8 p.m. tonight with Bizet's ever-popular opera "Carmen." Rise Stevens will sing the role of the flirtatious cigarette girl who becomes the victim of her jealous lover.

Tuesday night at 8, the company will offer Puccini's opera of love and trickery, "Tosca."

With arrival set for 2:45 p.m. today, the beloved

—before dawn this morning—was famed Greek-born conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos who will preside in the pit for both Houston performances. Both Miss Tebaldi and Mitropoulos are at the Rice Hotel.

The opera personnel travel in 20 Pullman cars on the two trains.

Renata Tebaldi, much acclaimed soprano who will fill the title role of "Tosca" Tuesday night arrived Sunday.

She came here following a triumphant Dallas performance as Violetta in "La Traviata"—one that had that city's critics raving.

RISE CANCELS ROOM

Star of tonight's "Carmen," Rise Stevens due in at the Shamrock here Sunday cancelled her reservations there.

Local Met manager Edna Saunders said she is not worried about her.

"She always appears when she is scheduled to appear," Mrs. Saunders said.

Metropolitan troupe will be coming via a special train, to the Union Station.

The company of 325 people—singers, conductors, musicians, stage managers, baggage superintendents, wardrobe mistresses and ballet dancers—travels on two trains. The technical people traditionally arrive first, to see to the unloading of 14 baggage cars which bring not only personal belongings but trunks of wardrobes and the gigantic sets and musical instruments.

An early arrival in Houston

From MAY 14 1957
CHRONICLE
Houston, Texas



Chronicle Photo
FAMED CONDUCTOR ARRIVES
Dimitri Mitropoulos

MADEIRA AND THE MAESTRO

Jean Madeira substituted for Rise Stevens in Monday night's performance of "Carmen" here. Here she is given a word of encouragement by Conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos before she went on stage.

Miss Stevens became ill with flu a few hours before the performance. (See review on Page 17-A.) (Chronicle Photo by Tom Colburn)

From MAY 24 1957

HERALD TRIBUNE

Philharmonic's Income Up—\$16,000 Still Needed

The Philharmonic-Symphony Society of New York has had increased revenues and reduced operating costs for its 1956-'57 season, it was announced yesterday. Approximately \$16,000, however, must still be raised by May 31, the end of the current fiscal year, to meet the inevitable gap between the orchestra's income and expenses.

David M. Keiser, president of the society, reported the season's financial outcome at the annual joint meeting of the Board of Directors and Auxiliary Board Wednesday afternoon. Ticket sales for the regu-

lar Carnegie Hall concert gained \$31,500 over the 1955-'56 figure, and royalties from the sale of recordings have doubled. The Friends of the Philharmonic have raised \$202,000 thus far in their 1957 campaign.

Mr. Keiser expressed the board of directors' appreciation

for the services of Bruno Zirato, managing director, and his associates, for their part in planning the 1957-'58 season and for their role in "this brightening picture. Both boards unanimously adopted a resolution of gratitude to the society's musical director, Dimitri Mitropoulos.

From MAY 19 1957
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

FOR MITROPOULOS

To the Music Editor:
With deep interest and concern I read Howard Taubman's article regarding our loved and esteemed New York Philharmonic-Symphony. I have been a New Yorker since 1895 and an almost regular subscriber since my girlhood in 1902. I always have had a soft spot for our Philharmonic.

Mr. Taubman's criticism of conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos and the orchestra seems rather unkind. I have listened to some beautiful concerts when conductor and orchestra seemed to

work with and for one another. Under Mitropoulos the men work differently. I find they are inspired by his intensity. He seems music personified—untiring, pleasant, unassuming. And he has a great following. I shall never forget his "Elektra" or "Wozzeck," to name two, and I always liked his readings of the Strauss tone poems.

Mrs. MARTHA R. ENGLEHART,
New York.

From MAY 14 1957
CHRONICLE
Houston, Texas

STARS ABSENT

Met Beats baldi a Triumphant To Wow

By ANN HOLMES
Chronicle Staff

The old bugaboo struck down two of the Metropolitan Opera's prize singers Monday, but "Carmen," the Met's opener, went on anyway.

With substitutes in the two leading roles—filled just hours before curtain rise—the show wowed an overflow audience in the Music Hall.

Rise Stevens wired she was ill in New York with intestinal flu. Kurt Baum repented in the Town House, his voice hushed by laryngitis.

With little time to spare, Jean Madeira was rushed into the "Carmen" role and proved to be as sexy and flouncy a Carmen as ever tormented a Don Jose. In his role, Giulio Gari subbed for Baum.

No Pall

There was no pall over the Met's two-performance stint here which will provide "Tosca" on tonight's bill at 8 o'clock with Renata Tebaldi in the name role.

Opera-goers Monday night moaned at first hearing of the replacement of the stars, but they were soon cheering for more Madeira.

In low-cut gowns to which she gave that certain shape, soprano Madeira was every supple inch the flirtatious Gypsy girl, toying with the affections of her jealous Don Jose as she sang her provocative "Habanera."

Her voice was a little sharp at first, but she warmed up and so did her audience. Wild, husky-voiced, flamboyant, she was anybody's money's worth. One of the Met's rapidly rising stars, she sang here in "Rigoletto," in 1952, and is known as a favorite Carmen of the Vienna Opera where she often sings.

Tenor Gari has a good serviceable voice. He was not exciting in the hanger-on role of Don Jose—but few tenors are. He did bring a real warmth to his impassioned aria in the second act in which he tells Carmen he had kept the flower she had given to him. Gari proved to be an excellent actor.

Well Directed

Swiftly paced, the ensemble movements generally well directed on stage, "Carmen" was a blaze of colorful costumes and a tangle of unbridled emotions, set to a book of familiar, melodious music. In the pit, Maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos, one of the world's great conductors, lead the full orchestra to a superb performance and surely a much finer one than we have been hearing in past years from a touring opera company.

The supporting cast contributed some fine moments to "Carmen," Lucine Amara being a notably expressive Micaela. As Escamillo, the toreador, Frank Guarrera finally tuned up to some rich measures in the third act but his "Toreador Song" seemed a little short winded, earlier in the game.

An excellent moment in the Gypsy hideout came when Heidi Krall and Margaret Roggero joined Miss Madeira to sing the famed "Card Song" predicting the violent deaths of Carmen and Don Jose. And violent it was. Don Jose stabbed, and down came Carmen, dragging the draperies with her. But it was a large evening in the grand style.

From MAY 15 1957
POST
Houston, Texas

—gality of the Artist: baldi a Triumphant To Wow

By HUBERT ROUSSEL

THE art of singing in opera, with the grand line and full command of the stage—as distinct from the mere practice of singing in the operatic form—is now so rare an experience in this country that a generation has grown up with little knowledge of what it is like.

There is accordingly considerable skepticism about the claims of older people that there was once a "Golden Age" of song in the major opera houses of this land and others. It is a somewhat loosely used claim, but part of it is fact. The art of singing has taken a sad decline in the past 30 years or so, and to see it returned to the stage in an operatic performance in Houston Tuesday evening was the memorable joy of the Metropolitan Opera Company's 10th visit to this city.

The production of Puccini's "La Tosca" Roussel delivered in the presence of more than 3,000 listeners at the Music Hall, to wind up the 1957 engagement of the Met, was opera of the full calibre and dramatic force. That is a rarity, even for the Met these days. This "Tosca" amounted to the most noteworthy entertainment of the company's present series of visits to Houston which began in 1947, and the chief reason was the presence of a prima donna who is truly a magnificent artist of her medium.

her own work most effectively.

The orchestral performance was likewise one of real flame and intensity under the handling of Dimitri Mitropoulos. To be sure, it was the prima donna's orchestra, too, in the sense that Mitropoulos scaled his dynamics proportionate to the power and glory of the Tebaldi voice, letting his male stars fare as they could, which meant they were frequently overridden by the instrumental sound above forte.

But since "Tosca" is essentially a prima donna's opera, it was Tebaldi who dominated the stage and the audience, fascinated all ears and eyes, and tingled every spine with excitement from her entrance to the grisly finale of this drama. It was not an intrusive performance in any of the cheap and obvious ways; it was merely a true and a great performance of Puccini's amoureuse, completely feminine, completely characterized in both sound and action—and completely beautiful to hear at every point.

George London's account of Scarpa is the best to be heard in this country today, a portrait which this splendid young baritone has brought to a rare point of perfection. His singing was all grand; his act a joy to behold.

Campora's Mario had the ring and gallantry of the really heroic tenor, and all the other principals—especially Alesso de Paolis as the brutalized Spoletta—were fine. So was the chorus—so was this "Tosca," and thanks to Mrs. Edna W. Saunders for bringing it all.

It remains to be said quickly—and briefly in view of this limited space in which to deal with a major theatre experience—that the Met deserves credit for the setting it gave its new jewel. With George London the brilliant Scarpa of this "Tosca," Giuseppe Campora the Mario, and all the other singing and acting particulars right, Signorina Tebaldi had some of the best the Met offers today and all the values necessary to set off

Beverly Hills, Calif.
Citizen
(Cir. 7,130)

MAY 24 1957

On Record

By ROBERT RILEY

William Schuman: Credendum. The Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, conductor. Leon Kirchner: Piano Concerto. Leon Kirchner, piano, with the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra of N.Y., conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos (Columbia).

A first hearing of Kirchner's concerto left with me a depressing impression of ugliness. Seven or eight subsequent spinings of the record effaced that impression, attesting to it as dynamic, nearly explosive music by a composer trying desperately for truly individual articulation. Inaccessible as a total, the work's inner designs are as fleeting as the patterns of a Mobile in the wind. A Mobile's formations can be interesting even though they do elude one's memory later. So the concerto is interesting; at any rate its composer is one possessed of unique talents.

TRIBUNE
Chicago, Ill.
MAY 27 1957

On the Aisle

Mitropoulos in the Pit, Stevens on the Stage—Good 'Carmen'

BY CLAUDIA CASSIDY

SOMETHING UNUSUAL happened in the Civic Opera house yesterday afternoon—a good "Carmen." This is rarely encountered with any troupe, and it was such an improvement over recent Metropolitan visits with this production comparably cast that the major credit probably has to go to the new man with the Bizet baton, Dimitri Mitropoulos. When "Carmen" is right in the pit it is difficult not to recognize a masterpiece of the lyric stage. The performance went a long way toward meeting it on its own level.

Especially that of Rise Stevens, whose Carmen is a supple, smoky blonde flecked with mischief and streaked with the smoulder of a not too well banked fire. She sounds like she looks, her long fingers can manipulate castanets, or snap as well without them. She knows what many would be sirens forget, that your real seductress doesn't work at it so you can catch her at it, and that a gleeful inner delight can be amazingly enticing. I don't know when I have encountered a more beguiling "Carmen" facet than the way Miss Stevens says "Ecoute!" when she hears her soldier



Rise Stevens

fairly intractable fellow himself. More to his disadvantage was the misdirection of the first act, which has Jose daft about Carmen on sight, when in fact she is piqued by his indifference. No help was Lucine Amara's Micaela, oblivious to the pulse of music drama, and careless with a lovely voice. The whole vocal point of the village sweetheart in the score is the purity of that voice floating over the smoke, sparks, and flame of earthbound fires.

Whether or not stage direction still follows the Tyrone Guthrie pattern, it is more vivid and compact than when I saw it two years ago. Even the Rolf Gerard settings, no "Carmen" bargain, had in the first and second acts a touch of the proud severity of the Spanish scene, and the once ugly tableau in the courtyard window had a touch of Goyescas. In any case, this was a good "Carmen" to the Metropolitan's credit.

coming after her gypsy friends have scoffed that he will not. She says "E-COU-tez!" with a crowd of pardonable pride most engaging.

George London's Escamillo is adequate as a difficult role goes, but less than his Escamillo potential. His first scene is a little slick on a less than matador surface, but in the third act he digs a bit deeper into the possibilities of the role. Much as he is admired in Vienna, he ought to take his Escamillo to Paris by way of a corrida in Seville.

Kurt Baum did the best singing I have heard from him in a long time, with greater freedom of production and quality of tone, and his inflexibility as an actor was no great handicap to Don Jose, a

From MAY 18 1957
Christian Science Monitor
Boston, Mass.

Masterpiece by Walton and Two Premieres

By Miles Kastendieck
New York

Dimitri Mitropoulos ended the Philharmonic-Symphony's 115th season with a magnificent performance of Sir William Walton's choral masterpiece, "Belshazzar's Feast." This was the culmination of a choral program, as interesting as it was un-hackneyed, which included two first performances—the American premiere of Bentzon's "Variazioni Brevi" and the world premiere of Lukas Foss's "Psalms" for chorus and orchestra. Kodaly's "Psalms Hungaricus" completed the bill.

Brilliance Undimmed

A quarter century has not dimmed the brilliance of Walton's dramatization of the fall of Babylon. Knowing instinctively how to underline the emotion of text, he has written impressively in the great tradition of English choral music. There was no mistaking the impact of this work, which aroused the audience to spontaneous cheering.

Mr. Mitropoulos responds naturally to this kind of music. His strong sense of theater and his appreciation of the symphonic grandeur of the piece

combined to give full delineation to its content. From the proclamation of its opening pages to the joyous alleluias at the end, his interpretation was completely in keeping with the spirit of both text and score.

Bentzon's orchestral variations left a most favorable impression. They placed the composer in a challenging position both as composer and as orchestrator. Foss's setting of a text from Psalms 121, 95, 98, 23, appeared uninspired. The piece is keyed to the familiar line, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help," according to a commission he received from the Stockbridge (Mass.) Bowl Association. The radiance of the local scenery apparently gave the composer no lift. Only here and there does the music rise above the ground. Though 30 years old, the Kodaly sounded fresher and stronger.

These works were well sung by the Schola Cantorum. David Lloyd sang the tenor part of the Kodaly, Giorgio Tozzi, the baritone solo in the Walton.

Choral Activity

The performance of "Belshazzar's Feast" culminated an outbreak of choral activity. Earlier in the week the Collegiate Choral had presented Mendelssohn's Oratorio "Elijah" as part of its 15th anniversary observation. Ralph Hunter, the conductor, chose to approach the performance from a dramatic point of view, achieving his best results at the end. Mack Harrell sang the title role. The chorus was excellent.

Handel's oratorio "Israel in Egypt" was heard earlier in the month in a performance by the Dessoif Choirs. In reviving this work, Paul Boeppe anticipated by two years the 200th anniversary

Artistic Breadth

Some of the nobility of the grand manner set Mr. Kentner apart from most pianists. He was too good a musician to yield to the temptation of virtuosity that the Brahms' Concerto affords. The result was a performance of unusual artistic breadth and sensitive coloring.

These concerts brought attention to both new and unfamiliar music. Elliot Carter's "Holiday Overture" reveals a persuasively spirited piece, lending itself to almost too much jubilation. Walton's new concerto bears the composer's stamp both melodically and orchestrally. It is a thoroughly professional job, sympathetically written for the cello, at its best in the finale. Dallapiccola's "Tartini-ana" brought a neoclassic treatment nicely scored for violin and a select orchestra. It sounds academic in spite of its melodic content.

Other than this new music, Mr. Mitropoulos played such works as Beethoven's Eighth Symphony and Mendelssohn's "Scottish" Symphony. The performances were more acceptable than memorable.

GLI SPETTACOLI

MAGGIO MUSICALE

Vivo successo di «Ernani», al Comunale

«Ernani» è la quinta opera di Verdi, e porta sulle solide spalle centotrentadue anni. Il Maestro era alle sue prime armi, lo si avverte. Da cinque anni soli aveva dedicato al teatro ogni sua attività artistica: da appena due col «Nabucco» e i «Lombardi» s'era imposto all'attenzione e all'ammirazione. Il primo Verdi è per la psicologia a massa, per la psicologia «corale». Individuo e collettività sono i due poli dell'evoluzione verdiana. Se il protagonista di «Ernani» è l'opera, che vive nel clima mistico della spiritualità ibérica fra il Cinque e Seicento, sono fondamentali i due sentimenti romantici dell'amore e del valore in violento e stagiato contrasto. Il dramma si costruisce inesorabilmente la sua forma. E' Verdi che studia prima il libretto dell'opera, che prepara le scene, che prepara i dialoghi, che distribuisce le parti e consegna l'intero libretto; il linguista Plave farà il resto. Svecchiare e tenerci a un'intonazione drammaticamente viva ed asciutta era ormai uno dei cardini inamovibili dell'arte sua. Verdi non si preoccupava molto, purché ci fossero le parole scritte, purché si andasse dritti allo scopo, che era lo svizzeramento del dramma; ma esigeva ritmi nuovi ed energici. Nell'«Ernani» il Maestro segna forme e schemi consueti. Ciò non ci deve far dimenticare le tendenze novatrici nella sostanza che si rivelano nell'ariosità e incisività dei recitativi, nel carattere musicale scultoreo del personaggio. «Ernani» è tutto nell'impeto violento delle sue arie e dei suoi declamati. Silvano è il vecchio innamorato, che oscilla tra la malinconia nostalgica dell'aria «In felice e tuo credevi» e la implacabile sete di vendetta con cui perseguita mortalmente il suo rivale: Carlo V che nei suoi duetti con Elvira si erge nel 3.° atto con nobiltà ignota ai personaggi regali dei melodrammi precedenti, nel sogno di gloria, nel perdono generoso

so ai congiurati, e nella rinuncia ad Elvira. Quanto a questa travolta com'è nel vortice delle passioni amorose dei tre contendenti, è la figura perennemente dolente, alla quale il corno di Silva spegne tragicamente sul labbro e nel cuore il primo ed unico sorriso di gioia della sua vita. Dal punto di vista drammatico nulla è uguale nella turbinosa esasperata partitura, il terzo che le conclude, nel quale i tre stati d'animo scossi da contrasti violenti trovano profonde espressioni nel canto, e si fondono in un'armonica unità di costruzione nuova e perfetta. Ancora cinquant'anni fa «Ernani» era popolarissimo. A poco a poco andò scomparendo dalla circolazione. Quale la ragione di questo allontanarsi di un'opera davvero eccezionale, dove le lacune e le esuberanze di un'atmosfera musicale quanto arroventata e altrove calata, si era imposta alle folle? Non è difficile scoprirlo. Le sue melodie e armonie contenevano troppo poco futuro: facevano parte cioè di quel Verdi che viveva ancora nel presente e non poco nel passato; il suo linguaggio era ancora quasi del tipo corrente di quell'epoca, di cui la grande popolarità immediata e il suo rapido declino. Quanto alla sua ripresa quale spettacolo di questo sofferto Maggio si è resa giustizia maggiore con una edizione davvero eccezionale, dove le lacune e le esuberanze di una atmosfera musicale della turbinosa esasperata partitura si sono bilanciate dai meriti superiori di tutti i principali interpreti. Nessun artista era fuori da «fuori parte», fatto addirittura miracoloso. Anita Cerquetti feriva di ariosità e di una tecnica finita ed accorta, interpretava notevolmente. Mario Del Monaco ha dominato le inestricabili difficoltà con squillo e modulazione della sua voce. Ettore Bastianini ha voce fresca, sonora, si è comportato egregiamente quale Re di Spagna con uso moderato delle mezzecce, e finalmente il basso eccezionale Boris Christoff, sempre maestro del bel canto ha perseguito autenticamente il personaggio dell'insuperabile Silvano con musicalità spiccatissima. Molto lodevoli il Cesarini, la Boni e il Neagu. Tutti docili al comando del concertatore e direttore d'orchestra Dimitri Mitropoulos, animato da un alto e consapevole fervore artistico degno dei più alti confronti. Ha dato al vecchio «Ernani» l'orchestra che gli conviene; agile, lucente, umile nelle parti deboli, scattante e luminosa in quelle di rilievo. Buono il coro del Morasini. La regia del triestino Raffaello De Banfield ha seguito un ruolo di assoluta preminenza, regolata severamente secondo i ritmi e le evoluzioni della musica, pur rispettando i dettami della tradizione teatrale. Così cantanti e regista hanno dimostrato pienamente il valore della loro collaborazione. Ingegnerose e aderenti le scene di Andreas Nomikos sopra tutto agli effetti pratici, e ricordiamo anche l'allestimento scenico del Caliterna. Presentato dinanzi ad un pubblico da grandi occasioni l'opera ha ottenuto un esito grande e addirittura entusiastico.

Un trionfo per il direttore Mitropoulos e un vero successo per tutti i principali interpreti, spesso applauditi anche a scena aperta. Alla fine ogni atto le chiamate sono state molte e calorose.

L. B.

GLI SPETTACOLI DEL MAGGIO MUSICALE

La regia dell'«Ernani», affidata a un musicista

I nomi di quelli che hanno curato la parte visiva dell'allestimento di «Ernani» — che Dimitri Mitropoulos dirige domani sera per il ventesimo «Maggio musicale» — sono entrambi sconosciuti al pubblico italiano. O, meglio, uno dei due è conosciuto per motivi diversi dalla regia. Raffaello De Banfield, un anglo-triestino, è stato ascoltato, nella stessa sede del «Maggio», quale autore della musica per il balletto «The duel», interpretato dalla compagnia dello «American national ballet theatre»; e, recentemente, prima al teatro «Verdi» di Trieste e anche alla R.A.L., quale autore di un'opera lirica, «Una lettera d'amore di lord Byron», che riscosse un grosso successo e che, in occasione della prima americana al «Lirico» di Chicago, fu accolta da un successo entusiastico.

Musica affermato, allievo di Gianfrancesco Malipiero e di Nadia Boulanger e autore di un'opera lirica, copiosa, teatrale e no, De Banfield, che era stato ascoltato come autore della musica per «Agostino», un balletto eseguito al festival di Nervi di due anni or sono, si presenta ora per la prima volta come regista di teatro, per invito diretto di Mitropoulos, che lo ha appostamente fatto venire dagli Stati Uniti.

De Banfield è essenzialmente un musicista, e ritiene la regia di teatro lirico come una attività nella quale la musica, la musicalità, debba avere un ruolo di assoluta preminenza. Non si può concepire, dice De Banfield, una

forma visiva che non sia strettamente regolata nei suoi sviluppi secondo i ritmi e le evoluzioni della musica; quasi come un balletto o una pantomima. Ma non si può neanche concepire, per «Ernani», una messa in scena che non rispetti rigorosamente i dettami della tradizione teatrale, la quale non può ammettere innovazioni di punta o impegni di polemica. Sicché, il nuovo di questo regista starà proprio in questo senso del predominio della musica, centro unico, arrivo ed inizio di ogni rappresentazione melodrammatica.

Andreas Nomikos è lo scenografo di «Ernani». E' un greco nato in Egitto, che ha viaggiato il mondo, ha visitato i centri artistici più importanti, ha avuto avventure drammatiche durante la guerra (tanto da evadere dalla prigione e raggiungere le forze greche all'estero, dove collaborò in qualità di interprete), possiede una laurea e conosce sei lingue.

Nomikos ha esordito per il teatro di prosa. Ha disegnato le scene di antiche tragedie greche, ma anche per lavori di Tennessee Williams e di Arthur Miller. Poi, al primo festival di musica ad Atene, accolse l'invito di disegnare le scene per l'«Idomeneo» di Mozart. Quest'opera segnò l'avvio di una feconda collaborazione di Nomikos col teatro lirico, collaborazione che lo scenografo ha prevalentemente esercitato negli Stati Uniti: durante il suo primo soggiorno americano Nomikos disegnava le scene di «Cenerentola», di «Tosca», di «Traviata», trovando anche modo di svolgere un ciclo di conferenze sul Teatro antico e contemporaneo in Grecia.

Anche la scelta di Nomikos quale bozzettista e figurinista per questa edizione di «Ernani» è stata fatta direttamente da Dimitri Mitropoulos col quale il pittore è legato anche per una prossima edizione di «Elektra» di Strauss al festival di Salisburgo. L'attività di quest'anno prevede per Nomikos una nuova serie di allestimenti a New York: fra questi le nuove scene per «La vida breve» e per «El amor brujo» di De Falla. In occasione dei dieci anni dalla morte del grande musicista spagnolo.

Con la collaborazione singolare di questi due artisti, oltre che per la possente attrattiva della bacchetta di Mitropoulos, e per un cast vocale di assoluta eccezione — sono presenti Del Monaco, la Cerquetti, Boris Christoff e Bastianini — questa edizione di «Ernani» si presenta densa di interessi e di promesse. Anche perché si tratta di una delle opere verdiane maggiormente trascurate nella pratica teatrale e meritevole di più frequenti ed attente riprese.

GUALTIERO FRANGINI

From JUN 6 - 1957
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Bagby Benefit First 'Tosca'

The annual benefit given in behalf of the Bagby Music Foundation, which aids musical artists in need, will be a special performance at the Metropolitan Opera of Puccini's «Tosca», with Renata Tebaldi in the title role and Dimitri Mitropoulos as conductor, on December 5.

Edward Johnson, new president of the Bagby Foundation, is handling the arrangements for the benefit, which will be the first Met performance of «Tosca» this season. The foundation, established in 1925, was an outgrowth of the original Bagby Concerts, which since 1892 have been supported by audiences from New York society.

From JUN 6 1957
HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

400 Sign Appeal For Arts Council

An appeal to Congress to enact bills establishing a Federal Advisory Council on the Arts was made yesterday by the National Council on the Arts and Government, it was announced by Clarence Derwent, chairman. Among more than 400 leaders in the arts and public life who signed the appeal were Nelson W. Aldrich, Rose Bampton, Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein, Van Wyck Brooks, Al Capp, Paddy Chayefsky, Marc Connelly, Helen Hayes, Celeste Holm, Clare Boothe Luce, Henry R. Luce, Howard Lindsay, Joshua Logan, Raymond Massey, Gilbert Miller, Grandma Moses, and Dimitri Mitropoulos.

Also Paul Muni, Charles Munch, Reinhold Niebuhr, Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, Vincent Price, Mrs. Ogden Reid, Fritz Reiner, Elmer Rice, Edward G. Robinson, Rise Stevens, Gladys Swarthout, Mark Van Doren, Mies van der Rohe, Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney, Darryl F. Zanuck, and Fred Zinneman.

Added social importance was attached to the performance by the presence of the Greek ambassador, former Queen Helen of Roumania and other notables. They were the cheering section for the Greek artists Andreas Nomikos, who built and dressed this mounting of Verdi. He's due to show his flair at the N. Y. City Centre opera this fall. Florence got an intimation of magnificence in style and color. The question arises as to his working equal wonders in Manhattan with the limited funds available on West 55 St. for production.

Musically sensitive stage direction was provided by Raffaello De Banfield. Better known as composer to the Tennessee Williams libretto, «Lord Byron's Love Letter», and the ballet «The Duel», Banfield revealing himself in this new assignment as the musician who loves, knows and understands Verdi.

From JUN 2 6 1957
VARIETY
New York, N. Y.
Florence Fest's 'Ernani' - Raises Shoestring Art Challenge to Nominkas

By TRUDY GOTH
Florence, June 20.
Florence's Musical Festival peaked June 14 with the opera «Ernani». This showed in Anita Cerquetti as Elvira a 24-year-old soprano, known only in America to the small quarters of Chicago opera, at the outset of what seems a big career, perhaps paralleling that of Renata Tebaldi.

Comparisons of this «Ernani» with the one last winter at the Met are encouraged by their sharing of the same conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos, and leading tenor, Mario Del Monaco. The maestro was more intensive than usual; the tenor's voice seem rested and not forced as occasionally the case during the Met season. This time he exhibited all the highlights and none of the bad habits of his great talent. Boris Christoff was imposing as Silva and Ettore Bastianini satisfying as Carlo.

Added social importance was attached to the performance by the presence of the Greek ambassador, former Queen Helen of Roumania and other notables. They were the cheering section for the Greek artists Andreas Nomikos, who built and dressed this mounting of Verdi. He's due to show his flair at the N. Y. City Centre opera this fall. Florence got an intimation of magnificence in style and color. The question arises as to his working equal wonders in Manhattan with the limited funds available on West 55 St. for production.

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«TA NEA» ΠΑΡΑΣΚΕΥΗ, 21 'Ιουνίου 1957

ΣΤΗΝ ΠΑΝΗΓΥΡΙΚΗ ΠΡΕΜΙΕΡΑ ΤΟΥ «ΕΡΝΑΝΗ»

Ο Μητρόπουλος αποθεώθηκε στην Φλωρεντία με 18 αὐλαίες

Στην πρεμιέρα έλαβαν μέρος τα καλύτερα στελέχη του 'Ιταλικού μελοδράματος με έπικεφαλής τον Ντέλ Μόνικο. — Ένθουσιώδεις κρίσεις για τα σκηνικά και τα κοστούμια του Άνδρεά Νομικού. — Έξοσες χιλιάδες θεατές ηλεκτρίζονται από την παρουσία του Μητρόπουλου.

ΤΟΥ ΑΠΕΣΤΑΛΜΕΝΟΥ ΤΩΝ «ΝΕΩΝ» Κ. Γ. ΠΗΛΙΧΟΥ

ΦΛΩΡΕΝΤΙΑ, 15 'Ιουνίου-Χθές, στις 9 μ.μ., στην Ιστορία της ώρας αυτής πολλούς των τεχνών και των γραμμάτων, προσετέθη ένα ακόμα μεγάλο καλλιτεχνικό γεγονός: Η ανέλιξη της νεο-νικής όπερας του Βέρνι, η «Ερνάνη».

Εγγραφο: «Η χθονινή πρεμιέρα του «Ερνάνη» έσπασε την χρυσή εποχή της όπερας τόσο στην σκηνή, όσο και στην σάλα».

Στο σημερινό φύλλο της μεγάλης ήμερας έφημερας της Φλωρεντίας «Το



Ο Δημήτρης Μητρόπουλος ενώ συνομιλεί με τον «Έλληνα σκηνογράφο» Άνδρεά Νομικό, του δοθέντος Μπαρί Κρίστοφ και τον σκηνοθέτη Ντέλ Μόνικο, οι οποίοι πρόκειται να σκηνοθετήσουν και τον «Φιντέλιο» στην Αθήνα, μετά το τέλος της πανηγυρικής πρεμιέρας του «Ερνάνη», με τον όποιον εγκαίνιστηκε το Φεστιβάλ της Φλωρεντίας.

το τον μεγάλο «Έλληνα μαέστρο» Δημήτρη Μητρόπουλο, μέσα στα πλαίσια των εκδηλώσεων του έφταναν 200.000 Φλωρεντίτες «έκστασιες» (Μουσικός Μάιος).

Η παρουσία του «Ερνάνη» δόθηκε στο «Teatro Comunale», που είναι ένα από τα ώριμότερα και μεγαλύτερα θέατρα της 'Ιταλίας, αν όχι όλου του κόσμου. Και οι 4.000 θέσεις του θεάτρου ήταν κατεπληρωμένες από προσκεκλημένους, που είχαν έρθει από όλη την 'Ιταλία, την Αγγλία, την Γαλλία,



Το κοστούμι του «Ερνάνη», φιλοτεχνήμένο από τον «Έλληνα σκηνογράφο» Άνδρεά Νομικό.

την Γερμανία και άλλα Ευρωπαϊκά κράτη.

Στο κεντρικό θεωατρο είχαν κοσμήσει οι πρώτοι «Έλληνες» «Έλληνα» Ρουμανούς και «Ολγα της Γουγκολόβας» με την κόρη της «Ελισάβετ, Μαζού τους ήταν «Έλληνα» πρεμιέρας και η κυρία «Αργυροπούλου». Τα άλλα θεωατρα είχαν κοσμήσει από άλλους πρίγκιπες και κομμάτια διαφόρων έθνων και από προσωπικότητες των Τεχνών και των Γραμμάτων άνωμας στις όποιες ήταν η διάσημη σκηνοθέτις και χορογράφος της «Νέας» της Μιλάνου Μαργαρίτα Βολμαν, η γνωστή «Αμερικανίδα δημοσιογράφος Τρουτί Γκόλ» ο διευθυντής της 'Ιταλικής Ραδιοφωνίας και Τηλεόρασης «Αλφρενσέ» και άλλοι.

Η πρεμιέρα του «Ερνάνη» υπήρξε μία από τις καλύτερες μελοδραματικές παραστάσεις που δόθηκαν στον κόσμο. Και συνέθεσε σ' αυτό, εκτός από τον μεγάλο μαέστρο Δημήτρη Μητρόπουλο, έδωκε ένας «Έλληνα» καλλιτέχνης: Ο έ-ξοτερος σκηνογράφος Άνδρεά Νομικός ο οποίος δυο μήνες πριν από την πρεμιέρα του «Ερνάνη» είχε φθάσει από την Νέα Υόρκη στην Φλωρεντία για να δημιουργήσει τα τέτατα περίφημα σκηνικά της όπερας αυτής του Βέρνι και τα 400 κοστούμια των πρωταγωνιστών και της χοροδίας.

Άλλο, η πρεμιέρα του «Ερνάνη» δεν έλαβε στο χώρο αυτό της τελεότητας λαιμό από την παρουσία του Μητρόπουλου και του Νομικού. Τα καλύτερα στελέχη του 'Ιταλικού και του παγκοσμίου Μελοδραματικού Θεάτρου είχαν επιστρατευθεί για να λανθάνουν την όπερα, που είχε σχεδόν έλκαστη στην ίδια αυτή πατρίδα του συνθέτη. Έπί κεφαλής όλων, ο μεγαλύτερος, σήμερα τέτονος του κόσμου Μάριο Ντέλ Μόνικο στον ρόλο του «Ερνάνη». Τους άλλους βασικούς ρόλους του έργου τραγούδησαν η διάσημη ύψιφνος «Ανίτα Τσεκουέτι», ο παγκοσμίου όφους δούσαντος Μπαρί Κρίστοφ και ο δούσαντος «Έτορε Μποστάνι». Ο διάσημος νέος μουσικοσυνθέτης Ροσφόλλο ντέ Μπαρτίνι είχε σκηνοθετήσει τον «Ερνάνη».

Στο φύλλο του έργου μόλις έπεσαν η δοχεία κόκκινη δελουβίνη αὐλαία, το κοινό έστρεψε σε χειροκρότημα και μπράβο, ενώ από τα θεωατρα διαφύλαξε, καθώς ανοιγότανε η αὐλαία, πετούσαν στην σκηνή πολύχρωμα λουλούδια. Δίκα από φορές άνοιξε η αὐλαία και να διαδραματίζονται οι θεατές τον έθουσαρά τους προς τους βασικούς έρηντες που με επί κεφαλής τον μαέστρο Δημήτρη Μητρόπουλο, μπινάβαν δούσαν στην σκηνή για να υπολαθούν ηρωικά στο έζαλλο από έθουσαρά κοινό.

Την έπομένη, οι 'Ιταλικές έφημερές

Ernani al maggio fiorentino

A Firenze sono fortunati: lo chiamano «Maggio» anche se è giugno avanzato, quasi luglio. Un modo come un altro di combattere la realtà del 34° all'ombra accertati per l'altro al Comunale, alla diurna della «Ernani». A vedere quell'anomala folla, ardentissima per ragioni interne oltre che esterne (Victor Hugo e Verdi insieme sviluppano il massimo possibile delle calorie), in parte senza giacca nelle regioni alte del teatro, veniva subito in mente il gile di Théophile Gautier: indumento «de satin cerise ou vermillon de la Chine», il cui ricordo è appunto legato alla prima di «Ernani» (quello in versi, ancora senza musica), per la sua funzione di tagliare il dramma romantico nei vivaci assalti della storica serata. Pensavamo dunque: se invece che il 25 febbraio (1830), la «battaglia di Ernani» avesse avuto luogo in un giugno come questo, l'eroico capomaniolo dei «salteadores» di Victor Hugo avrebbe dovuto rinunciare al famoso gile rosso, e forse, chi sa, le sorti dell'arte romantica sarebbero state diverse.

Scherzi meteorologici a parte, l'entusiasmo suscitato da questo «Ernani» al Maggio Fiorentino, dopo le recite esaltanti dell'«Anna Bolena» alla Scala, significa qualche cosa: e cioè che alcune opere neglette per molti anni dai grandi teatri — opere «superate», si diceva durante la reazione antiromantica — hanno tuttora una carica vitale così veemente da far paura a molte altre, a tante di quelle magnificate dalla critica di sussiego. Ma non basta: a risentire adesso, quelle opere, col necessario distacco, ci si rende conto che alcune pagine di esse rappresentarono per i loro autori momenti in un certo senso irripetibili. Valga per tutte il breve preludio dell'«Ernani», l'adagio e il cantabile di trama così insolitamente leggera in Verdi, con quel «leggerissimo» insistito, con quel «mendo» che ne accentua la sostanza tutta lirica, di una tinta quasi beliniana. Come pure le dodici pregnanti battute di largo che fanno da introduzione alla scena del «sepolcrali marmi». Finezze, ritorni che non ritroveremo spesso nemmeno nelle opere verdiane più potentemente illuminate, a gloria raggiunta. Per tacere, s'intende, di quel radiante quarto atto — nemmeno venti minuti di musica, ma tutti essenziali — dove il volo dell'ispirazione pura non è interrotto neppure dalle più scabre «fatalità» liricistiche.

Bisogna dire, a questo punto, che Mitropoulos, l'uomo degli Strauss e dei Berg che tutti sanno, ha dimostrato qui di sentire come pochi direttori il Verdi che noi intendiamo: asciutto, essenziale, infiammato ma non retorico, vivissimo nella spirale ritmica, scattante nella primaverile esultanza del canto. Il suo successo personale ha raggiunto proporzioni inconsuete.

Del Monaco ci ha dato forse con l'«Ernani» la sua interpretazione più completa. Il muscoloso linguaggio del Verdi giovane (un alternarsi continuo di slanci ardenti e di lirici abbandoni) si adatta mirabilmente alle caratteristiche della sua virile vocalità e al suo fuoco temperamento d'artista. La Cerquetti, quanto a ricchezza di suono, gli sta degnamente al fianco. E il basso Christoff è un Silva di linea severa, aristocratica, se pure qui un tantino appannato. Nella parte di Carlo V, tremendamente impegnativa, il baritono Bastianini ci è parso qua e là costretto alla difensiva. È un cantante giovane, di belle risorse, che l'anno scorso nel «Ballo in maschera» si fece giustamente apprezzare. Varrebbe la pena di non mandarlo allo sbaraglio in ruoli forse troppo superiori alle sue forze. (D'accordo che il problema dei baritoni, oggi, non è davvero di facile soluzione).

Il coro diretto dal maestro Morasini ha fatto scattare il pubblico dopo il celebrato, e atteso, «Si ridesti il leon di Castiglia». Pareva che qualcuno davvero si fosse risvegliato: il leonino Verdi della prima giovinezza.

BARDOLFO

From JUN 3 0 1957
STAR
Kansas City, Mo.

ONE of De Falla's works that defies the usual classification is his «Nights in the Gardens of Spain», which requires the services of a piano soloist and an orchestra, yet cannot be called a concerto. Columbia has a new recorded version of it, presenting highly competent Robert Casadesus as the pianist, in suitably French mood. The orchestra is the New York Philharmonic-Symphony orchestra, Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting. Good pairing also provides us with the orchestra playing three dances from «The Three Corners Hat» and an interlude and dance from «La Vida Breve», all by De Falla.



Ο Δημήτρης Μητρόπουλος ενώ χαιρετά έγκαρδίας τον διάσημο τένοσο Μάριο Ντέλ Μόνικο μετά την θριαμβευτική πρεμιέρα της όπερας του Βέρνι «Ερνάνη», με την όποιαν εγκαίνιστηκε πρό ήμερών το Φεστιβάλ της Φλωρεντίας.

From

TIMES

Kansas City, Mo.

MAY 25 1957

Jazz Plays in Same League With Classics at Summer Festivals

Conservatory Here Is in the Forefront of New Trend, Offering Courses in Summer Session—At the Tanglewood Festival, Makers of "Modern Music" Will Follow the Boston Symphony.

By Clyde Neibarger.

(The Star's Music Editor.)

ANY actual gulf that exists between so-called jazz or popular music and so-called "serious music" is being bridged in various ways in these days. Music schools are adding courses in jazz. In the summer music festivals and workshops, jazz is being given a place alongside the classics.

In Kansas City, the Conservatory of Music is adding a course in jazz. Other schools around the nation have established such courses, or plan to do so soon. But this is one of the first invasions of a formal conservatory.

In New York's Town Hall, where most of the music heard is on the serious side, a new concert society, Music for Moderns, launched a series of four concerts including Duke Ellington's band on the same program with Dimitri Mitropoulos and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony. Symbolic sounds of impressionism and jazz that tend to put them in the same league were defined on another program. A third linked Negro gospel music with European art songs. The fourth program, to be given tomorrow, will be "New Horizons," devoted to the most advanced ideas in jazz and serious music.

On the Ellington-Mitropoulos program at Town Hall, Ellington and his orchestra played the world premiere of the Duke's concert suite called "Such Sweet Thunder," the title taken from a Shakespearean play. Ellington dedicated the suite to the Stratford Shakespearean festival at Stratford, Ontario, Canada, where he and his orchestra played jazz music last summer.

THE FLORENCE FESTIVAL

Great success for Mitropoulos and Nomikos

By Trudy Goth

IT IS GOOD NEWS to relate that the unsurpassed peak of the operatic performances the Florence Musical May Festival had to offer was a performance of Verdi's «Ernani» in which two Greek artists distinguished themselves.

The musical director and animator of this long-neglected opera, the beauties of which have never been so apparent as in this instance, needs no introduction to the Greek or international public, be it music lovers or not, Dimitri Mitropoulos is for ever the hero of the evening, just those reasons which are contrary to mak-

sed a most difficult examination for the State Designers Union in the USA (New York) and, being admitted with highest votes, has been active as an opera designer in Texas and as a lecturer about ancient and contemporary Greek Theatre in the principal universities of the USA.

be for her an extremely beneficial competition and stimulus. The difficult aria in the first act, «Ernani, Ernani inviolami», was sung with masterful technique, and if the young singer had an understandable first-night nervousness it was nowhere apparent.



Left to right: Rafael de Banfield (stage director), Mario Del Monaco (Ernani), Anita Cerquetti (Elvira), D. Mitropoulos, Boris Christoff (Silva), Ettore Bastianini, Andreas Nomikos (Designer).

ing heroes. His complete immersion in the work, his putting his genial personality behind and to the complete service of the music he is conducting, always create exactly what the composer wished his music to sound like.

As for the other Greek artist who made the visual aspect of the performance a thoroughly satisfying and exceptional one — he is comparatively unknown to the international public, although he is rapidly rising in fame, as was forceable at his auspicious debut at the Athens Festival in 1955. Andreas Nomikos, formerly with the Kotopoli and the National Theatre, was first noticed by press and public outside his native country for Mozart's «Idomeneo» at the Herodas Atticus, two years ago. He has since pas-

The meeting with Mitropoulos, who invited him to design the «Ernani» in Florence and Richard Strauss' «Electra» for the Salzburg Festival in August, has been instrumental in the career of this young designer, who has experienced the competition as well as the stimulation proper to each artist who leaves his native ground for fields of wider and more responsible activities.

FINE CAST

But not only the aforementioned artists were responsible for the excellence of the performance. It is rare today to assemble a cast of such high standing as the one which included Del Monaco in the title role and Anita Cerquetti in the extremely taxing soprano part of Elvira. The famous tenor proved to have not only a great voice but a musicality and intelligent interpretation among tenors. Miss Cerquetti, if she is a relative newcomer to the operatic field, has proved in this performance what her friends and admirers have foreseen for the past two years: that she is among the truly great voices of this century and that she has at this point only one equal — undoubtedly more experienced and versatile than the 25 year old Cerquetti — Renata Tebaldi. And this should

Cerquetti's name will soon be as well known as beloved among the opera fans all over the world. Not less magnificent was Boris Christoff Silva — this truly great basso being capable of putting his voice at the service of all dramatic shadings the part requires. Ettore Bastianini's velvety voice was perfectly suited to the part of Carlo V, and all the smaller parts were in expert hands — and throats!

DIRECTOR FOR ATHENS

Very noticeable was the staging of Rafael de Banfield, who approached the subject — true musician that he is — solely from its score, creating a homogeneous work, giving proper placement to the famous choral numbers and choreographic movement to the masses, all as a well-woven tapestry-background in front of which the drama of the three noble figures in love with one woman presented itself. This young stage director is expected in Athens shortly to stage «Fidelio» for the Festival at the Herodas Theatre.

Innumerable times the curtain rose to satisfy an acclaiming public which included the flower of Italian culture and aristocracy as well as the Greek Ambassador in Rome, Helen — ex-queen of Rumania, the Duchess of Aosta, Princess Olga of Yugoslavia and many more who had come for an evening of great music and great lyric theatre not soon to be forgotten.

From
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MUSICAL LEADER
CHICAGO ILL

Editor and Critic: SHIRLEY CECILE CASH, 42 Cloverfield Road, So. Valley Stream, N. Y. Tel: LOcust 1-8192
Other Critics: Harry L. Fuchs, Sherman Gottesman, Walter F. Loeb

With the Orchestras

Louis Kentner, who is a fine pianist, made his New York orchestral debut with the Philharmonic-Symphony, April 25, with Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting. The vehicle was Brahms' wonderful Second Piano Concerto, and we were treated to a performance of exceptional dimensions. Mr. Kentner is a pianist of great strength. His tones rang out in virile pronunciation of the familiar and endearing themes. (But there was strength not merely in size of tone—there was control, a vast range of color and dynamics, beauty of quality, maturity of interpretation—in brief, the strength of poetry and artistry.) The program opened with Elliott Carter's «Holiday Overture», a gay contemporary work well worth hearing. Beethoven's Eighth Symphony was treated rather roughly. The beautiful melodic elements were shunted aside in favor of slam-bang rhythm beating...

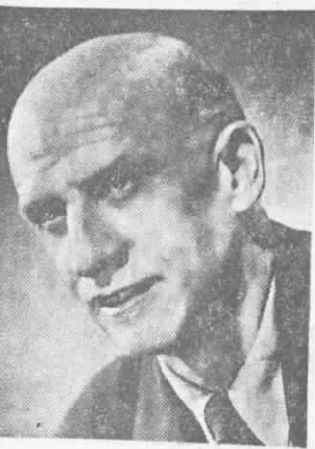
The featured work at the Philharmonic-Symphony program, May 2, was Walton's Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra. It impressed us as a modern work of exceptional beauty. Gregor Piatigorsky, who commissioned the work and performed it in its world premiere in Boston, gave a masterful reading at this New York premiere. Another interesting contribution was Dallapiccola's «Tartiniana» Divertimento for Violin and Orchestra with concertmaster John Corigliano doing top-notch work as soloist. Mitropoulos opened the program with a spirited reading of Berlioz' Overture, «The Corsair», and concluded with a charming interpretation of Mendelssohn's Third Symphony... William Walton figured prominently again at the Philharmonic on May 9 when his exciting work, «Belshazzar's Feast», received a stimulating and colorful performance. Joining the orchestra were the Schola Cantorum and Giorgio Tozzi, basso, who was making his

Philharmonic debut. We must particularly praise Mr. Tozzi for an exceptionally fine performance. The ambitious program opened with the U. S. premiere of Bentzon's «Variazioni Brevi», the only non-choral work of the evening. Niels Bentzon is a young Danish composer who has some facility in the contemporary idiom. This was followed by Kodaly's «Psalmus Hungaricus», which was the most moving contribution of the evening. The Schola Cantorum was excellent in this performance, and tenor David Lloyd was artistic and persuasive. Lukas Foss was on hand to hear the world premiere of his «Psalms» for Chorus and Orchestra. He seemed as pleased as the audience. The whole program gave one the feeling that here was something special, a fitting climax to the season...

ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ 24 ΙΟΥΝΙΟΥ 1957

ΕΘΝΟΣ

ΑΘΗΝΑΪΚΑ ΕΙΚΟΣΙΤΕΤΙ



Ο Δημήτρης Μητρόπουλος.

Θεατρικά νέα

Ο ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ
ΣΥΝΕΦΩΝΗΣΕ ΜΕ ΤΟ ΦΕΣΤΙΒΑΛ
ΑΘΗΝΩΝ ΝΑ ΕΛΘΗ ΝΑ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΗ
ΤΟΝ ΣΕΠΤΕΜΒΡΙΟΥ ΤΟΥ 1958

Ο ΔΗΜΗΤΡΗΣ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ έλαβε συμφωνία με το Φεστιβάλ Αθηνών και θα έλθει στις Αθήνες τον Σεπτέμβριο του 1958 για να διευθύνει δύο συναυλίες τις 27 και 28 Σεπτεμβρίου. Την έκτακτη επιμέλεια του προγράμματος θα αναλάβει ο ίδιος, ο οποίος θα διευθύνει και τον ορχήστρα του Φεστιβάλ, ο οποίος έπαιξε στην νύκτα του Σαββάτου από την Φλωρεντία όπου μετάεισε και συντηρήσει με τον διευθυντή «Ελληνική Αρχαϊκή» μουσική. Σχετικά έδηλώσε ότι από έφετος το Φεστιβάλ «Αθηνών» θα λάμβανει με την προετοιμασία των έδωσαν που άρχισαν την 1η Αυγούστου άπεράσει να παρακολουθήσει το σύστημα που έφασαν στον δία το Φεστιβάλ του Κόσμου, δηλαδή η άρχισή τον καταστούν του προγράμματος του 1958 ένα χρόνο πριν από την άρχισή του να περιληφθεί εις το ένα διαφημιστικά έντυπα που άναγγέλλουν την κίνηση όλων των παρεφερών έδωσαν και να διαφημισθεί γενικά εις το έδαφος έδαφος έγκαίρας ώστε να προσέλθω μεγαλύτερος αριθμός τουρίστων. Προς τούτο η διευθυντής του Φεστιβάλ ήλθεν εις έπικοινωνία με την Φιλαρμονική της Βιέννης με την άποψη άς γιωστών — άσυγκρατείται Μητρόπουλος εις το Σάλτσμπουργκ διά να κατέλθω τον Σεπτέμβριο του 1958 εις τας Αθήνας. Η μεγάλη άρεσκά της άστυναις πρωτεύουσας της Βιέννης θα έλθω έφετος και θα παίζω υπό την διεύθυνση του διαπρεπούς κατάρτου Σαρόφσκυ — η Φιλαρμονική, έδωκε κατ' άρχην έμε νεν άμως ν' άποδεχθεί και ο Μητρόπουλος.

«Έινε ευχάριστη εις δι-
συνώνω εις τον τόπον
στον όποιον έχω γεν-
νηθή»
Κατόπιν τούτου με την ευκαιρία που ο διαπρεπής Έλληνας άρχιμουσικός έφασκε εις την Φλωρεντία όπου διήλθε με την γιωστήν τεραστίαν έπιτυχία τον «Έρνάνης» έσται εις την Έλλάδα ο διευθυντής καλλιτεχνικός συμβούλος του Φεστιβάλ. Ο Μητρόπουλος έδωκεν εις τον κ. Μαμάκην ότι εις τον Σεπτέμβριο του 1958 εις τας Αθήνας θα έλθω να προωθή άμέσως θήκας και ότι να προωθή άμέσως

ή σύναψις και η ύπογραφη των σχετικών συμβολαίων. Έν συνεχεία ηχογράφησε ραδιοφωνικώς η όποια και μεταδόθη χέος από το δεύτερο πρόγραμμα — και θα έπαναληφθεί αύριον στις 2.15' το μεσημέρι από τον σταθμόν δωδεκάων κυμάτων και αύριον το δρόμν εις τας 10 παρά τέταρτο από το Έθνικόν Πρόγραμμα — εις την όποιαν έδωσαν έπισημώς ότι θα έλθω άποσπασμένος του χρόνου εις την Έλλάδα. Ο Μητρόπουλος άφού ύπεγράφησεν ότι άποτελεί δι' αυτόν ιδιαιτέρην ευχαρίστησιν να διευθύνω τον τόπον όπου σιν να διευθύνω τον τόπον όπου γεννήθηκε, διηκρίσινεν ότι άνω των χρόν και όν έπιτελεθί τελικάς συμφωνίας με την Φιλαρμονική της Βιέννης έκείνος πάντως άποσπασμένος θα έλθω εις τας Αθήνας και θα άσκησιν τις συναυλίας του με την Κροατικήν Ορχήστραν Αθηνών. Προέβλεπεν ότι δι' έφετος άτύκας δεν μπορεί να έλθω ούτε ως έπισκέπτης διότι έχει άνεληλθόντες ύποχρεώσεις εις το Ισραήλ και ότι εις την Έλλάδα θα μέινω του χρόνου το άλιγότερον τρεις και το περισσότερον 15 ήμερες.

Η γνώμη του δια τον
Μπαφίλντ και τον «Φιν-
τέλιο»

Ο Δημήτρης Μητρόπουλος εις την ραδιοφωνικώς αυτην που έδωκεν εις τον κ. Μαμάκην δι' ειδικού συνεντεύου που παρεχώρησεν η «Ράϊ» (η Ιταλική ραδιοφωνία) άνέφερε με ικανοποίησιν την έπιτυχία του Έλ ληος σκηνογράφου και ένομαστού του Νομικού εις την παράστασιν του «Έρνάνης» και την δημιουργικήν συμβολήν του νου σκηνοθέτου Μπαφίλντ που θα χρησιμοποιοιθί έφετος και εις το Φεστιβάλ Αθηνών διά ν' άναβήσθω τον «Φιντέλιο» του Μπετόβεν, που θα έμωανισθ 3, 4 και 6 Σεπτεμβρίου η Έθνική Λυρική Σκηνή. Ο διαπρεπής κατάρτος υπεγράμμισε το γεγονός ότι ο Μπαφίλντ εις μουσική — συνθέτης και μάετρος — και έτόνισεν ότι ήταν καιρός ένας μουσικός ν' άναβήσθω την παρουσίασιν μουσικών έργων εις την σκηνήν. Ο Μητρόπουλος έπεν άκούσθ ότι ο Μπαφίλντ έπέτυχε κατά άδωκον άναγνωρίσιν εις τον «Έρνάνης» και ότι προδίδει ίδιον εύλητον άπόδοσιν και εις τον «Φιντέλιο», κατέληξε δε έκράσας την άπόφασιν ότι ικανοποιείν διότι θα άσυνοασθί με το Φεστιβάλ Αθηνών.

ΟΜΙΛΕΙ Ο ΘΡΙΑΜΒΕΥΤΗΣ ΤΟΥ ΦΕΣΤΙΒΑΛ ΤΗΣ ΦΛΩΡΕΝΤΙΑΣ

ΠΕΝΤΕ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΕΣ ΠΟΛΕΙΣ ΑΝΑΜΕΝΟΥΝ ΤΟΝ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟ:
ΜΙΛΑΝΟ, ΚΟΛΩΝΙΑ, ΣΑΛΤΣΜΠΟΥΡΓΚ, ΛΟΥΚΕΡΝΗ ΚΑΙ ΒΙΕΝΝΗ
ΣΤΗΝ ΝΕΑ ΥΟΡΚΗ ΘΑ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΗ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΛΙΝ ΕΡΓΑ ΣΚΑΛΚΩΤΑ
ΑΠΟ ΠΑΙΔΙ ΟΝΕΙΡΕΥΟΤΑΝ ΝΑ ΖΩΤΑΝΕΥΗ ΤΟΝ «ΕΡΝΑΝΗ»

ΣΥΝΕΝΤΕΥΞΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΔΙΑΣΤΗΜΟΥ ΑΡΧΙΜΟΥΣΙΚΟΥ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΑΠΕΣΤΑΛΜΕΝΟΝ ΤΟΝ «ΝΕΩΝ» Κ. Γ. ΠΗΛΙΧΟΝ

ΦΛΩΡΕΝΤΙΑ, Ιούλιος. — Κάθε Έλ ληος που ήλθεν αυτες τις ήμέρας στην άραια πόλιν του άστυναις του Λαζαρό ντο Ντα Βίντι ασάβησεν άριεύς έθνική ύπερφανεία. Μόλις άγθ από τον σιδηροδρομικό σταθμό και άντικρύσθ το Μπαφίλντ και τα άλλα μεγάλα γραφικα της Πλάτσα ντελλα Σαπ- τόνε, είναι άδύνατον μη προσέξω ένα μεγάλο έλληνικό όνομα, που κυριαρχεί στις τεραστίας άφίσσεως του φλωρεντινού Φεστιβάλ που καλύπτουν όλους τους γούχους. Είναι το όνομα του Δημήτρη Μητρόπουλου, ένα όνομα που έχει κατακτήσει τους φιλομούσους όλων του κόσμου.

Στους Φλωρεντινούς ο Μητρόπουλος έινει πολύ άγαπητός και γιωστός, γιατί είναι η τρίτη φορά έφετος που παίρνει μέρος στο έτήσιο μουσικό Φεστιβάλ τους. Στις έφετεινές άδελφάσεις άναβώσε την ληροσημένη νεανική άπαρα του Βέρντι «Έρνάνης». Μετά το τέλος της παραστάσεως, έκαστονάδες άπομα, άνδρες και γυναίκες κάθε ηλικίας, έτρεξαν στην πίσω πόρτα του «Τεάτρο Κομουνάλε» για να προλάβουν τον μάετρο, να του φωνάξουν από κοντά «μπράβο» και να άνταμειφθούν άπ' αυτόν με ένα αύτογραφο επάνω στην άνοιγμένη 5η σελίδα του προγράμματος του «Έρνάνης». Όταν η πολιορκία των θεατών του λήθηκε κάποτε, ο μάετρος, τυλίγμενος μ' ένα φλωρινά κοκκί και μία κομπάρτινα πάνω από το σμόκιν, άγηνε έξω στο δρόμο. Άφού έκακε λίγα άφματα πεζή στην Βία Σαλφερίνο, πρής μετά το αύτοκίνητο που τον περίμενε στην γωνία και χάρθηκε μέσα στην ύγρη φλωρεντινή νύκτα.

Χέος ο μάετρος δεν είχε να διευθύνω. Είχε όμως την έπιθυμία να παρακολουθήσθ στο ίδιο θέατρο μία παράσταση μπαλέτου. Στο θέατρο νομμερο 5 όπου καθόταν πίσω-πίσω, κρυμμένος σέχον από τα έλέμματα του κοινού, μάς έκανε την τιμή να μάς άσκησθ δύο θέσεις πλάι του, στον ένομαστολόγο του Έθνικού Θεάτρου κ. Αντώνη Φωκά και στήν ύποφάνωσιν. Μας άεχθηκε με χαρά και καλωσόριον και πριν από κάθε άντηρήν μάς άρίσσε για την Αθήνα.

— Τι γίνεται έφετος με το Φεστιβάλ; Έπισημώ πολύ να έλθω στην Έλλάδα και έλπίω του χρόνου να μπορέσω να διευθύνω στην Αθήνα.

— Έν συνεχεία, ο Δημήτρης Μητρόπουλος έδωκε άδελφώ το πρόγραμμα των προσέχων έμφανισμών του. Μετά την τελευταία παράστασιν του «Έρνάνης» θα άσκησθ στις 23 Ιουνίου, ο Δημήτρης Μητρόπουλος θα άναχωρήσθ στο Μιλάνο, όπου στις 27 και 28 του ίδιου μηνός θα διευθύνω την Ορχήστραν της Σαλτσμπουργκ. Το πρόγραμμα και των δύο αυτών συνολών είναι το ίδιο. Η συμφωνία άσθδ,

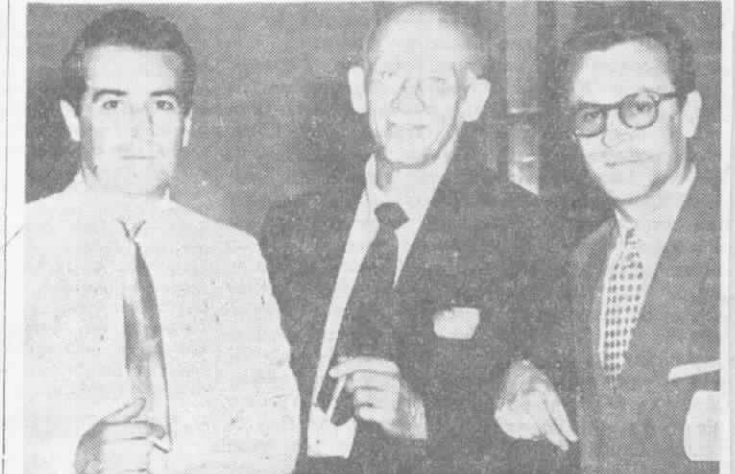
6 του Μάιερ και τα 3 κομμάτια για άρχισμα του «Άλμαν Μπέρκ».

— Υστερό-συνεχίζει ο μάετρος — λαγαρώς να έξουαρώσθ 15 ήμερες πριν πάω στην Κολωνία, όπου στις 19 Ιουλίου θα διευθύνω την Φιλαρμονική Ορχήστραν της πόλεως, σε μία συναυλία με τρεις Συμφωνίες μία ένας νέου Άμερικανού συνθέτου, του Σαίλερ που είναι μόνον για πνευστά, την συμφωνία άριθ. 5 του Μέντελσον και την Συμφωνία Ντομνίστικα του Ρίχαρντ Στράους.

— Στις 22 Ιουλίου ο Δημήτρης Μητρόπουλος θα μεταβή στο Σάλτσμπουργκ όπου θα μέινω μέχρι τις 30 Αυγούστου. Στο διάστημα αυτό θα διευθύνω την ορχήστρα της Κρατικής Όπερας και την Φιλαρμονική της Βιέννης, στην «Η-

— Η έγγραφη της μουσικής σε διάσους — συμπληρώνει ο Δημήτρης Μητρόπουλος — είναι μία ύπόθεσις που δεν με ένοιασθείς καθόλου. Πιστεύω ότι η όμορφιά της άληθινής δημιουργίας, που χάνεται μετά από κάθε κοντύζο σε μία σάλα ή στο ύπαιθρο, δεν μπορεί ποτέ να διατηρήθ άπολυμένη επάνω σ' ένα δίσκο. Άποδείξει, ότι έγω στο σπίτι μου δεν έχω ούτε έναν δίσκο, έπ' όσους μέχρι σήμερα έχω έγγραφη με διάφορες όρχήστρες και διάφορες έταιρίες. Θα ρωτήσετε έστω, γιατί τότε αγοράζω δίσκους; Η έρώση άδειε πολλά λεφτά από μένα και πρέπει να δουλέω για να της τάω δώσω.

— Ο Δημήτρης Μητρόπουλος μεταβήρεται κατόπιν στον έναπό του στην Νέα Υόρκη, όπου θα άρίσκειται τον Οκτώ-



Ο Δημήτρης Μητρόπουλος με τον σκηνογράφο Άνδρέα Νομικό και τον συνενεργή των «Νέων» κ. Πηλίων, προς τον όποιον έδωκε την δημοσιεύμενην σήμερα συνέντευξιν.

λέκτρα» του Ρίχαρντ Στράους και σε δύο κονταίρες με διαφορετικό το θέμα πρόγραμμα. Το πρώτο περιλαμβάνει έργα συνθέτων της Βορείου Άμερικής, ενώ το άλλο την συμφωνία άριθ. 1, της Άνταίους του Σούμαν, το «κα- τέρτο για πιάνο του Ραβήλ για άρισ- τερό χέρι με σολίστ τον Ρομπέρτ Καζανέζης και την Συμφωνία Ντομνίστικα του Ρίχαρντ Στράους. Υστερά άφού διευθύνω στην Λουκερνή της Έλβετίας την Φιλαρμονική της Βιέννης, θα άναχωρήσθ στις 2 Σεπτεμβρίου στην Αυστριακή Πρωτεύουσα για να ηχογραφήσθ σε δίσκους όλοκληρή την «Ηλέκτρα», την «Μανταρ Μπαφίλντ» και δύο κονταίρες.

— Έν συνεχεία, ο Δημήτρης Μητρόπουλος έδωκε άδελφώ την χειμερινή σάβλα, τόσο της Φλωρεντινής Ορχήστρας όσο και της Μετροπόλιταν Όπερας. — Στις συναυλίες με την Φιλαρμονική Ορχήστραν της Νέας Υόρκης — έπειτα ο διαπρεπής Έλληνας άρχιμουσικός — θα περιλάβω και πάλι έργα του ά- ξεκαστου Έλ ληος συνθέτου Νίκου Σκαλκώτα, ο άποιος διατύκως πέρασε τόσους πρώτα μπροστά στην διάσφαρι των συμπαιρωτών μας, και μία δυστυρώς γιωσι ο Σκαλκώτας δεν πρόλαβε να φησά μεγάλο έργο, που ήταν άσιος να άπολυρήσθ.

Στο άσπινον αυτό, διεκώη η ένδιαφε- ρουσα συνολία με τον μεγάλο Έλληνα μάετρο, γιατί η παράστασις, τα μπαλέτα άρχισε. Θωμάσις ντεκόρ, έ- ρινες μπαλλερίνες και λαστικίνες γαρ- νευαί έξίστασι μουσική. Τα δύο πρώτα μπαλέτα είναι μοντέρνα, τα τρίτα βασισμένα πάλι σε μουσική του Γίαν- νη και το τέταρτο πάνω σε μελωδίες του Γιόχαν Στράους με σατυρικό χαρακτήρα. Όλες οι χορογραφίες έχουν γι- νη από τον Ουγγαρίζο Άουρίλια Μιλάνο. Άνέφερε στις πρώτες μπαλλερίνες και τους πρώτους χορευτάς τα όνόματ της Όλγας Άματι, του Ρενέ Μπών, της Λία Ντέλ Άρα, του Άλσασσάρ Βασίλιεφ, της Σωμπίν Λαμπάν και του Βάλτερ Σαππλίνι.

Στο διαλείμμα της παραστάσεως των μπαλέτων ένοηρόσασμε την ά- κούσι να συνεχίσουμε την συνολία με τον Δημήτρη Μητρόπουλο. Σε έρώτησι, γιατί διαλέξε να διευθύνω τον «Έρνάνη» του Βέρντι, από όλα τα άλλα έργα του, ο μάετρος έπεν, τότε η μουσική της όπερας αυτής, ώστε μου έινε στην ψυχή μου σαν μία από τις πιο ευχάριστες στιγμές της ζωής μου. Άργότερο, άναυλωσάμε την μουσική τέχνη και για πρώτη φορά έπίστω την μαχητικότητα στα χέρια μου, με άβρε στο νου να ένασώνωσμε το έξασμένο νεανικό έργο του Βέρντι, που τότε γράφει γύρω στα 1844 και που παίζατον έσπετα πολύ σπάνια. Η έπιθυμία μου αυτή, προγραμματοποίησεν άμως μόλις τε λειψία, όταν το έργο άναβήσθηκε υπό την διεύθυνσιν μου στην Μετροπόλιταν με «Έρνάνη» τον άληθινά μεγάλο τένορο Μάριο Ντέλ Μόνακο. Ήταν λαμπρή, η περίεργη στη Μετροπόλιταν, αλλά και η προχρησινή πρεμιέρα στο «Τεάτρο Κομουνάλε» με τους ίδιους σέχον άποσ- κούς έρηναιούς δεν είχε να ζήλωση τίποτα από την πρεμιέρα της Άμερικής. Ένας άλλος συμπαιρωτής μας, ο άλυ- ρος σκηνογράφος Άνδρέας Νομικός, σιν νέβαλε στην άναμφισβήτητη έπιτυχία της παραστάσεως με τα πριζάντα ύ- ποδείκνυσι σσημικά και τα θωμάσις σε σπαύματα. Ο ίδιος ο Ντέλ Μόνακο έινε στους διανομησάρχους ότι το σσημικά του Νομικού και το καστούμι ήσαν πολύ καλύτερα και άραιότερα από της Μετροπόλιταν.

Και ο Δημήτρης Μητρόπουλος, έδωκε- σιν την συνολία με την ένδιαφερόσασ δίστασι.

— Πρέπει να προσθέσω και κάτι ά- κων για την σπράνω Άννίτα Τσερ- κουεττί. Αυτή η μεγαλόσημη χορδή γυναικάς των 24 έτών, που μάγερε το κοινό της Φλωρεντίας τον άειν φάσθ της, να θ' άναβήσθ επί πολύ αύτοσε άς ν' έινε η πρώτη σπράνω του κόσμου Φω- σκικό, η έμφανισίς της θα την δυσκο- λήσθ πολύ να κατακτήσθ και το κο- νον έαίνα που ζήτησε άποσπασμένη του Αλομηνόγικας ή άλλες του τύπου των 9.000 δολλάρια!

Γ. ΠΗΛΙΧΟΣ

RIBALTE - SCHERMI

IERI SERA ALLA SCALA

Chiusa la stagione concertistica

Con il programma dedicato a Mahler e a Berg, diretto da Dimitri Mitropoulos, si è conclusa la breve stagione dei concerti scaligeri. E' stata questa la serata più proficua e, naturalmente, artisticamente elevata, e per l'assunto del concerto, dimostrativo se non proprio polemico (che di polemica di fronte a due artisti scomparsi come Berg e Mahler non è il caso di parlare), e per la magistrale abilità di questo direttore che ha considerato il maggiore oggi esistente in campo concertistico.

Importante davvero il concerto di ieri sera per volgere sotto un'atmosfera di solenne e, di fatto, in programma una sinfonia del 1904 che figurava in prima esecuzione in Italia. La sinfonia è la « sesta in la minore » di Mahler, il quasi ignoto sinfonista austriaco, allievo del pure semiconosciuto (da noi) Bruckner, e maestro a sua volta di Alban Berg, il cui « Wozzeck » giunse alla Scala con una quarantina d'anni di ritardo. E' evidente che da noi questi musicisti, così importanti nello sviluppo del romanticismo musicale tedesco verso le forme attuali della musica, cioè della dodecafonia, non sono graditi, anzi per la mole dei loro spartiti, vuoi per quanto di scabroso e di arduo e di nuovo essi hanno tentato e coraggiosamente sperimentato sul pentagramma. E' difficile ieri sera, non ostante il nome fascinoso di Mitropoulos, la sala presentava molti vuoti.

Mitropoulos è un direttore che riesce a rappresentare in musica attraverso il gesto, un gesto tanto quando deve essere misurato, ardente e incisivo quando la partitura lo esige. E' sempre impegnato veramente di fronte all'orchestra e all'auditorium che va

e seguendo. Non si tratta mai di esibizione, ma di omaggio alla musica e al musicista.

Gli assai fragili ma vitali brani per orchestra di Berg, un Berg ancora alla ricerca di una musica che sente già dentro di sé, ma che ancora stenta a prendere realmente corpo. Mitropoulos li ha sorretti quasi con la preoccupazione di dimostrare quanto di artistico era contenuto in quel fiero contrappunto, già sulla via di rompersi con l'armonia tradizionale, e come tocanti siano gli accenti di disperata tensione verso un lucido e umano ideale artistico che un autore onesto e vero come Berg sentiva di dover esprimere.

Di fronte a Mahler, il Mahler maturo della « sesta », Mitropoulos ha potuto manifestare tutta la sua valenza, la somma della sua sapienza direttoriale nel maneggiare un'orchestra complessa, tumultuosa, travolgente, a volte squassante come quella di Mahler. Fin dal primo tempo il dramma di Mahler è stato messo a punto, il dramma di un artista che si sente chiamato ad aprire un periodo nuovo della musica tedesca, ma che deve necessariamente chiudere quello di cui è erede. Lo splendore del secondo movimento, l'impressionante caduta delle trombe dal tono maggiore al minore, nel primo tempo; quel conturbante scampanello di capre che entra sovente in ogni tempo, e non allo scopo di aprire orizzonti cuposcolari e descrittivi, ma quasi a deprimere ogni forma di lirismo per imporre una più cruda strada all'espressione sonora, alla stessa materia sonora; le gigantesche proporzioni del pur coerentissimo quarto tempo, hanno affascinato l'uditorio che alla fine ha tributato al maestro il più fervido applauso. E accanto a Mitropoulos va lodato quel magnifico strumento che è l'orchestra scaligera, inarrivabile quando ben diretta.

Luigi Gianoli

Alla Scala il concerto di Dimitri Mitropoulos

Non è esagerato dire che il trionfo a cui abbiamo assistito ieri sera alla Scala deve essere ripartito in parti uguali fra i tre protagonisti della serata: Berg, Mahler e Mitropoulos. Due compositori del nostro secolo e un direttore che ha la grande dote di sapere penetrare nelle partiture, e riuscire a realizzarle in maniera assolutamente esemplare la veste formale e i contenuti spirituali. Già l'accostamento del *Tre pezzi per orchestra* op. 6 di Berg con la *Sesta Sinfonia* di Mahler, rivela l'intelligenza musicale di Mitropoulos: il quale la stagione scorsa presentò due diversi aspetti, in Strauss e nel primo Schoenberg, della crisi del mondo germanico agli inizi del secolo; e ieri sera ha voluto ritornare sull'argomento, ritenendo invece nella intima continuità che lega il problematico e tragico mondo di Mahler con quello angosciato e stralunato di Berg. Anche musicalmente il pubblico ha potuto avvertire questa continuità: il coraggio armonico di Mahler è infatti appena al di qua delle sfatte strutturali tradizionali di cui si vanta Berg. Mitropoulos ha reso di quest'ultimo l'intima tensione, l'aspirazione ansiosa e disperata, venata continuamente da un pessimismo ironico che condanna paradossalmente con un generoso entusiasmo lirico, per cui la partitura del *Tre pezzi* è già ampiamente presaga del *Wozzeck*; e del primo ha saputo condurre le complesse file dell'immane discorso distribuito attraverso settanta minuti di musica.

Un successo travolgente, lo si è detto. Tanto che è stato

concesso un bis, la Sinfonia dell'« Ernani », ed è stata una chiusura verdiana accolta con rinnovato entusiasmo.

L. P.

ALLA SCALA

Dimitri Mitropoulos

La ormai indiscussa autorità del maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos è riuscita a imporre alla direzione e al pubblico della Scala un concerto di indubbio ardimento e di notevole interesse. La stagione sinfonica si è chiusa così con un trionfale successo coronato dal lancio di fiori dalle gallerie sulla bravissima orchestra.

Due soli gli autori in programma: Gustav Mahler e Alban Berg, il precursore dell'espressionismo, cioè, e il suo più geniale e maturo esponente. Del primo, Mitropoulos ha diretto la colossale Sesta Sinfonia, detta « Tragica », composta nel 1903-1904: vasto affresco in cui il lirismo tipicamente schubertiano e popolare sfocia, soprattutto nel grandioso finale, in una tempesta sonora in cui le trombe, la percussione e tutta l'orchestra si scatenano raggiungendo il massimo della sonorità. Di Alban Berg abbiamo invece ascoltato i « Tre pezzi per orchestra » op. 6, scritti nel '14 dall'autore non ancora trentenne, lavoro straordinariamente maturo che, mentre si collega con lo Schoenberg dei primi grandi poemi sinfonici, mostra già pienamente la fortissima individualità del musicista, nelle sue atmosfere tragiche come nei suoi momenti di intima e soave dolcezza: l'autore del *Wozzeck* e del Concerto per violino è già qui tutto.

A chiusura della serata, fuori programma, aderendo alle calorose richieste degli ascoltatori, Mitropoulos ha infine superbamente diretto il preludio dell'« Ernani » di Verdi. Il pubblico ha così salutato con fragorosi applausi la magnifica orchestra scaligera premiando, assieme alla gloriosa fatica di questa serata, quella di tutta la stagione.

Ter

MUSICHE DI MAHLER E BERG ALLA SCALA

Mitropoulos ha chiuso la stagione sinfonica

Chiusura spettacolosa ieri sera, della stagione concertistica scaligera. Vedere Dimitri Mitropoulos dirigere il programma che ci ha fatto ascoltare, eccitata l'orchestra in un parossismo tra inebriato e delforrenato, è anche, se non soprattutto, uno spettacolo.

Mitropoulos non ha certo chi lo superi in fatto di tecnica, e la sua sensibilità, come le tesa talora sino allo spasimo, si riflette e si scatena su chi suona e chi ascolta come una forza elettrica. E' lo stesso che scosso da scariche di non so quale potenza nervosa. Non si scompone mai, però, in una continua gesticolazione da invasato e niente altro, incapace di controllarsi perdendo il dominio di sé e dell'orchestra. Qualche volta lo vedi come attorcigliarsi dallo spasimo, ma è soltanto per allargare l'arco delle ampie cadenze o per l'accentuazione di un crescendo. Del resto, la sua bacchetta ha i movimenti più impercettibili e più espressivi, il corpo resta sempre a perpendicolo il viso soltanto parla: voglio dire che dal viso, dagli occhi, fa intendere ciò che sente e vuol far sentire, e che da quella sua testa un po' frastuono e un po' faustica, si sprigiona, è da credere, dei fluidi co-

municativi irresistibili. Certo gli si addice più che mai in un'occasione del virtuosismo strumentale d'eccezione come i « Tre pezzi per orchestra » di Alban Berg e la « Sinfonia in la minore » di Gustav Mahler, che hanno preso da soli tutto il programma della serata. (Con le nostre vecchie musiche melodrammatiche non è a suo miglior luogo. Sere fa si è udita una sua esecuzione di una di queste musiche poco meno che barbara: come chi dicesse che parla l'italiano con ogni storpiatura dei nostri anche più facili costrutti). Alban Berg dev'essere una sua passione, Gustav Mahler un suo gusto, per non dire un cavallo di battaglia.

Il Berg, che non è tutto dodecafonic, anzi, sta anche in questi suoi « tre pezzi » in quell'espressionismo che non è altro che esasperazione romantica, feroce, spasmodica. Sono tre brevi composizioni, Preludio, Ridda e Marcia — una marcia di allucinati? — che si ascoltano e sono stati ascoltati ormai senza suscitare scandali. La Sinfonia di Mahler, nuova per l'Italia, ci ha interessato, ha interessato per gli effetti strumentali che in essa si susseguono ritardando, ininterrottamente, ma, fuor di que-

sto, non si sbaglia a dire che è apparsa, com'è, di una lungezza da silberne qualunque che l'ascolti. (Tanto è vero che si è eseguita in due parti staccate). Mahler anche in questo suo lavoro, mostra i pregi e i difetti, o le manchevolezze o la povertà geniale, dei grandi direttori d'orchestra, dediti alla composizione. I pregi sono unicamente della capacità tecnica costruttiva e dell'abile mano strumentale, la povertà è nell'inventiva creatrice, e aggiungerei, se non sembri una contraddizione in termini, una mancanza assoluta del senso della armoniosa misura. Questa sinfonia è ipertrofica, caotica, echeggiante autori diversi, quasi sempre volgare, come nel primo e nell'ultimo tempo, mediocre, più che da musica leggera, come nell'Andante moderato. Ma, dicevo, è stato un concerto spettacoloso, centrato in Mitropoulos, proprio nelle attrattive sue personali artistiche, visive e intime: della sua mimica direttoriale suggestiva al massimo, della sua genialità e del suo strabiliante virtuosismo di interprete. Naturalmente, accoglienze trionfali.

a. t.

July, 1957

Musical Review

But surely Verdi's "Ernani" has never been better performed. It is a supreme work for showing off supreme singers, and a cast including Anita Cerquetti, Mario Del Monaco, Ettore Bastianini, and Boris Christoff

pera Given at May Festival

virtually guaranteed a remarkable performance. Add to this the art of Dimitri Mitropoulos as conductor, and the recipe seemed perfect. His vigorous and penetrating interpretation of the score was enhanced by his particular adaptability to such a fiery brand of music. Enthusiasm for the singers and the work itself was enormous. For once, that hackneyed phrase "a great success" had its full significance.



Foto Levi

Happy after an "Ernani" performance at the Florence May Festival are Mario Del Monaco, Dimitri Mitropoulos, and Francesco Siciliani, artistic director of the Teatro Comunale

CHIUSURA SINFONICA ALLA SCALA

Dinamico virtuosismo del maestro Mitropoulos

di BENIAMINO DAL FABBRO

STA ORMAI per diventare tradizionale che la serie dei « concerti di primavera » e insieme l'anno musicale alla « Scala » si concludano con la energica e dinamica presenza sul podio di Dimitri Mitropoulos. Anche i suoi programmi propongono sempre una lezione d'alta cultura, a cui si unisce il prestigio d'un virtuosismo interpretativo e direttoriale che non teme confronti. L'anno scorso,

Mitropoulos aveva accostato Schoenberg e Strauss: quest'anno, a Berg ha fatto seguire Mahler. Insomma, è continuata la esplorazione di quella fondamentale zona estetica tra post-romanticismo ed espressionismo che tanto influsso ha avuto sulla determinazione della musica del nostro secolo.

Ieri sera si sono ascoltati, dapprima, i *Tre pezzi per orchestra* op. 6 di Alban Berg, una partitura di nuove e deliranti figurazioni e d'estremo magistero tecnico, di cui alcune pagine si possono forse considerare cartoni sinfonici dell'opera *Wozzeck*. Da Berg a Mahler, è stato poi come risalire alle premesse. La *Sinfonia n. 6 in la minore* è una colossale partitura in quattro tempi, in cui Mahler ancora una volta conferma la sua posizione di erede diretto del maggior sinfonismo tedesco, contrapponendosi, da una parte, all'accademismo formale di Brahms, dall'altra, al funambolismo tematico di Strauss. Il lavoro è ricco di straordinarie bellezze e di terribanti sonorità, di episodi prolissi, di geniali semplificazioni come di complicazioni inutili: ma se ne sprigiona il senso tragico d'un messaggio dettato da complesse ed elevate ragioni spirituali. Ambedue gli autori hanno avuto in Mitropoulos un interprete e un animatore insuperabile, pronto a scatenare le forze sinfoniche sino al calor bianco, ad avvolgerne le sinuose spire impressionistiche, a render palesi le grandi arcate formali, a dar risalto agli innumerevoli particolari.

Una splendida prova di tecnica e di dedizione ha dato l'orchestra della « Scala », provata implacabilmente in ogni suo settore strumentale; e ci è gradito, in occasione di questo bellissimo concerto di chiusura, rivolgere un cordiale saluto e un fervido augurio a tutti i componenti di questo complesso, di cui per molti mesi abbiamo seguito le nobili fatiche al servizio della musica e delle tradizioni della « Scala ».

Il pubblico ha mostrato d'intendere appieno il valore sia delle musiche che degli interpreti e ha tributato a Dimitri Mitropoulos e all'orchestra intensi applausi, che si sono poi tramutati in acclamazioni. Fuori programma, alla fine, è stato eseguito, con uno slancio romantico del tutto nuovo, il preludio verdiano dell'« Ernani ».

From JUL 1 6 1957

HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Mitropoulos Gets Mantua Award

MANTUA, Italy, July 15 (AP).—Dimitri Mitropoulos, the Greek-born American music director of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, received here last night the gold "Orpheus" award bestowed upon him by Mantua as the foremost conductor of 1956. Ettore Campogalliani, president of the award committee and chorus conductor at La Scala in Milan, made the presentation.

The first "Orpheus," a gold statuette representing that mythical classic minstrel, was awarded two years ago to the late Arturo Toscanini. Mr. Mitropoulos was not able to come here earlier to receive the award, but has recently been conducting in the May Music Festival in Florence.

At the baton, famed conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos who chooses SAS for transatlantic travel.

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KULTUR IN DER ZEIT

Souveräner Gebieter im Reich der Musik

Letztes Konzert des Kölner Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchesters

Durch Spielplanänderungen rückte das III. Sonderkonzert des Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchesters an den Schluß der Spielzeit. Man ist gewohnt bei dieser repräsentativen Konzertreihe im Funkhausaal besonders hohe Maßstäbe anlegen zu können. Man durfte also von solchem Schlußkonzert etwas Besonderes erwarten. Und man wurde nicht enttäuscht! Was vielleicht nicht einfach gewesen sein mag, wurde erreicht: die Steigerung der Gesamt-Qualität über jedes bislang erlebte Maß hinaus.

Zwei Werke der jüngeren Vergangenheit entnahm das Programm der Fülle zu Unrecht weniger bekannter Schöpfungen. Gleichwohl gehören sie zum Besten, was uns die mit dem Begriff der musikalischen Romantik recht summarisch bezeichnete Epoche hinterlassen hat. Der ersten Blütezeit und der spätesten Entfaltung dieser Epoche entstammend, umfassen sie zugleich das ganze weite und vielfältig behaute Feld und verkörpern gleichsam die ganze Entwicklung der Romantik während fast eines Jahrhunderts.

Beide Werke nahmen aber auch zu ihrer Zeit Sonderstellungen ein durch die ausgeprägte Verarbeitungsweisen und sind aus eben diesem Grunde uns heute wieder so nahe gerückt.

Mendelssohns sogenannte 5. Sinfonie, lange nach seinem Tode erst veröffentlicht, aber schon 1830 zum Reformationstag geschrieben, greift alte Techniken der Chorbearbeitung auf. Sie rückt damit in innere Nähe zu Mendelssohns Orgelsonaten, den heute so verkannten, ja sie mag als deren beste gelten, die weit über das Vermögen von Mendelssohns zeitgenössischer Orgel hinauswächst.

Ihre beiden letzten Sätze gewinnen die straffe Form aus ihrer Anlage als Chorbearbeitung von „Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott“, die von großartigem Orchesterzitativ eingeleiteten Bläserklänge des vollakkordischen Choralstabs im Andante und die mit reicher und oft kontrapunktischer Motivverarbeitung vorbereitete Choralkrönung des Finales.

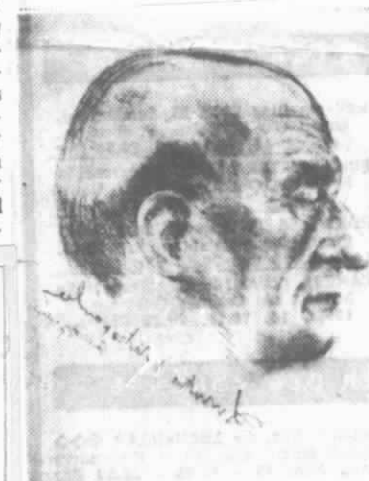
Aber auch die vorhergehenden Sätze; der so männlich straffe, aller Mendelssohnschen Weichlichkeit ferne erste mit seiner episodisch das Parsifal-Thema vorwegnehmenden Einleitung und das länderhaft innige Scherzo lassen sich durchaus als erweiterte Vorbereitungen des Choralstabs aufzufassen und als Vorweginterpretationen gewisser Partien des Choralstabs. Ein Werk, das Verständlichkeit der Anlage, Adel von Form und Satz, Ernst und Würde des Ge-

haltes so glücklich vereinigt, daß man es öfter hören sollte.

Abschließend Richard Strauß' „Sinfonia domestica“: ein Werk, das jeder Analyse spottet, dessen nähere Erläuterungen Bande füllen könnte. Bis ins kleinste Detail schildert der Komponist sein Familienleben und bindet zugleich aufs stärkste alles zur musikalischen Einheit zusammen: ob mit oder ohne Kenntnis des Programms gehört, immer packt die Schwungkraft und Einheitlichkeit der Komposition, macht die Subtilität der Feinstruktur und ihrer Bezüglichkeiten staunen.

Gerade dies Werk war es, das einen wahrhaft frenetischen Beifall hervorrief: es war nämlich einem kongenialen Interpreten anvertraut. Leiter des Abends war Dimitri Mitropoulos aus New York, der im Rahmen seines diesjährigen Europa-Aufenthaltes für dieses ein Konzert nach Deutschland gekommen war.

Unerhört, wie er, auswendig dirigierend, Einsicht in das We-



sen dieser so verwickelten Partitur gefunden hat, wie er meisterhaft und souverän über das Orchester gebietet, wie er Wesentliches von der Zutat scheidet. Herrlich, wie der größte Bogen, die kleinste Phrase dynamisch ausrundernd: ein stetiges Schwellen, welches packt und mitreißt.

Königlich und unverwechselbar sein Gestus: die taktierende Rechte oft fast unbeteiligt, die ausformende Linke dagegen unentwegt mit dem Nuancieren von Dynamik und Ausdrucksfarbe tätig. Voll überlegener Ruhe zu Zeiten, und dann wieder in großflächiger und unge-

mein lockerer Schwingung belebend, zuweilen auch mit Energie geladen befeuernd.

Als Werk der zeitgenössischen Musik hatte er die Sinfonie für 16 Blechbläser und Schlagzeug op. 16 des jungen Solo-Hornisten des Metropolitan-Opera-Orchesters, Günther Schuller, mitgebracht. Ein interessantes Werk, denn es zeigte, wie vielfältigen Ausdrucks die Blechbläser in den letzten Jahrzehnten mächtig geworden sind. Tatsächlich fehlte nichts, was man von einer Sinfonie erwarten darf: freilich wurden die Bläser aufs raffinierteste ausgenutzt.

Aber auch ein schönes Werk: nirgends überschreitet es das von innen gesetzte Maß klassischer Rundung der Form und völlige Aequalität von Gehalt und Gestalt zeichnen es aus. Liebenswert die expressive Zartheit von höchster Intensität des „Lento desolato“, das fast allein auf dem unirdischen Klang sechs gestoppter Trompeten beruht, voll herrlicher Vitalität und mit packenden rhythmischen Antrieben der kraftvoll beleuchtete letzte Satz.

Der einsame Mißfallens-Pfiff mag wohl nur dem zwar logisch vorbereiteten, aber doch im Wesen „atomzertrümmerten“ Zwölfton-Schlußakkord gegolten haben. Er wurde schnell vom zögernden, aber anhaltenden Beifall übertönt, der dem jungen Komponisten und dem trefflichen Gestalter herzliche Anerkennung ausdrückte.

Das hier wie in den anderen Werken eingebungsvoll, begeistert und vortrefflich musizierende Orchester hatte sich gleichfalls hohe Anerkennung verdient.

Das Programm war diesmal arg gemischt

Abschluß der Kölner Funkhauskonzerte unter Dimitri Mitropoulos

Eigenbericht der WELT

Köln, 22. Juli

Die Kölner Musiksensationalen dieses Sommers (Opern- und Ballett-Internationale, Dirigentenparade bei Funkhaus- und Gürzenichkonzerten) fanden mit einem großsonnigen Applaus ihren Abschluß. Wochentag vorher prangten bereits die grellgelben Querscheiben „Ausverkauft“ über den Plakaten Dimitri Mitropoulos aus New York dirigierte die Rundfunk-Sinfonie: Lutheralchor A la Mendelssohn plus US-Blechbläserexzess plus Strauß-Supersinfonie. Ein wunderliches Mischprogramm, abstoßend und anziehend zugleich. Möglicherweise ein Notprogramm, jedenfalls aber Nötigung.

Den kompletten zweiten Teil füllte die „Sinfonia domestica“ von Strauß' Makartmusik im Hausrock. Man war ihr in der vergangenen Saison noch begegnet, im raffenden Griff des Bajuwaren Keilberth. Mitropoulos, der Grieche, stempelte sie nun auch nicht zu einer Genialität um. Höchstens daß der Bezug zu New York Zusammenhänge aufzeigte: Uraufführung Anno 1904 durch die Elite-Sinfoniker der Weltstadt vor optimistischem Besitzbürgerparkett Neu-Amerikas.

Wie auch immer, es blieb Ersatz. Rasch arrangiert an Stelle eines ursprünglich verheißenen Sonderkonzertes unter Sanzogni mit Solisten der Scala di Milano, die dem neuen Kölner Opernhaus an der zerbrochenen Glockengasse soeben die italienischen Weihen gab. Sanzogni erkrankte, die Stars hatten ihre Partien auf Köln und Paris zugleich verteilt. Was an den Opernabenden geschworenmaßen getrennt auftrat, hätte sich für ein Funkhauskonzert nicht wohl zusammenfinden können, die Callas beispielsweise neben Giuseppe di Stefano ganz und gar nicht.

Auch für die Ausgrabung von Mendelssohns „Reformationsinfonie“ wird man schwer einleuchtende Erklärungen finden. Es sei denn die, sich reumütig dann doch lieber zu einer italienischen oder zur schottischen bekennen zu können. Ein Auftragswerk des Zeiterschülers zur Berliner (entfallenen) Dreihundertjahrfeier von 1830. Im Choralfinale für unsere Ohren heute erstaunlich vorgepaukt, auf deutsches Wagner-Brahms-Burgzinnenpathos. Im

übrigen mitchäftig-historische Musik hübsch blaß zwischen den schöpferischen Stildaptionen eines Mozarts vorher oder eines Strawinskys heute.

Bleibe das Neue in dem Fassadenprogramm, die deutsche Erstaufführung einer „Sinfonie“ für sechs Blechbläser und zwei Schlagwerker von Günther Schuller, dem jetzt 32-jährigen deutschstämmigen Solohornisten des Metropolitan-Opernorchesters. Hier hat die handwerkliche, die klangwerkrealistische Freude am Blechblasen Platz gefunden. Eine traditionell deutsche Freude, diesmal gepflegt mit Jazz-erfahrung.

Zwanzig Spielminuten lang Schwierigkeit auf Schwierigkeit getürmt: im Ansatz, in den Starkegraden, in der rhythmischen Vertracktheit. Nur nicht in der musikalisch-kompositorischen Substanz. Diese begnügt sich mit chromatisch ausgestuften Trittschritten. Das klingt titanisch wild, bleibt aber noch im Experiment, im Vorfeld des eigentlichen Werkgestaltens.

Ein paar Protestpfeiffe gingen mit über die Ätherwellen hinaus. Mitropoulos holte den athletisch schweren jungen Mann wiederholt aufs Podium. In der Pause war er von einem Rudel festspielender Amerikaner umstellt. Die angloamerikanische Kolonie aus dem Raum Godesberg-Düsseldorf war auch sonst stark und lebhaft vertreten.

Sie feierte vor allem den Dirigenten der Met und der New-Yorker Philharmonie: Dimitri Mitropoulos, den Aristokraten unter den Pultstars der Gegenwart, den schmalköpfigen Asketen, den nervigen Ekstater mit der Rührgebärde und dem Kopftremolo Furtwänglers.

Es muß gesagt sein: mit Berlioz' gigantischem Requiem, das er von Salzburg kommend im vergangenen Herbst hier aufgeführt, hat er den stärkeren, geschlosseneren Eindruck hinterlassen. Seine vielgerühmte Intensität aus der Geistgestalt des jeweiligen Musikwerkes her zersplittert diesmal an dem unterschiedlichen Farbenvielerlei seines Programms. Bei Strauß wirkte manches sogar gestisch aufgesetzt. Man möchte ihm für eine der konzertanten Opernaufführungen des Kölner Funkhauses wiederbegegnen. Auch wenn es nur auf Festival-Trip sein kann.

Heinrich Lindler

"Die Welt" 24.7.57

WESTDEUTSCHER RUNDFUNK:

Aachener Nachrichten

vom 30.7.1957

Mendelssohn wird überprüft

Dimitri Mitropoulos und die „Reformations-Symphonie“

Nicht immer geht es gut aus, wenn Dirigenten Musikgeschichte machen wollen. Ihre Maßstäbe stift von denen der Musikologen verschieden. Aber es ist nun mal so: die Pultsternen bestimmen, was gespielt wird, und die Programme beweisen, daß der dirigierende Aermel oft genug stärker ist als das ästhetische Unterscheidungsvermögen.

Ueber Mendelssohns „Reformations-Symphonie“ hat die Geschichte ihr Urteil gesprochen. Begeisterte Mendelssohnianer, wie etwa der Biograph Walter Dahms, halten nicht viel davon. Aber da kommt der berühmte New Yorker Dirigent Dimitri Mitropoulos zum dritten Sonderkonzert ins Kölner Funkhaus und versucht, die Geschichte zu korrigieren, überzeugt seine Zuhörer, reißt sie zu frenetischen Beifallsstürmen hin. Er tut es in bestrecker Weise da, wo die hohe Qualität nie umstritten war, im frohsinnig weitgewandten Scherzo, aber in den großen Sätzen bleibt es doch kalte Prädik im weitraumig-leeren Prunkgebäude. Im reformatorisch-kampfgelassenen Eröffnungssatz steht das Zitat des „Dresdener Amen“ wie ein Fremdkörper, und auch im Allegro-Finale mit dem Posaunenchoral kann selbst ein Mitropoulos die Substanz nicht stärker machen als sie ist, und es bleibt der Eindruck des rhetorischen Blendwerks, in eindrucksvoller Aufmachung.

Mitropoulos, 1896 in Athen geboren, hat in seinen deutschen Lehrjahren noch etwas von dem verschwenderischen Glanz der Zeiten mitbekommen, der auch in Richard Straußens „Symphonie Domestica“, dem persönlichsten Werke des Meisters, seinen Niederschlag ge-

funden hat. Diese Zeit ist den meisten fremd, sie haben kein Ohr mehr dafür, daß man damals von Dingen schwärmte und in Tönen schwebte, nach denen heute kein Hahn mehr kräht. Kein junger Dirigent konnte das Werk so wie Mitropoulos spielen, so warmblütig und voll von Instrumentenglanz. Aber es gibt auch kaum einen, der besser wüßte, wo das Werk vom Interpreten her der Hilfe bedarf, wenn es gilt, bei all der Dramatik im Kleinwerk, bei den Familienszenen mit Zank und Liebe, bei der Hypertrophie gefühlvoller Innenwelt am Ende doch die Formgebäude der funfsätzigen Symphonie zu retten. Und kaum einer hat wie Mitropoulos die Kraft des unverzagten Durchhaltens, wenn nach der prächtigen Doppelfuge das Stück kein Ende finden will.

Die mitgebrachte Neuheit, eine Symphonie für Blechbläser und Schlagzeug, Werk 16 des 1925 in New York geborenen Amerikaners deutscher Abstammung Günther Schuller ist, nach Strawinsky Ebony-Konzert und dem Jazz-Band-Konzert Liebermanns, ein weiterer Versuch, den Ausdrucksbereich der Blasinstrumente für die hohe Musik auszuweiten. Das Verfahren scheint doktrinär, wo der Geist der Sätze von den Zwecken der instrumentalen Demonstration bestimmt ist. Am besten geht wohl beim ersten Hören das virtuose oahertrudelnde Scherzo ein. Besonders imponiert nach der weitgespannten Flächenmusik des Lento desolato, eine wirklich bestürzende Kadenz aller Instrumente, die das sprühende Allegro finale einleitet. Der anwesende Komponist erhielt freundlichen Beifall.

W. Kemp.

Echo der Presse Bonn, Bonner Talweg 21

Fernruf 37301

Ausschnitt aus:

Generalanzeiger Bonn

24. Juli 1957

vom:

Mitropoulos im Kölner Funkhauskonzert

Sinfoniefinale mit Mendelssohn, Schuller und Strauss

Dimitri Mitropoulos ist seit zwei Jahren in die Erinnerung Europas und Deutschlands zurückgekehrt. Von New York her legte er mit seinen Philharmonikern eine triumphale Konzertreise durch den alten Kontinent zurück. Salzburg war für ihn auch für ihn, wie für Bruno Walter, Szell, Kubelik und andere das Tor der siegreichen Rückkunft. Auch im vergangenen Jahre, mit Berlioz „Requiem“ in der Felsenreitschule, gefolgt von einem Gastspiel mit dem nämlichen gigantischen Werk in den Funkhauskonzerten am Wallreißplatz zu Köln.

Heuer nun nimmt er den Weg umgekehrt: soeben gastierte er in Köln, von wo ihn fast dasselbe Programm nach Salzburg führt. Hier wie dort bietet er zeitgenössische amerikanische nebst spätromantisch-impressionistischer europäischer Musik, insbesondere von Richard Strauss, genauer seine hierzulande fast verschollene „Sinfonia Domestica“. Merkwürdig, daß dem langjährigen Chefdirigenten der Metropolitan Opera inzwischen noch kein Opernauftrag zuwuchs, in Salzburg oder Edinburgh, in Aix-en-Provence oder Venedig etwa.

Opernartig freilich wirken auch seine Konzertprogramme. Monumentale Frescomusiken zieht er allen anderen, abgespielten sinfonischen Vortragsfolgen vor. Für Köln war es ein ungewöhnliches, seltsames Mischprogramm: Mendelssohns Reformationsinfonie (mit dem Burg-Choral Luthers im Schlußsatz) nebst einer nervenreißenden Kurzsinfonie für Blechbläser und Schlagwerk von dem jungen deutsch-amerikanischen Solo-

hornisten der Met, Günther Schuller, nebst besagter ausschweifend programmatischer Domestica-Sinfonie Straussens.

Ein Widerspruch, den asketischen Hohepriester aus Athen die jazzoiden Bläserinfonie Schullers, ihre exzessiv vertrackten Tontrauben exekutieren zu hören und zu sehen. Ein Widerspruch vollends, ihn als gestisch sehr bemühten Ausdeuter auch der Makartmusik der Domestica-Sinfonie zu erleben. Überzeugend wirkte er am unmittelbarsten mit der noch so pompös ausladenden Glaubensinfonie. Vielleicht steht sie ihm auch am nächsten noch, ihm, dem orthodox gläubigen Griechen, dem in Berlin aufgewachsenen Busoni-Schüler.

Allerdings, auch über dem Klangexperiment der Bläserstücke spürte man den gespannten Atem des Propheten einer ja Neuen Musik, dem leidenschaftlichen Verfechter Schönbörs wie Prokofjews vor jetzt dreißig Jahren schon. Und selbst, wie in der dirigentischen Ausdrucksgestalt dieses jetzt einundsechzigjährigen Griechen (das Bild Furtwänglers wiedererscheint (Inbild wie Abbild) in der rotierenden Linke, in dem entrindeten Nukleus des Kopfes, in der ganzen nervigen Ekstase des aristokratischen Dirigenten.

Die zahlreiche amerikanische Kolonie feierte den Gast lange und lebhaft. Noch über die Ätherwellen des WDR/NDR wird von dieser seiner geistigen Leidenschaft spürbar gewesen sein, trotz der gefährdet exponierten Vielfarbigkeit seines Programms.

Dr. L.

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Zeitungsausschnitte

Ausschnitt aus:

Düsseldorfer Nachrichten

22. Juli 1957

Ein Virtuose vor dem WDR-Orchester

Dimitri Mitropoulos dirigierte im Kölner Funkhaus

Dimitri Mitropoulos, die „Symphonie domestica“ von Richard Strauß, konnte man glauben, es mit einem Genie zu tun zu haben. Die Virtuosität und Raffinesse, mit der er dieses virtuose und raffinierte Werk „inszeniert“, sind tatsächlich kaum zu überbieten. Der unbeschreibliche Glanz und die Ausdruckskraft, die Richard Strauß in diese Partitur gelegt hat, wird von Mitropoulos mit hinreißender Begeisterung entfaltet, die Musiker, von einem wahren Lexikonmeister der Dirigenkunst angeführt, spielen, als wenn es um ihr Leben ginge. Zu hoher Präzision gesellen sich eine leidenschaftliche Expressivität, die Steigerungen sind von atemberaubender Wucht, die Doppelfuge enthüllt ihre kunstvolle Gliederung, ihre Dramatik, und streckenweise meint man, diese monströse musikalische Schöpfung des Intimsten menschlichen Bereichs, des Familienlebens, sei ein bedeutendes Zeugnis abendländischer Kunst. In Wirklichkeit bringt die hochpolierte, allerperfekteste Wiedergabe nur die schreckliche geistige Oede und Unangemessenheit dieses programm-musikalischen Kolosses ans Tageslicht, der sich anschießt. Straußens „Alpensymphonie“ ins Grab zu folgen. Mitropoulos hat eine verdächtige Vorliebe für Musik dieses Schlages, also für Werke, bei denen sich Gegenstand und Gestaltung nicht decken. Er begann sein Kölner Konzert mit dem Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester mit Mendelssohns „Reformations-Symphonie“ bei der das Mißverständnis ebenfalls deutlich wird, nur in umgekehrtem Sinne. Strauß kleidete bürgerlich-banale Erlebnisse in ein heroisches Klanggewand, bei Mendelssohn reichten die „Textilien“ nicht, um dem gedanklichen Kern seiner Symphonie das angestrebte wallende Faltenkleid zu geben. Unter Mitropoulos klingt die „Domestica“ wie die „Eroica“, Mendelssohn wie Bruckner. Zu sagen, er sei ein Fassaden-

künstler, wäre ungerecht, aber er liebt die Oberfläche der Musik, er liebt auch oberflächliche Musik und hat bestimmt kein befriedigendes Verhältnis zur klassischen deutschen Symphonik, die ja noch immer — man verzeihe uns die Annahme — Prüfstein für die innerste Musikalität ist. In Edinburgh hörten wir einmal unter Mitropoulos die „Zweite“ von Brahms — eiskalt, artistisch, mit einem rasend abschnurrenden Finale, an dem sich das komplette Unverständnis des Dirigenten für romantische deutsche Musik erwies. Nun gut, Brahms oder Beethoven oder Mozart nicht zu „können“, ist für einen so großartigen Musiker wie Mitropoulos kein Verbrechen, wir selbst aber sollten uns doch unsere Maßstäbe nicht verwirren lassen und einen erstärkenden Virtuosen nicht für einen Universal-Künstler halten.

Als Neuheit brachte der amerikanische Dirigent eine „Sinfonie für Blechbläser und Schlagzeug“ op. 16, des 1925 geborenen Deutschamerikaners Günther Schuller mit, der als Hornist des Metropolitan Orchesters in seinem viersätzigen Stück eine gute Kenntnis des Instrumentariums verrät. Die technischen Erweiterungen des Jazz werden geschickt verwendet, und der WDR-Trompeter Neugebauer beispielsweise muß viele Passagen in Armstrong-Höhen blasen. Die thematische Erfindung Schullers ist nicht sehr wahrheits-, manchmal fast populär, und es wirkt grotesk, wenn er seine Modernität durch grausame Dissonanzhäufungen beweisen will. Wenn man seine Partitur „durchforstet“, bleibt ein elegantes, unterhaltsam-witziges Stück eines begabten Musikers. Die berühmten WDR-Bläser musizierten mit erlesenen Können und offenbar auch zur höchsten Zufriedenheit des Dirigenten, der am Schluß dem großen Ensemble sogar eine anerkennende Kußhand zuwarf. Darauf kann das Orchester stolz sein.

Alfons Neukirchen

DIE FESTSPIELSTADT



1957

„Elektra“ in der Felsenreitschule

Die musikdramatische Erneuerung des antiken Dramas auf idealem Schauplatz

Man konnte es fast mit Sicherheit voraussagen: Nach Glucks „Orpheus“ (1948/49) und Orffs „Antigone“ (1949) war „Elektra“, das von Hofmannsthal und Richard Strauss der Tragödie des Euripides im modernen Geist nachgeformte Musikdrama, jenes Werk, das in dem grandiosen Rahmen der Felsenreitschule die adäquateste szenische Verwirklichung fand. Es war nicht nur das in der antiken Dramatik herrschende Gesetz von der Einheit von Raum und Zeit, das sich hier in natürlichster Weise erfüllen ließ; Herbert Graf, der Regisseur unserer Aufführung, vermochte mit Unterstützung des Bühnenbildners Gustav Vargo die den Raum vor dem Palaste des Agamemnon in Mykene darstellende Szenerie auch zum Ausdruck der tiefenpsychologischen Deutungen werden zu lassen, die das antike Drama sowohl zu den überpersönlichen Urmythen als auch zu den erst in unserer Zeit erforschten geheimen Triebregungen in Beziehung setzen. Nach Grafs eigener Aussage erschien ihm bei seiner, sich übrigens auch den Weisungen Hofmannsthals sinnvoll anpassenden szenischen Gestaltung besonders wichtig die Konzentration auf das im Mittelpunkt des Bühnenbildes angebrachte Haupttor des Palastes. Diese gewaltige dunkle Öffnung bedeutet für ihn — und in zwingender Übertragung auch für alle Zuschauer — nicht nur das visuelle Zentrum der Szene, sondern auch über alles Konkrete hinaus gleichsam den symbolischen Eingang zum Reich des Unbewußten. Auch sonst leistet Graf hier sowohl in der Führung der Einzelgestalten als auch in der Anlage der Massenszenen (Zug der Opfernden in der mittleren Loggienreihe, Auftritt der Fackelträgerinnen, Kampf zwischen den Anhängern des Orest und des Aegisth) so Außerordentliches, daß wir glücklich sind, ihn wegen dieser tiefdurchdachten „Elektra“-Inszenierung einmal wirklich aus dem Vollen loben zu können.

Analogen uneingeschränktes Lob ist auch dem musikalischen Leiter der Aufführung, Dimitri Mitropoulos, zu widmen, den wir schon im vorigen Jahr in den Konturszenen des „Don Giovanni“ als besonders eindringlichen Darsteller des Tragischen in der Musik identifizierten. Um seine diesmalige wahrhaft meisterliche Leistung voll würdigen zu können, ist es nötig, vorerst eine allgemeine Charakteristik der Musik zu „Elektra“ zu geben, die wir dem längst verschollenen Buch von Walter Schrenk „Richard Strauss und die neue Musik“ (Berlin 1924) entnehmen: „Diese Musik reißt die finsternen Abgründe der menschlichen Seele auf, sie ist ein Monument des Hasses in Tönen. Elektras wilder, brennender Haß gegen ihre Mutter Klytämnestra, die den Vater Agamemnon im Bade morden ließ und nun in Buhlschaft mit Aegisth lebt, ihr fanatischer Rachetrieb, der erst dadurch zur Ruhe kommt, daß ihr Bruder Orest zum Muttermörder wird — dieser grausige Haß ist der Cantus firmus der ganzen Tragödie, die aber, trotz ihrer Entsetzlichkeit, am Ende doch wieder versöhnt und befreit. Das aber ist das Werk der Musik, der es auch hier gelingt, Grauen und Häßlichkeit zur Schönheit zu wandeln. Sie zwingt einen völlig unter ihr Gesetz, sie überredet mit dem Zauber ihrer erlauteten Melodik und sie sagt mit unheimlicher Deutlichkeit alles das, was dem Wort nicht vergönnt ist. Wo sind all die „haarsträubenden Mißklänge“ geblieben, über die sich so manche Leute nach der Uraufführung (1909) und auch später noch entrüsteten? Wie klar ist — trotz aller Kompliziertheit im Technischen — diese geniale Partitur geworden, wie herrlich wirkt auf uns die Reinheit und fast klassische Strenge ihres Stils! Im Gegensatz zu der ganz anders gearteten „Salome“ schreitet hier das Melos in großen, gewaltigen Bogen, und die Harmonik baut sich — fast immer als zwangsläufiges Ergebnis der Stimmenführung — in eherner Logik auf.“

„Reinheit“ — „fast klassische Strenge“ — „eherner Logik“ — das sind auch einige der wichtigsten Schlüsselwörter, mit denen die Leistung, die Mitropoulos und die Wiener Philharmoniker in

„Elektra“ vollbrachten, zutreffend zu kennzeichnen ist. Man setzt vielfach irrlich den Gesamtklang des Werkes der stärksten Ballung des seinerzeit als gigantisch und überdimensioniert empfundenen Orche-

angeordneten Lichtwirkungen wunderbar angepaßten Kostümen ausstattet wurde, in einigen Einzelheiten nachgezeichnet werden soll, muß der Gesamtleistung der Trägerin der Titelrolle, Inge Borkh, gedacht wer-

tiefer Demut bis zu taumelndem Entzücken gesteigerte Ausbruch nach der Erkennung des Orest angeführt.

Einem glücklicheren Gegensatz zu der von nächtlichem Dunkel umwitterten Elektra der Borkh und der lichten, ganz von natürlichem Gefühl durchfluteten Gestalt der Chrysothemis, wie sie Lisa Della Casa verkörperte, hätte man sich kaum denken können. Von ihrem schlichten, ihr unverkümmertes Innenleben in den einfachsten Zügen offenbaren Spiel und ihrem herrlichen, die Orchesterstürme mühelos überstrahlenden Gesang ging jener übersinnliche Glanz aus, der bereits die vom Dichter jenseits des Elektra-Dramas vollzogene große Versöhnung ahnen läßt. Es ist kein Zufall, daß gerade dieser Gestalt die Schlußworte der Tragödie, die das weitere tragische Geschick des Orest beschwören, anvertraut sind.

Ein Monodrama innerhalb des großen dramatischen Bogens enthielt Jean Madeira als Klytämnestra in ihrer einzigen Szene, in der sie in Grauen und Mitleid erregender Maske die ganze Skala von abgründiger Ge-



DEN TRAGISCHEN HÖHEPUNKT DER OPER ...

... bildet die große Auseinandersetzung zwischen Elektra (Inge Borkh, rechts) und ihrer Mutter Klytämnestra (Jean Madeira).

sters gleich und übersieht dabei, daß Strauss ja solche Lautstärken nur zur Markierung der dramatischen Höhepunkte angewendet hat. Die genaueste Dosierung der Fortissimo-Stufen, die Vorzeichnung heroischer Klanggesten, die scharfe Kontrastierung des Tragischen mit dem Lyrischen, die sorgsame Vorbereitung der großen dramatischen Entladungen, die zwingende Klarstellung der musikalischen Architektur und die Herbeiführung wahrhaft klassischer Monumentalität, erschienen uns als die diesmaligen künstlerischen Hauptanliegen von Mitropoulos, denen er mit leidenschaftlicher Hingabe dienende, verständnisvoll unterstützte von dem Äußersten an elementarer Klanggewalt und rhythmischer Verve anbietenden Riesenorchester.

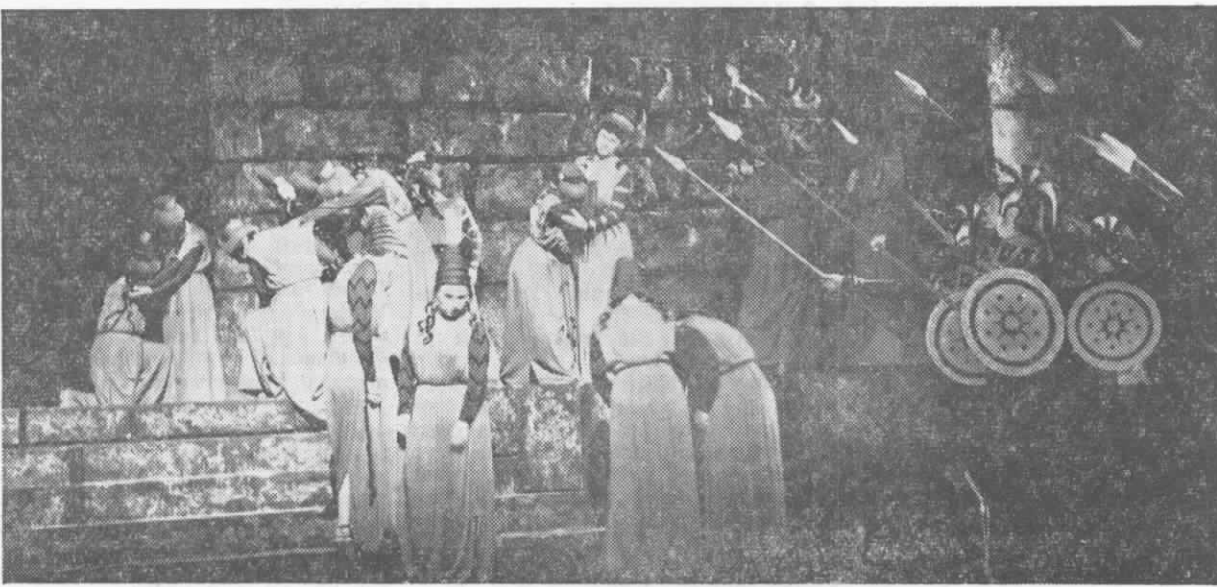
Ehe der Bogen des spannungsreichen Bühnengeschehens, das von dem jungen griechischen Maler Andreas Nomikos mit herrlichen, den Farben der Szenerie und den sorgsam

den: Trotz der unfassbaren Variabilität ihrer Gestik, ihres Mienenspiels und ihres Gesangsdruckes konnte Frau Borkh die menschliche Einheit der von den Schauern der Rachegier zerwühlten und zugleich oft von den zartesten Regungen des Mitgefühls erfüllten, tief erniedrigten griechischen Königstochter in jedem Augenblick glaubhaft machen. Das verbindende Element war eine alle ihre Bewegungen beherrschende „tänzerische“ Rhythmik, die ihren Aktionen oft etwas Priesterliches gab und den triumphalen Tanz nach der Erfüllung der Rache nicht als unvermittelt angesetztes „Solo“ erscheinen ließ, sondern als die befreiende Lösung eines ungeheuerlichen Seelendramas. Als einige weitere Beispiele für die besondere Intensität und Mannigfaltigkeit, mit der Inge Borkh die Elektra gestaltete, seien hier nur ihr nervöses Lauern im Gespräch mit Klytämnestra, ihr mildes Verständnis der Schwester gegenüber und der von

EINEN LIEBLICHEN GEGENSATZ zu der ekstatischen Frauengestalt der Elektra bildete die Chrysothemis Lisa Della Casas.

Madner-Photo (2)

wissensqual, abergläubischer Hoffnung, wilder Wut und bösem Triumph entwickelte. Für all diese heterogenen Gefühlsselemente fand sie den eindringlichsten mimischen und gesanglichen Ausdruck.



Der von Herbert Graf bewußt auf antike statische Bildwirkung angelegte rechte Seitenteil der Schlußszene.



BEHERRSCHER DER RIESEN-PARTITUR

Dimitri Mitropoulos leitete das komplizierte Werk in souveräner Unabhängigkeit von jeder Noten-Stütze. Schreiber-Photo (2)

Zu den drei dominierenden Frauenfiguren traten im letzten Teil des Werkes noch die beiden vom Dichter knapper gezeichneten Männergestalten: Kurt Böhm als Orest, die verhaltene Leidenschaft in Gesang und Spiel sehr eindrucksvoll andeutend und sein Rächeramt mit einer gewissen behäbigen Würde vollziehend; Max Lorenz, in seinem kurzen Auftritt eine erschütternde Studie des pathologischen Charakters des Aegisth bietend.

Die beiden Pfeiler der eigentlichen Handlung bildeten die ganz auf statische Wirkung gestellte einleitende Mädeszene (vorzüglich ausgeführt von Audrey Gerber-Candy, Kerstin Meyer, Sonja Draksler, Sieglinde Wagner, Marilyn Horne und Lisa Otto) und das förmlich in Schrecken erstarrte Schlußbild. Als weitere nützliche Helfer am Werk sind noch zu nennen: Alois Pernerstorfer (Pfeifer des Orest), Anny Felbermayer und Karol Loraine (Gefolge der Klytämnestra), Erich Majkut und Georg Littassy (Diener).

Innerhalb dieses Rahmens entfaltete der Regisseur mit zwingender Gewalt und unerbittlicher Folgerichtigkeit die Tragödie, deren neun Glieder: Erster Monolog Elektras, Szene Elektra-Chrysothemis, Klytämnestra-Elektra, zweiter Monolog Elektras, zweite Szene Elektra-Chrysothemis, Orest-Elektra, Elektra-Aegisth, Tod des Aegisth, Triumph Elektras — sich nach den Gesetzen steigender Symmetrie zusammenschließen. Die das Ganze durchwaltende seelische Steigerung wurde aber durch die Musik geleistet, die in Mitropoulos und seinen musikalischen Helfern wahrhaft begnadete Interpreten fand.

Über die Bedeutung der „Elektra“ für die Entwicklung der neuen Musik ließen sich Bände schreiben. Das Werk bedeutet den revolutionärsten Beitrag, den Richard Strauss zu dieser Entwicklung leistete: Die letzte Übersteigerung des Monumentalstils Wagners und zugleich einen kühnen Vorstoß in neue kompositionstechnische Bereiche. Es ist daher völlig legitim, daß ein solches bahnbrechendes Werk, ganz abgesehen von seinen eigenständigen künstlerischen Werten, als ein repräsentatives musikalisches Dokument von historischer Bedeutung, frühzeitig (1934 und 1937) Eingang in das Repertoire der Salzburger Festspiele fand. Seinen wahren hiesigen Bestimmungsort hat es aber erst jetzt erreicht: durch die in jeder Beziehung exemplarische Wiedergabe im monumentalen Schauplatz der Felsenreitschule.

DR. WILLI REICH

Gegensatzreiche Oper „Elektra“

Triumph von Richard Strauss' Musik in der Felsenreitschule

Überwältigend ist — als Ganzes erlebt — die Neuinszenierung der Strauss-Oper „Elektra“ in der Felsenreitschule. Seit zwanzig Jahren hatte man hier auf dies Werk verzichtet. Nun brachte es den Ausführenden einen Erfolg, der sich in noch viel stärkerem Beifall ausgedrückt hätte, wäre nicht die Erschütterung über das ungeheure Geschehen gewesen. Von zahlreichem enthusiastischen Begeisterten wurden sie dennoch immer wieder auf die Bühne gerufen: Dimitri Mitropoulos, genialer Dirigent des „kolossalen Strauss“, Herbert Graf, den Dimensionen der Felsenreitschule nun als Regisseur gewachsen, Gustav Vargo, der Bühnenbildner mit Erfahrung und starkem, eigenem Profil, Andrea Nomikos, Kostümzeichner mit Phantasie und Geschmack; dazu die Schar der ersten Sänger, voran das herrliche Trio der Sängerinnen: Inge Borkh, Lisa Della Casa und Jean Madeira.

„Elektra“ ist das wirkungsgewaltigste Werk von Richard Strauss. „Mensch und Schicksal“, schlagendes Herz und erstarrtes Herz: ein Grundmotiv, das unerschöpflich ist! Das ist ein Bekenntnis des Dichters Hofmannsthal, von dem Strauss beehrte: „Schaffen Sie mir ein recht handlungs- und gegensatzreiches Drama mit wenig Massenszenen, aber zwei bis drei sehr guten, ausgeprägten Rollen!“ — So ist „Elektra“ eine gegensatz-, also spannungsreiche Oper geworden. Sie zwingt dem Zuhörer das Empfinden auf, als habe er unmittelbaren Anteil an den leidenschaftlichen menschlichen Gefühlen, die auf der Bühne dargestellt werden, und als werde er selbst unmittelbar von dem Schicksal betroffen, dem die Bühnengestalten unterworfen sind. Die Musik, kraftvoll jung und unerhört grausam, sprengt die jahrhundertlang ihr auferlegten Fesseln der Tonalität, sie ergreift das Herz und den Verstand; der Zuhörer fühlt sich um Jahrtausende zurückversetzt und zugleich ganz bewußt als ein Kind seiner eigenen „modernen“ Zeit. Ein Tondichter hat das bewirkt, der modernes und antikes Dichterwort in Eines bannte.

Inge Borkh ist in dieser Salzburger Aufführung die Elektra. Zu sagen, daß sie als Sängerkünstlerin und Darstellerin die Titelpartie bewältigt, wäre zu wenig gesagt. Sie vereint in sich das Wesen der Elektra antiker und moderner Tragödien. Als eine Königs-Tochter erleidet und bezwingt sie ihr Schicksal. Sie ergibt sich in die gräßliche Pflicht, die Ermordung des Vaters an der Mutter zu rächen; als Dienerin der Erynnyen sehnt sie den Bruder Orest herbei, den Vollstrecker der Rache, für den sie das Mordheil bewahrt: da die Strafe vollzogen ist, huldigt sie mit Wahnsinnsgebärde der dunklen chthonischen Gottheit im Schoß der Erde und schreitet, trunken vom Sieg, zum ekstatischen Tanz. Nun aber ist sie nicht mehr die griechische Elektra, die nach übermenschlich ertragenem Leid ein menschliches Glück finden darf.

Der Tanz entrückt Elektra aus dem Dasein. Mit schrillen Wehschrei und großem, beruhigtem Akkord kündigt die Musik, daß dem Schmerz die Erlösung folgt. — Weiche Aufgaben werden der Künstlerin Inge Borkh von dieser Musik auferlegt! Wie unvergleichlich hat sie in sich die Verwandlung vollzogen! Sie schwankt zwischen ewig weiblicher Empfindung der Liebe zum gemordeten Vater, zur schuldigen Mutter, zur kindhaften Schwester und zum verlorengegangenen Bruder; visionär beschwört sie die Erscheinung Agamemnon's, schlängelt sich in ihrem Haß tritt sie Klytämnestra entgegen; sie hat die Geste der zärtlich schen Jungfrau und der perversen Verführung; wie in Trance ist sie

sitzt. Die Wirkung ihres Auftritts erhöht das prächtig ersonnene Kostüm, aufdringlich farbig, glitzernd von Steinen, die der Mörderin gegen die bösen Geister helfen sollen. Anny Felbermayer und Karol Loraine sind ihre Vertrauten mit schmeichlerisch wohlklingendem Gesang. Musikalisch fein abgestimmt ist der Chor der Mägde und ihrer Aufseherin: Kerstin Meyer, Sonja Draksler, Sieglinde Wagner, Marilyn Horne, Lisa Otto und Audrey Gerber-Candy; es würde eine jede ausführlicheres Lob verdienen. — Gewaltig ist die Erscheinung des Orest, dem Kurt Böhme die mächtige Stimme leiht; Max Lorenz bietet in seiner kurzen Szene eine Charakterstudie als verderbter Agisth.

Man mag sonst berechnete Einwände gegen die Felsenreitschule als Aufführungsraum für eine Oper vorbringen. Für „Elektra“ ist sie der geeignetste Rahmen, zumal Gustav Vargo mit großzügigem Aufbau das „Bühnenbild“ nicht



Chrysothemis (Lisa Della Casa) im Arm Elektras (Inge Borkh), daneben Klytämnestra (Jean Madeira).
Aufnahmen (2) Hans Norbert Glaser

endlich dem rhythmischen Tanz hingegeben, der sie von Wahn und Haß befreit. Welch eine Künstlerin ist Inge Borkh, daß ihr Gesang in seiner wandlungsfähigen Schönheit und Kraft nicht als Kunstmittel, sondern jeweils als der natürlichste Ausdruck erscheint!

Neben Elektra steht die lichte Gestalt der jungen Schwester Chrysothemis. Lisa Della Casa verkörpert sie sehr rührend in ihrer Sehnsucht nach Glück und Liebe, ihrer zarten Zuneigung zur Schwester, die sie dem Bann des Tantalidenfluchs entreißen möchte, zu schwach zum Helfen und selbst zum Begreifen, doch hoheitsvoll genug als echte Tochter Agamemnon's. Ihre volle, edle Stimme schwingt sich in wunderbaren Kantilenen über den reichen Orchesterklang. Für diese Chrysothemis (von Sophokles ins tragisch düstere Spiel gebracht, von Hofmannsthal mit Recht übernommen) hat Strauss die holdsten Melodien erdacht.

Die dritte Frauengestalt, Klytämnestra, ist Jean Madeira anvertraut, deren umfangreiche Stimme genügend „dämonische“ Modulation be-

eigens geschaffen, sondern vervollständigt hat, indem er ein riesenhaftes Tor aus Felsquadern vor die durchbrochene Felswand türmte und den düsteren Hof vor diesem Agamemnon-Palast mit Mauerwerk umgab, wie man es von Mykene kennt, der trotzigen Burg auf dem Peloponnes. Sogar das offene Steindreieck über den Türen ist getreu den Denkmälern des zweiten vorchristlichen Jahrtausends nachgebildet, jedoch nicht als bloße Nachahmung, sondern als ein Schauplatz, auf dem homerische Sagengehalt zum Leben erwachen — und obendrein moderne Regiekünste sich entfalten können. Herbert Graf hat alle Bewegungen in durchdachte Übereinstimmung mit der Musik gebracht, auch die Arkaden für raffinierte Effekte genutzt, wenn der Aufzug der Opfer im Schein geschwungener Fackeln erfolgt oder die Krieger mit Schild und Lanze zum Angriff gegen Orest stürmen. Akustische Effekte gilt es noch zu verbessern; der Lautsprecher für fernes Volksgeschrei dürfte nicht den Gesang auf der Bühne überdröhnen.
Dr. Hehn

Theater und Kunst

Salzburger Festspiele:

Packende „Elektra“ in der Felsenreitschule Mitropoulos am Dirigentenpult — Inge Borkh als liebende Elektra

Salzburg, 8. August

Mit der „Elektra“ ist ein weiteres Opernwerk in den magischen Kreis der Felsenreitschule eingeordnet worden. Die Einordnung vollzog sich dieses Mal so völlig reibungslos, sie gelang so vollkommen, daß man meinen möchte, das Werk sei eigens dafür geschaffen worden. Wir haben es ja wiederholt erlebt, wie hier die äußere Hülle eines Dramas gelockert und wie der kultische Kern, den jedes festliche Bühnenwerk enthält, sichtbar wird. Die Erneuerung der „Elektra“ durch Hofmannsthal und Strauss verleiht auch in ihrer stilistisch modernen Gewandung niemals den kultischen Charakter der antiken Tragödie. Ein feiner Geist wie Joseph Gregor behauptet sogar, daß eine höhere Verwirklichung der antiken Tragödie, als sie Strauss hier durch das moderne Medium der Musik vorgenommen hat, undenkbar ist. In der Felsenreitschule wird eine weitere Kraft wirksam, die unsere Phantasie dem griechischen Theater näherbringt, dessen Anhauch man über die zweieinhalb Jahrtausende hinweg unmittelbar zu spüren glaubt.

Die Übereinstimmung von Stoff und Staffage ist in der Felsenreitschule so stark, daß schon die geringste bauliche Adaptierung genügt. Gustav Vargo, von dem die neue Einrichtung stammt, hat beinahe zuviel gebaut. Es war sehr richtig, in der Mitte des Schauplatzes ein mykenisch wuchtendes Tor zu errichten, das dem Regisseur eine konzentrierende Sammlung des Geschehens ermöglicht. Dagegen wird durch die engen Seitentreppe, über die die meisten Auftritte vor sich gehen, die Regiearbeit eher erschwert. Zumal, da die auftretenden Personen stets um einen Torpfiler herumgeführt werden müssen, bevor sie im Rahmen des Tores sichtbar werden. Indessen, diese architektonische Unbeholfenheit fällt kaum in Betracht, da sonst alles eine klare und eindrucksvolle Disposition ermöglicht. Die stärksten Akzente verleiht Herbert Graf als Regisseur diesmal der individuellen Aktion. Er weiß dabei die bauliche Anlage, die zwei Spielstufen vorsieht, ebenso geschickt auszunutzen, wie der Bauplan auf die Erfordernisse der Handlung abgestimmt erscheint. Herbert Graf, ein erfahrener Praktiker der Felsenreitschule, weiß ferner die Gänge und Galerien der Felswand für den Opferzug und für die Palastrevolution am Schluß sehr effektiv auszunutzen. Der Gesamteindruck, der dem Auge geboten wird, ist wahrhaft imponierend.

Er wird indessen entschieden überboten durch die hohe und einzigartige Perfektion des musikalischen Teils der Aufführung. Den Grundcharakter bestimmt Dimitri Mitropoulos, der nicht nur auswendig dirigiert, sondern die musikalische Vision, die er im Geiste trägt, in jedes Instrument, in jede Stimme, in jede Note überzuleiten weiß. Er wirkt auf die Künstler, die er führt, steigend und begeisternd. Der absoluten Korrektheit, die er erzielt, haftet nichts von Zwang und Nötigung an, sie ist die freiwillig gespendete Gabe eines Orchesters, das sich in seinem innersten künstlerischen Wesen gepackt und mitgerissen fühlt.

Die Aufführung hat endlich den Vorzug oder das Glück, für die drei weiblichen Hauptrollen drei Künstlerinnen vereinen zu können, die in ihrer Art unvergleichlich sind und wahrhaft Vollendetes bieten. Drei Charakterstimmen und drei Individualitäten. Die stärkste ist Inge Borkh, die heute wohl die erste Sängerin der deutschen Bühne genannt werden kann; die mit einer schönen edlen Sopranstimme hohe Gesangkunst und faszinierende Persönlichkeit verbindet; die eine eminente Dramatikerin und eine ebenso kultivierte Belkantin ist; die niemals konventionell wirkt und alles mit eigener Anschauung und eigenem Fühlen erfüllt. So sieht man sie auch die Elektra förmlich neu gestalten. Sie wahrt der Figur durchaus ihr monumentales Maß und ihren heroischen Affekt, durchdringt aber gleichzeitig Heroismus und Monumentalität mit warmer, hingebungsvoller Menschlichkeit. Sie ist nicht bloß der Dämon, der von Rachedenken besessen und gejagt wird, sie führt uns an den Ursprung der dämonischen Besessenheit, die hervorgerufen wird von einem übermächtigen Gefühl der Liebe zu Vater und Bruder. Sie ist in Wahrheit eine liebende Elektra. Und wie wunderbar befindet sie sich da in Übereinstimmung mit den vielen überströmenden lyrischen Partien der „Elektra“-Musik!

Als Chrysothemis bietet Lisa della Casa eine ganz ins lichte, zarte, liebliche transponierte Variation des Gefühls. Ihr lyrischer Sopran entfaltet überraschend Durchschlagskraft und zeigt sich jedem dramatischen Anspruch gewachsen, ohne dabei etwas von der Süße der Stimme preiszugeben.

Einen weiteren scharfen Kontrast trägt Jean Madeira in das Trio erlesener Stimmen. Ihr Charakter-Mezzo bildet einen packenden klanglichen Kontrapunkt. Auch sie ist eine fesselnde Individualität. Sie erspart ihrer Stimme keine noch so scharfe Individualisierung und überrascht dann wieder durch vorbildlich schön gesungene Phrasen.

Den Orest gibt Kurt Böhme mit voller, tragender Stimme, aber zu massiv und so ganz ohne Feinheit, ohne Geheimnis. Max Lorenz verleiht der Episode des Aegysth stilvolle Kontur. Auch in den wenigen Taktakzenten manifestiert sich sein Künstlertum. Besonders Lob verdienen die Mägde und ihre Anführerin: Kerstin Meyer, Sonja Draksler, Sieglinde Wagner, Marilyn Horne, Lisa Otto und Audrey Gerber-Candy. Die Begleitung der Klytämnestra sind Anny Felbermayer und Karol Loraine, die beiden Diener Erich Majkut und Georg Littay. Als Pfleger des Orest begleitet Alois Pernerstorfer den Gefährten auf dem Schicksalsweg. Das Auditorium war begeistert und bereitete den Darstellern überwältigende Ovationen. Alles stand unter dem Eindruck eines großen und unvergeßlichen Festspielabends.
kr.

KUNST UND KULTUR

Salzburger Festspiele 1957:

„Elektra“ — das Musikdrama der Rache

Die „Orestie“ des Äschylos ist eines der gewaltigen Monumentalwerke der klassischen griechischen Tragödie. In ihr hat der Dichter den Mythos von der Erfüllung des Atriden-Fluchs gestaltet, der Atrius, den Herrscher über Argos, traf, als dieser von den dreizehn Söhnen seines Bruders, der Atrius' Gattin verführt hatte, zwölf tötete und dem Vater ihr Fleisch zum Mahle vorsetzte. Nur einer entkam dieser grausigen Rache: Agisth, der später, als Agamemnon die Nachfolge des Atrius angetreten hat, der Geliebte von dessen Gattin Klytämnestra wird. Mit seiner Hilfe ermordet sie den aus dem trojanischen Krieg heimgekehrten Agamemnon. So rächt Klytämnestra nach zehn Jahren die Opferung ihrer Tochter Iphigenie in Aulis durch den Vater, befreit sich und den Geliebten von einem fremd gewordenen Heimkehrer, aber fällt selbst schließlich ihrem Sohn Orestes zum Opfer, der auf Befehl Apollons aus Phokis, wohin ihn Klytämnestra als Kind verschickt hat, um freie Bahn für ihre Buhlschaft mit Agisth zu gewinnen, heimkehrt und den Tod seines Vaters durch die Ermordung seiner Mutter rächt.

Diese Heimkehr und die Tat des Orestes ist das düstere Thema des Mittelteiles von Äschylos' „Orestie“, der „Grabspendungen“, der die Grundzüge jenes Textes bildet, den Hugo v. Hofmannsthal als erstes Opernbuch für Richard Strauss schrieb. Strauss wandte sich nach dem pervers-blutigen Geschehen der Wildeschen „Salome“, mit der

er die satte bürgerliche Gesellschaft unseres Jahrhundertanfangs skandalisiert und zugleich lustvoll aufgestachelte hatte, nun dem noch viel blutigeren Geschehen der „Elektra“ zu. Hofmannsthal stellte Elektra, die eine der zwei verbliebenen Töchter Klytämnestras, in den Mittelpunkt. In Monologen und Dialogen von riesigen Ausmaßen baut sich vor dem Palast zu Mykene die Tragödie der vor Schmerz um den ermordeten Vater und vor rasender Rachegeier halbwahnsinnigen Elektra vor uns auf. Das blutige Mordheil hat sie vergraben, damit Orestes mit ihm Klytämnestras Tat sühne. Als aber die falsche Kunde vom Tode des Orestes kommt, Freude für die von den Furien der Angst gehetzte Klytämnestra und der schrecklichste Schlag für Elektra, der sie vollends in den Wahnsinn treibt, versucht sie, sich die weiche Schwester Chrysothemis zum Racheinstrument an der Mutter zu verbünden. Doch Orestes kehrt zurück, nimmt ihr die Tat ab, und Elektras Qual endet in einem erlösenden Tod.

Kindesmord, Vatermord, Muttermord, blutschänderische Liebe, eine unfassliche Versammlung urbarbarischer Greuel, vermengt mit entgleister Sexualität, tut sich hier auf und wurde von Hofmannsthal in einen einzigen Akt gedrängt, von Strauss in einen einzigen Block vielfarbig schillernder wildpompöser und zugleich virtuös gesteuerter Musik gesetzt, die wohl die ungeheuerlichen Tiefen dieser barbarischen, alle rasenden Gewalten des Urbewußtseins entsetzenden Mythen nicht ausschöpfen kann, aber sie in einen wildwogenden musikalischen Mantel voll bald schreiender, bald raffiniert schillernder Farben hüllt.

Diese Musik zu interpretieren, braucht es einen genialen Mittler. Salzburg hat diesen bei seiner heurigen Festspieldarstellung in Dimitri Mitropoulos gefunden, der vom Dirigentenpult her diese „Elektra“ mit einer

Souveränität nachgestaltete, wie sie hier am Opernpult eines Musikdramas seit Furtwängler nicht mehr zu spüren war. Wie Mitropoulos die ungeheure Vielfalt dieser Partitur meisterte, all die zahllosen Klangfarben differenziert und doch unverseht in ihrem Gesamtbild aufleuchten ließ, dabei dynamisch sorgfältig abstufte und doch den großen, rauschenden Schwung nirgends unterbrach: das war eine gewaltige künstlerische, eine Meisterleistung schlechthin.

Großartig auch die gesangliche Gestaltung der Elektra durch Inge Borkh, die diese physisch und psychisch geradezu barbarische Ansprüche stellende Rolle grandios bewältigte. Hervorragend sang und spielte Lisa della Casa ihre Chrysothemis mit allem Reiz warmer und dem Leben zugewandter Weiblichkeit, und scharf profiliert in Stimme und Spiel formte Jean Madeira ihre Klytämnestra zu einer von Dämonen getetzten und selbst dämonischen Erscheinung. Mit starker Wirkung setzte Kurt Böhme seine imponierende Erscheinung und seine prachtvolle dunkle Stimme für den Orestes ein. Ebenso boten alle anderen, mit Max Lorenz als Agisth an der Spitze, ganz ausgezeichnete Leistungen unter der faszinierenden und bewundernden musikalischen Leitung Mitropoulos'.

Der Regisseur Herbert Graf bemühte sich nicht ohne Erfolg um die szenische Ergänzung dieser musikalischen Wirkung. Natürlich gab es auch hier das durch die Struktur der Felsenreitschule aufgezwungene Hinundherjagen in den Felsenarkaden und stellenweise ein wenig viel wechselnde bengalische Beleuchtung. Auch war die Überverleuchtung der Schlussszene mit dem aufgezwungenen Kriegerehrenzug und seinem „Präsentieren des Speer!“ vor der niedergeborenen, entseelten Elektra des Gutgemeinten ein bißchen zuviel, wofür man sich wieder die Erkennungsszene mit Orestes und den Greisen eindrucksvoller hätte vorstellen können. Gut gelang Graf hingegen die darstellerische Gliederung der großen Monologe und Dialoge dieser Musiktragödie, die in dem archaisierenden Bühnenbildern Gustav Vargos und in den etwas stark stilisierten Kostümen Andreas Nomikos einen gewaltigen Salzburger Festspielderfolg errang, für den alle Beteiligten, vor allem Inge Borkh, zahllose Male danken konnten.
Hubalek

DAS KLEINE VOLKSBLATT

Freitag, 9. August 1957,

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Ein Richard-Strauss-Ensemble von hohem Rang:

„Elektra“ in der Salzburger Felsenreitschule

Von unserem Dr.-E.-W.-Sonderberichterstatter

Die Bindungen Richard Strauss' an Mozart und an die Mozart-Stadt waren vielfältig und stark. Somit zählt das Richard-Strauss-Werk zu den ältesten der Tradition im Salzburger Festspiel. „Der Rosenkavalier“ kehrt immer wieder in den Spielplan zurück; dem Vernehmen nach soll diese Oper im Sommer 1958 hier Herbert Karajan dirigieren. Heuer war „Elektra“ ins Programm gestellt worden. Mit drei Aufführungen in den Jahren 1934 und 1937 gehörte sie zu den in Salzburg am seltensten gegebenen Werken.

Waren damals, vor dem zweiten Weltkrieg, Clemens Krauß, der Aesthet, und Hans Knappertsbusch, der Epiker, die Dirigenten, so wirkte diesmal Dimitri Mitropoulos, der Grieche aus New York, am Pult. Das bedeutete dramatischen Feueratem, spannungsgeladene Atmosphäre, orchestrale und vokale Ekstase. Lothar Wallerstein war als „Elektra“-Regisseur Herbert Graf, dem Erfolgreichen Anno 1957, vorangegangen. Der Wiener von der Metropolitan Opera versteht sich auf die Verdeutlichung der Szene, ohne das Niveau zu gefährden. Er hat mit dieser Inszenierung seine überzeugendste Regiearbeit in Salzburg gesetzt. Aus der Stille bisheriger Mitarbeit trat der Bühnenbildner Gustav Vargo ins Blickfeld der Öffentlichkeit. Seine Raumlösung macht die Felsenreitschule zum idealen Schauplatz für die antike Tragödie, wie sie Strauss und Hofmannsthal neu geformt haben. Andreas Nomikos, der zweite Grieche unter den Leitern des Spiels, hatte für die Stilletheit der Kostüme Sorge zu tragen.

Das Salzburger „Elektra“-Ensemble kann sich hören und sehen lassen. Garant der denkbar schönsten Klangentfaltung bleiben die Wiener Philharmoniker, denen unter solcher Führung kein anderes Orchester von Weltruf so schnell diesen Strauss nachspielt. Mitropoulos schont freilich die Sänger nicht im geringsten und entzündet sich immer wieder von neuem an den instrumental-

Spannungen, der Basis für alle dramatischen Auseinandersetzungen auf der Bühne. Inge Borkh war eine großartige Elektra, eine entfesselte Rächerin, aber in jedem Augenblick ihres Bühnenlebens zugleich ein fühlender Mensch, ein Schemen. Lisa della Casa begeisterte als Chrysothemis durch den auch im Zugriff aufstrahlenden Wohlklang ihres schönen Soprans. Jean Madeira, die Klytämnestra, der die Rache der Tochter gilt, gleich einer Schwester der Elektra, während Orest, der jüngste im Kreise der unseligen Mykenischen Familie, der Generation des mit dem Tode bestraften Buhlen Aegisth anzuhehnen schien. Kurt Böhme und Max Lorenz standen einander da überzeugend gegenüber. In den schwierigen Nebenpartien, deren jede den vollen künstlerischen Einsatz verlangt, entsprachen Anny Felbermayer und Alois Pernerstorfer, Karol Loraine und Erich Majkut, Audrey Gerber-Candy und Georg Littay. Man horchte bei den schönen tiefen Stimmen der ersten drei Mägde auf, wie sie durch Kerstin Meyer, Sonja Draksler und Sieglinde Wagner vertreten waren, und empfand dazu in den hohen Sopranstimmen von Lisa Otto und Marilyn Horne den guten Kontrast. Die Verstärkeranlage für die wenigen Fernchöre funktionierte leider allzu gut und verschob in diesen Szenen Akzent und Schwerpunkt.

Das Ergebnis der Premiere: Das nun schon bald 50jährige Geniewerk von Richard Strauss fesselt nach wie vor. Die antike Tragödie hat nichts an Aktualität eingebüßt. Wiewohl die meisten Wünsche bezüglich der Wortverständlichkeit durch die Sänger offenblieben, stellte der rückhaltlose künstlerische Einsatz der fünf Hauptdarsteller und ihrer elf Episodisten voll und ganz zufrieden. Die Spielführung hatte in jedem ihrer Bereiche Hervorragendes geleistet. Fürwahr: eine ergreifende Elektra, ein Richard-Strauss-Ensemble von hohem Range, eine wahre Festspielkostbarkeit!

Packende „Elektra“ in der Felsenreitschule

Richard Strauss' zyklische Symphonie — Oper als Freilichtspiel unter Mitropoulos

Von unserem in die Festspielstadt entsandten Kulturredakteur

Die Diskussion um die Felsenreitschule reißt nicht ab. Immer wieder bemängelt man ihre Nichteignung für das musikalische Theater, ihre Starrheit, die höchstens auf dem Umweg über die Simultanbühne zu überwinden sei, ihre gewaltige Dimension, die jede feinere musikalische Wirkung ausschließt und die eben erst der Karajanschen „Fidelio“-Inszenierung zum Verhängnis geworden sei. Trotzdem: Wer wollte auf die Felsenreitschule verzichten? Ihre barocke Naturkulisse gehört seit Reinhardts „Faust“ zu Salzburg wie der Domplatz zu „Jedermann“. Sie preisgeben hieße gerade ein Stück von jener autochthonen Salzburger Szene verlieren, bei der die Stadt selbst mitspielt!

Nun hat man heuer mit glücklicher Hand ein Werk gewählt, für das die Felsenreitschule wie geschaffen erscheint. Richard Strauss' „Elektra“ fügt sich in ihrem düster-archaischen Umriss, in ihrer zyklischen Wucht, in der bewegten Statik ihrer statuarien Helden, selbst in ihrer ganzen musikalischen Anlage völlig zwanglos in die steinerne Atmosphäre des Felsentheaters am Mönchsberg. Gustav Vargo, der das Bühnenbild schuf, brauchte nur die markanten Punkte der Handlung zu fixieren — das zentrale Tor des Königspalastes von Mykene, durch das das blutige Schicksal ein und ausgeht, den Brunnen für die Mäde — das übrige gab die Felsenreitschule beinahe von selbst. Eine diagonale, zur Höhe steigende, im Innern des Palastes zu denkende Steintreppe überzeugte nicht ganz, bot aber der Regie die Möglichkeit, Szenen und Auftritte herauszuheben und das Spiel quer über die halbe Höhe der Bühne zu führen.

Herbert Graf, in Freilichtspielen versiert und mit den Tücken und Gegebenheiten der Felsenreitschule längst vertraut, hat diese Möglichkeit gut genutzt. Er gibt Klytämnestra einen langen und wirkungsvollen Auftritt, er rollt die Ermordung Agisths, seinen zögernden Eintritt in den Palast, seine Überwältigung mit fast filmischer Drastik auf, er jagt die mit Opfertieren beladenen Sklaven im blutroten Licht durch die stockhohen Arkaden, er läßt die Rufe des Chors (der Wiener Staatsoper) hinter der Szene durch Lautsprecher verstärken, und er weiß auch mit dem Scheinwerfer umzugehen: wenn Orest erscheint, fällt sein Schatten riesenhaft und drohend auf Mykene.

Daß in diesem handfesten Schauspiel, zu dem Andreas Nomikos zweckmäßige, um historische Stiltreue bemühte Kostüme beitrug, die innere Dimension zuwächst, dafür bürgt Dimitri Mitropoulos am Pult, der ungekrönte König des Abends, der in den Wiener Philharmonikern über ein wahrhaft majestätisches Gefolge gebietet. Vom ersten Aufschrei bis zu den letzten gewaltigen Keulenschlägen des Orchesters wölbt sich zwingend der düstere Bogen des blutigsten aller Musikdramen. Was die Szene nicht zeigt, das begibt sich im Orchester: Hier dampft das Blut, hier schweben die Flüche, hier rast die Rache, hier vollendet sich im mánadischen Stampfen Elektras das wilde Mysterium. Mitropoulos, der alles — auch die Proben — auswendig dirigiert, gibt jeden Einsatz, beherrscht jede Steigerung, entfesselt und bündigt jeden Ausbruch. Er rührt das Orchester mächtig auf und schont doch die Solisten, de-

ren symphonische Funktion nirgends die Individualität erschlägt.

Eine Sängerei steht auf den Brettern. Inge Borkh zum erstenmal in der Titelpartie: eine blonde, blauäugige Elektra, mehr visionär als mánadisch; mit einer etwas dumpfen Tiefe und im Volumen begrenzten Mittellage, aber mit einer leuchtenden edlen Höhe, überzeugend in der jugendlichen Erscheinung, groß in der geistigen Ausdruckskraft. Ihr Gegenstück: die weiche (dunkelhaarige) sanfte Chrysothemis Lisa Della Casa. Ganz die auf Liebe und Lebensglück gerichtete Schwester, eine mykenische Arabella, eine blühende Stimme!

Bestehend in ihrer temperamentvollen Individualität: Jean Madeira als luxuriöse, angstzerfressene Gattenmörderin. Eine Klytämnestra, die immer noch über buhlerische Reize und jedenfalls über souveräne Stimmittel verfügt. Kurt

Böhme gibt dem rächenden Orest unüberwindliche Bassetgewalt und mythisches Gewicht, Max Lorenz dem Agisth die Ausgelassenheit und Wurmstichigkeit des buhlerischen Mörders. Im Gefolge: Alois Pernerstorfers würdiger Pfleger des Orest, Anny Felbermayer als jugendliche vertraute Klytämnestras, Karol Loraine als tänzerisch durchgeformte Schleppträgerin sowie ein gut abgestimmtes Mägdquintett: Kerstin Meyer, Sonja Draksler, Sieglinde Wagner, Marilyn Horne und Lisa Otto. Erich Majkut als junger, Georg Littassy als alter Diener konnten genügen. Dagegen fiel die Aufseherin (Audrey Gerber-Candy) stimmlich aus dem anspruchsvollen Rahmen der Aufführung.

Ergebnis: ein packender, musikalisch ereignishafter Abend, eine neue bedeutende Elektra-Darstellerin. Eins zu Null für die Felsenreitschule. Alexander Witeschnik

Im Inferno des Rachekults

Salzburger Festspiele: Mitropoulos dirigierte „Elektra“ in der Felsenreitschule

Nur wenige Werke passen ohne Gewaltanwendung in die Salzburger Felsenreitschule. „Elektra“ von Richard Strauss gehört zu diesen wenigen. Gustav Vargo, der Bühnenbildnerische Betreuer der Festspielinszenierung des Werkes, hat in der Mitte vor der arkadendurchbrochenen Felswand ein monumentales Tor und beiderseits davon gewaltige Mauerzuben errichtet, die vom architektonischen her die Stimmung unterstreichen. Vargo schuf ein Bild von düsterer barbarischer Größe. Es bietet den geeigneten Rahmen für den Ablauf und Vollzug dieser in die Abgründe, in das Inferno blutdurchtränkter fesselloser Dekadenz dämonisch-ekstatischen Rachekults führenden Tragödie. Die antike Urkraft vermählt sich in Straussens Werk mit der den Geist einer Epoche unseres Jahrhunderts atmenden Dichtung und den Errungenschaften einer expressiv gesteigerten, die differenziertesten Ausdrucksmittel genial beherrschenden Orchestersprache zu einer Schöpfung von faszinierender Einmaligkeit. Herbert Grafs Regie strebt eine möglichst strenge, konzentrierte Bewegungsführung an. Sie verlangt freilich einerseits von den Sängern oft mehr darstellerische Persönlichkeit, als sie einzusetzen haben, und ist andererseits selbst nicht suggestiv genug, die Sänger aus ihrer eigenen Schablone herauszureißen. Graf hat aber jedenfalls die erfahrene Hand, einen sinnvollen Ablauf der Darstellung zu gewährleisten. Hinsichtlich der Beleuchtung läßt er sich auf keinerlei Experimente und Kunststücken ein. Das gibt alles in allem ein werk- und bühnengerechtes Bild, zu dem nur kleine Einwände vorzubringen sind: Wie alle Regisseure hat auch er geglaubt, die Felsenarkaden unbedingt bei jeder möglichen und unmöglichen Gelegenheit bevölkern zu müssen. Man könnte es sich ohne weiteres vorstellen, daß einmal eine Inszenierung dieser zweifellos irgendwie exponierte und daher heikle Gelegenheit nur einmal oder überhaupt nicht benützte. Die umständliche Erwürgung des Agisth hätte ruhig weniger sichtbar erfolgen können, um so mehr, als ihre Realistik sowieso nicht in den mehr auf statische Eindringlichkeit abzielenden Stil paßt. Weshalb am Schluß bewaffnete Krieger auftreten müssen, ist uns nicht klargeworden. Sie sind wohl reine Staffage, stören aber als solche, weil sie die Aufmerksamkeit von der Zentralgestalt, der sterbenden Elektra, ablenken.

Dimitri Mitropoulos dirigierte. Man brauchte ihm nur zuzusehen, wie er auswendig dirigierte, um zu wissen, daß hier ein Mann vor dem Orchester stand, dem die Partitur bis in jede Nebenstimme, bis in den letzten Ton hinein vertraut und geistiger Besitz ist. Das Ergebnis: Die Herausarbeitung jeder instrumentalen und motivischen Einzelheit. Dies bewirkte eine so starke, erregende Plastik der orchestralen Darstellung, wie man sie seit Jahren bei diesem Werk nicht mehr gehört hat. Vom dumpfen Brüten bis zum wilden Aufschrei wird die Bild- und Charakterisierungskraft der Musik zum Ereignis. Was der „Elektra“ Mitropoulos' fehlt, ist die Sinnlichkeit des Klangs, die schwebende Farbe

des Orchesters, die Karl Böhme so überragend hinreißend zu entfalten weiß und die wir für Straussens Musik auch hier wesentlich halten. Mit dieser Feststellung sei freilich nicht gesagt, daß die dramatische Strenge der gleichsam archaischen Monumentalität, mit der Mitropoulos die Tragödie musikalische Gestalt werden läßt, nicht dem Geist des Stoffes entspreche. Es war eine gewaltige, eindrucksvolle „Elektra“-Musik, die der Dirigent da breit, aus der elementaren Kraft des dramatischen Rhythmus heraus entwickelte und aufbaute. Im übrigen bleibt abzuwarten, ob Mitropoulos im Raum der Wiener Staatsoper — er wird dort im Herbst die „Elektra“ in der Salzburger Besetzung dirigieren — nicht auch klanglich eine intensivere Wirkung erzielen wird als unter den zur Härte neigenden akustischen Verhältnissen der Felsenreitschule, der freilich wiederum die „steinerne Wucht“ der Salzburger Interpretation besonders entspricht.

Die „Elektra“ ist eine der anspruchsvollsten Rollen der Opernliteratur, exponiert nicht nur wegen ihrer Anforderungen an die stimmliche Kapazität, sondern auch wegen ihrer bis in den Bereich des Tänzerisch-kultischen reichenden Darstellung, die eine noch weit größere Vitalität verlangt als die nicht minder umfangreiche Aufgabenskala der Salome-Rolle. Die Elektra Inge Borkhs ist eine leidende, getretene und dadurch nervlich sichtlich lädierte Kreatur. Die Verkörperung barbarischer, aus dem Urinstinkt hervorgehender Rache liegt ihr weniger. Darum wirkt sie in den Phasen der Erschütterung stärker, ergreifender als an den Höhepunkten der Monologe und der Tanzkässe. Sie ist mehr

passiv als vital, mehr hysterisch als bacchanisch, mehr pathologisch als dämonisch, als Gesamtleistung aber trotz allem psychologisch organisch angelegt und durchgehalten. Das Volumen der ausdauernden Stimme erscheint uns für die „Elektra“ zu gering, Ausdruck und dramatische Geste sind wohl nicht erregend genug. Die Spitzentöne sind rein, doch scharf und dünn. Wie faszinierend glanzvoll präsentiert sich dagegen die Höhe Christl Goltz', die in Salzburg leider mit der ihr weniger liegenden Leonore betraut ist, während Frau Borkh, deren künstlerische und stimmliche Qualität an sich wir durch die vorgebrachten Einwände natürlich nicht negieren wollen, im „Fidelio“ sicher vollkommener gewirkt und angesprochen hätte. Jean Madeiras Klytämnestra war stimmlich ganz groß: die Glut, das Dunkel, das Leuchten dieser Altstimme sind ein Phänomen. Darstellerisch wirkte Frau Madeira nicht völlig überzeugend, weil mehr gemein als seelisch brüchig, mehr vulgär als königlich dekadent. Lisa della Casa singt die Chrysothemis lückenlos sicher, bleibt jedoch kühl und distanziert, was gerade dieser nach sinnlicher Erfüllung sich sehnenen Frauengestalt nicht recht ansteht. Eindrucksvoll, obwohl nicht ganz im richtigen Fach Kurt Böhme als Orest. Von labiler Charakteristik der Aegisth Max Lorenz. Ausgezeichnet die vier Mäde Kerstin Meyer, Sonja Draksler, Sieglinde Wagner und Marilyn Horne. Stimmlich schön, aber nicht ganz durchdringend Lisa Otto als fünfte Magd, aus dem Niveau der Besetzung fallend Audrey Gerber-Candys, verlässlich und gut in den Nebenrollen Alois Pernerstorfer (Pfleger), Anny Felbermayer (Vertraute), Karol Loraine (Schleppenträgerin), Erich Majkut und Georg Littassy (Diener). Zweckvoll die Kostüme Andreas Nomikos. Beispielsweise in ihrer Leistung die Wiener Philharmoniker. — Der Beifall für alle Mitwirkenden war laut und anhaltend. Norbert Tschulik

Ein unsichtbares Beil kleidet Elektra...

Gestern in Salzburg: Fesselnde Strauss-Aufführung in der Felsenreitschule mit Inge Borkh

Von unserem nach Salzburg entsandten Kulturredakteur

Ein unvergeßlicher Anblick: Aus dem Schatten des Tores vom Palast in Mykene greift ein Scheinwerferkegel erst etwas scheu, dann immer eindringlicher nach einem Gesicht, einem schmalen, von Blondhaar gerahmten Mädchenkopf über einer hohen, schlanken Erscheinung. Man darf sie königlich nennen, und sie gehört auch einer Königtöchter: Elektra. Noch wirkt ihr Antlitz ruhig, fast mischt sich in die klaren, edlen Züge der Ausdruck von Versonnenheit. Doch der Schein trügt. Das Mädchen an der Mauer sinniert nicht, es sinnt — es sinnt nach Rache. In den Augen fängt es zu irrlernen an, Schatten eines verstörten Geistes senken sich über das Gesicht, zwei schlanke, sehnige Arme recken sich empor und wachsen ins Unendliche in den starr nach oben gespreizten Spinnenfingern, die im Dunkel nach Agamemnon, dem von Gattenhand gemordeten Vater, zu greifen scheinen. Bis der ganze Körper zu zucken beginnt, die Füße sich im wilden Rhythmus vom Boden lösen und der Traum von der Sühne des Blutravels sein erstes bachantisches Fest feiert. Ein unsichtbares Beil kleidet Elektra. Die Tragödie hat,

nicht nur im Orchester, ihren Anfang genommen.

Eine unvergeßliche Elektra: Inge Borkh. Unvergeßlich im Blüten und Strahlen ihres intensiven Singens, das im Finale noch einmal alle Leuchtkraft der ersten Szenen wiedergewinnt, unvergeßlich in der Wucht und Würde ihres Spieles, das noch im Maßlosen das Maß des Menschlichen bewahrt. Dieses „Spiel“ hat in seinen äußeren Erscheinungsformen nichts von animalischer Geschmeidigkeit, von der Raserei eines Tieres an sich, es wirkt eher hart, blockhaft, eckig und mengt in diesem Duktus den Exzessen der Gedanken und der Sinne das entscheidende Moment des Rührenden, Erschütternden — des Menschlichen bei. Inge Borkhs Elektra ist nicht wie die so mancher ihrer Kolleginnen ein Fall für die Klinik.

Und ein unvergeßlicher Dirigent: Dimitri Mitropoulos. Man muß seiner ganz besonders intensiv gedenken, weil man ihn während der Vorstellung nicht aufmerksam genug zu beachten vermag. So geschlossen ist der Ablauf des Geschehens, so dicht der Eindruck, so atemlos die Spannung, daß man die musika-

sche Direktion nicht aus dem Gesamtkomplex zu lösen instande ist und ihren Anteil an der Wirkung erst im nachhinein abschätzen und würdigen kann. Daß indessen die Szene vom Orchester immer gültig „untermauert“ wurde, daß der gewaltige Ausdrucksreichtum der Partitur vom lähmenden Entsetzensschrei bis zur seltenen sanften Regung sein eigenes, von dramatischem Atem erfülltes Bühnenleben gewann, spricht für die Souveränität des Dirigenten und für den Grad der Faszination, der vom Spiel der Philharmoniker ausging.

Der Rest der Aufführung war nicht unvergeßlich, aber er hatte bis auf den konturlosen Orest von Kurt Böhme, dem man die Schlüsselposition und -funktion nicht recht glauben wollte, gutes, zum Teil sogar beträchtliches Format. Jean Madeiras attraktiv-häßliche Klytämnestra überzeugte im beherrschten Spiel und durch plastische Deklamation, Lisa della Casa als darstellerisch ein wenig unbeteiligte, etwas zu damenhafte Chrysothemis steigerte sich im Laufe des Abends (und im Wettstreit mit den in den Arkaden angebrachten Lärmmaschinen) zur imposantesten stimmlichen Leistung seit langem, Max Lorenz gab dem Agisth das ihm zustehende Profil, Anny Felbermayer, Karol Loraine, Alois Pernerstorfer, Erich Majkut und Georg Littassy ergänzten in den kleinen Rollen. Festspielformat allerersten Ranges hatte das Mägdquintett mit den Damen Kerstin Meyer, Sonja Draksler, Sieglinde Wagner, Marilyn Horne und Lisa Otto, fünf ausgewählten Solistinnen also. Ein Beispiel, das Schule machen sollte.

Überraschend gut gelang Regisseur Herbert Graf und Bühnenbildner Gustav Vargo die Transposition des Königspalastes von Mykene vor die Felsenreitschule in Salzburg. Die letzte war freilich bei dem Anspruch auf Eigenständigkeit, den Neu-Alt-Mykene erheben durfte, kein sehr passender und trotz erheblicher Verbauung ein eher störender Hintergrund, zumal die Flucht der Arkaden die Cinemascope-Phantasie des Spielers leider keineswegs in die Flucht schlagen konnte. Aber der Bau selbst war wirkungsvoll, und die Szene praktisch und stimmungsreich zugleich. Und Grafs Spielführung ist mancher Einfalt nachzurufen, in der Abstraktion der Aktionen und in den Positionen der Akteure. Sein Hang zur Breite wirkte allerdings mehr störend: beim Auseinanderziehen des Mägdquintetts und in der Schlussszene, die keiner Dezentralisierung durch Show-Elemente bedarf. Wenn Elektra in ihrem Tanz vom Tod getroffen wie ein Brett auf dem Boden aufschlägt, dann interessiert nicht einmal den härtesten Festspielsnob das original-mykenische Hofzeremoniell mit auf Halbmaß gesenkten Speerspitzen.

Der Jubel um und für Inge Borkh kann nicht beschrieben werden.

Herbert Schnelber

Salzburger Festspiele

Elektra in der Felsenreitschule

Die amerikanischen Besucher der Festspielstadt Salzburg, die wie die Damen neben mir die Felsenreitschule „a nice place“ finden, werden sich in der Elektra-Premiere auf mannigfache Art an ihre Heimat erinnern gefühlt haben. Nicht nur, daß ihre Landsmännin Jean Madeira die Klytämnestra sang, sondern auch wie sie sang, verriet amerikanischen Gusto: Der wunderbare Altstimme eine naturalistische Klangfarbe aufwiegend, in Tönen stöhnend und mit den Allüren dekorativer Verworfenheit, gab sie die Königin eines Mykene, das weit ab von Kreia und dicht bei Hollywood liegt. Es sei denn, es läge noch näher bei der „Met“ in New York: Es scheint unauffällig zu sein, daß das, was man wohl deren Geist nennen muß, sich über Salzburg ausbreitet.

Hingen die kaschierten Mauern und Treppen des Bühnenbildners Gustav Vargo schon kaum mit den echten Steinwänden der grandiosen Felsenbühne zusammen, so wurde durch eine farbfilmartige Beleuchtung die seltsame Tatsache, daß den Bühnenbildnern wirklicher Stein nie steinern genug aussieht, noch demonstrativ unterstrichen. Die Breitwandwirkungen der Felsengänge nutzte Herbert Graf, erster Spielleiter der „Met“, zu mancherlei legitimen und illegitimen Effekten — legitimen, wenn er den (akustisch durch Geräusche und Schreie bis zum Überbönen des Orchesters lautverstärkten) Opferzug der Klytämnestra hindurchtreibt, illegitimen, wenn er in jenem großartigen Augenblick, da nach dem Mord die Rufe „Orest“ durch den Palast hallen, abermals aufgeschreckte Diener und Mäde darin herumhetzt. Denn hier, an einer der musikalisch genialsten Stellen der Oper ist es das Haus selbst, das ruft — das Haus, das nach der schreckensvollen Tat, durch die die mutterrechtliche Ordnung vernichtet wurde, von dem Täter die Stiftung einer neuen Ordnung fordert. Wenn irgendwo, so ist hier der Raum selbst und allein der Akteur, und es ist eine verkleinernde, naturalistische Ausdeutungsregie, ihm dabei eine menschliche Staffage zu geben. Und wenn vollends der einsame ekstatische Tod der Elektra am Schluß zu einem Auftritt des Hausgesindes

führt, ja in „schmerzlichen“ Gruppen erstarrt, während ein sonst nirgends in Erscheinung tretendes Detachment von Kriegern feierlich die Speere senkt, dann ist das Ende der Tragödie im Geist der Provinz unauffällig herbeigebrochen (jener Provinz, die sich, von den führenden Opernbühnen Europas erfolgreich vertrieben, auf der Bühne der „Met“ mit pompöser Beharrlichkeit etabliert hat).

Um nun aber auf das ganz und gar Unprovinzielle, auf das wahrhaft Festspielwürdige zu kommen, so war es die musikalische Gestaltung der monumentalsten und revolutionärsten Partitur von Richard Strauss durch Dimitri Mitropoulos. Auswendig dirigierend, faßt er die gewaltige dramatische Symphonie zu einem von höchster Spannung erfüllten und dabei ganz klar gegliederten actus tragicus zusammen, dessen klangliche Disposition ein Wunder war. Mitropoulos dirigiert den riesigen Instrumentalapparat mit einer Feinheit ohnegleichen, so daß er auf weiten Strecken wie ein Kammerorchester klingt. Was man (z. B. in Klytämnestras Bekenntnis ihrer seelischen und körperlichen Qualen) „Nervenkompunktion“ genannt hat, stellt sich unter der formenden Hand von Mitropoulos als rein musikalische Polyphonie von äußerster Subtilität dar. Und daß das lyrische Melos nicht nur ein Element der figuralen Charakteristik (für die sanfte Chrysothemis), sondern eine Koordinate des Ganzen ist, wird bei diesem genialen Dirigenten schon im ersten Monolog der Elektra klar. Daß er die große Kantilene der Erkennungsszene nicht affektisch schwellend, sondern mit einer fast verhalten wirkenden, aber gleichwohl unerhörten Intensität spielen läßt, sei ihm (und den herrlichen Wiener Philharmonikern) besonders gedankt. Im Gegensatz zur Regie, die das Drama nur auf seine dekorativen Wirkungen hin sah, entsprach es im Musikalischen ganz der inneren Logik, und seine Wirkung kam hier, ungeachtet aller artistischen Raffinements, aus dem Geist der Tragödie.

Aus ihm kam auch die Elektra der Inge Borkh.

Tänzerisch inspiriert, gab sie der Tochter Agamemmons etwas Mánadisches, so daß ihr Triumphanz am Schluß wie eine Selbstbefreiung und Rückkehr in ein königliches Lebensgefühl aus der Erniedrigung und Dumpfheit des Rachebrütens wirkte. Stimmlich sehr frisch und (im Gegensatz zu früher) die Riesenspartie außerordentlich ökonomisch intonierend, hatte Inge Borkh im Ausdruck der zärtlich und innig aufblühenden Geschwisterliebe zur Schwester Chrysothemis und dem Bruder Orest Momente von einer ergreifenden Stille und Demut — ein neuer Zug im Zeichen einer vertieften Begegnung mit der Gestalt.

Lisa della Casa Chrysothemis blieb daneben, so strahlend sie sang, von der Reserviertheit einer Primadonna, die sich keineswegs zu der Ekstase einer Atriden-Tochter verpflichtet fühlt — was ihr die Regie hätte beibringen sollen. Kurt Böhmes gewaltiger Orest strahlte soviel königliche Würde aus, daß man ihn gegen den drohenden Überfall der Erinyen flüchtig gefeßt wähen muß. Eine prägnante psychologische Studie der Dekadenz im Sinne der nervösen Umdeutung der antiken Usurpatoren-gestalt: der Aegisth von Max Lorenz.

Ein großartiger Dirigent, ein interessantes, hochqualifiziertes Ensemble, und doch eine auseinanderfallende Aufführung. Die „Met“ kommt über Salzburg. Generaldirektor Karajan möge das Signal rechtzeitig auf Halt stellen.

K. H. Ruppel

Symphonische Dichtung mit obligater Reitschule

„Elektra“ von Richard Strauss als problematische Inszenierung Herbert Grafs in der Felsenreitschule

Von unserem nach Salzburg entsandten Musikkritiker Dr. Ludwig K. Mayer

Nach dem Mißerfolg seines „Gunttram“, den er erst mit der „Feuersnot“ auf seine Weise abregiert hatte, war Richard Strauss bereits zum unbestrittenen Meister und Vollender der symphonischen Dichtung geworden, ehe er sich mit der „Salome“ erneut der Bühne zuwandte und ihr wenige Jahre darauf als Schwesterwerk die „Elektra“ folgen ließ. Genau besehen setzte er mit diesen beiden Werken die mit seinen symphonischen Dichtungen verfolgte Linie organisch fort. Man kann also sowohl die „Salome“ wie die „Elektra“ als eine Sondergattung des musikalischen Bühnenwerks bezeichnen, nämlich als symphonische Dichtung mit obligater Bühne. Wie sehr zu Recht, das zeigte besonders die Salzburger Festspieldarstellung in der Felsenreitschule unter der musikalischen Leitung von Dimitri Mitropoulos und in der Inszenierung von Herbert Graf.

Denkt man an den szenischen Rahmen, in den Hugo von Hofmannsthal das Werk gestellt hat, und der einen Innenhof der Burg Agamemnons in Mykenä darstellen soll, so möchte man meinen, die „Elektra“ eigne sich in ganz besonderem Maße für die Felsenreitschule. Daß dieser so verlockende Schauplatz aber auch in diesem Fall seine Probleme bietet, das wurde sehr deutlich, obwohl Gustav Vargo die traditionelle Szenerie mit dem beherrschenden, großen Mitteltor und den notwendigen Seitenbauten sehr geschickt in den gegebenen Rahmen eingebaut und mit diesem zu einer geschlossenen Einheit verschmolzen und überdies noch verschiedenen Wünschen des Inszenators Rechnung getragen hat. Eben diese Wünsche und die ihnen zugrunde liegenden Regieeinfälle Grafs aber offenbarten die Problematik der Felsenreitschule, die in erster Linie darin zu liegen scheint, daß sie die Phantasie des Regisseurs zu sehr beeinflusst, die gegebenen Möglichkeiten auszunutzen, und dabei nicht selten vom darzustellenden Werk ablenkt. So wurde das beherrschende Mitteltor fast sinnlos, da kaum ein Auftritt durch dieses erfolgte, sondern die meisten auf einer Seitentreppe, die von den Arkaden auf die Spielenebene herabführte. Und erst die Arkaden! Die haben es den Regisseuren besonders angetan! Wo anders sind sie da, als daß man in ihnen Leute, möglichst mit Fackeln bewaffnet, auf und ab laufen läßt! Das geschah

auch diesmal. Zum geringeren Teil sinnvoll, zum größeren Teil sinnlos und nur um eines Effektes willen, dessen wir allmählich ebenso müde werden, wie der ständig dunklen Beleuchtung, aus der scharfe Scheinwerferkegel jeweils die Darsteller herausheben. Die Abendbeleuchtung des Anfangs wurde unzulänglich versucht; von der Mondnacht, in der das hauptsächlich Geschehen spielt, war keine Spur zu bemerken. Ein anderes, immer wieder sich bietendes Problem sind die weiten Entfernungen, die beispielsweise die Begegnung Elektras mit Orest, die in höchster Spannung Aug' in Aug' erfolgen sollte, un-

gebührlich auseinanderziehen. Nimmt man dazu noch eine Reihe von Originaleinfällen Grafs, so kann man alles in allem seine „Elektra“-Inszenierung in der Felsenreitschule eben auch nur als problematisch, wenn auch interessant bezeichnen. In erster Linie gilt das für die große Szene zwischen Klytämnestra und Elektra, in der Klytämnestra schließlich völlig zusammenbrechen läßt, was deren Wesen durchaus nicht entspricht. So gehetzt und innerlich zerstört dieser Ausbruch von Schlechtigkeit auch sein mag, den Triumph des gänzlichen Zusammenbruchs gönnt sie der Tochter nicht. Daß es, man möchte fast sagen trotz Graf, großartige Momente gab, sei nicht in Abrede gestellt.

Was die musikalische Seite der Aufführung betrifft, so ist zunächst festzustellen, daß Mitropoulos den Wiener Philharmonikern alle ungeheuren und ungeheuerlichen Wirkungen der Partitur in großartiger Weise und mit selten zu hörender Transparenz des Klanges zu entlocken wußte. Vielfach nahm er dabei Zeitmaße, die wesentlich breiter waren, als Strauss selbst sie nahm. Dazu mag die Intensität des Ausdrucks nicht weniger verlocken wie die Dimensionen der Felsenreitschule. Den Sängerinnen, vor allem der Klytämnestra und der Elektra, werden ihre Aufgaben dadurch allerdings noch über das von Strauss verlangte Maß erschwert. Dem ist wohl hauptsächlich der Mangel an Textverständlichkeit zuzuschreiben, der um so bedauerlicher ist, als die Worte Hofmannsthals wert wären, gehört zu werden. Aber damit stoßen wir auf ein Problem, mit dem sich Strauss lebenslang herumgeschlagen hat, und das kaum jemals weniger gelöst worden ist wie in dieser Salzburger Festspieldarstellung. Wirklich verstanden hat man nur den Text des Orest und des Aegisth an diesem Abend. Um so stärker war somit der Eindruck einer symphonischen Dichtung mit obligater Bühne und damit bleibt freilich des Ergreifenden und Erschütternden noch genug.

Dazu trug neben Mitropoulos und dem Orchester das wesentlichste Inge Borkh als Darstellerin der Titelfigur bei. Sie ist keines jener Ueberweiber, die man als Elektra zu sehen gewohnt ist, wirkt fast gräulich, vor allem aber als junges Mädchen, das die Elektra ja sein soll. Um so stärker wirkt sie in der besessenen Dämonie des Spiels. Was sie den Zuhörern, wie schon angedeutet, an Wortverständlichkeit versagt, ersetzt sie durch Intensität des Ausdrucks ihrer schönen Stimme. Die Klytämnestra war Jean Madeira unvertraut, die zwar ebenfalls über ein exzellentes Organ verfügte, im Ganzen aber dieser überdimensionalen Rolle nicht gerecht wurde. An Vorbilder, wie etwa die große Anna Bahr-Mildenburg, durfte man nicht denken. Chrysothemis, die weiche, sehnsüchtige Schwester Elektras, fand in Lisa della Casa eine Darstellerin, die der Idealvorstellung entsprochen hätte, wäre nicht auch bei ihr allzuviel Text unverstanden geblieben. In jeder Beziehung seiner Rolle gewachsen zeigte sich Kurt Böhm als Orest und so wurde denn die Erkennungsszene zwischen ihm und der Schwester zum Höhepunkt des Abends. Auch Max Lorenz füllte seine kleine Rolle als Aegisth aus, ebenso Alois Pernertorfer als Pfleger des Orest, Anny Felbermayer als Vertraute und Karol Loraine als Schleppenträgerin Klytämnestras. Für die einleitende Magedeszenen war mit Kerstin Meyer, Sonja Drahsler, Sieglinde Wagner, Marilyn Horne und Lisa Otto ein Quintett schöner, junger Stimmen aufgetreten. Es gab enthusiastischen Beifall.

DIE FESTSPIELSTADT 1957

Der andere Ravel

Das zehnte und letzte Orchesterkonzert der Festspiele 1957

Zu den gefährlichen Vereinfachungen gehört seit jeher das Schlagwort vom musikalischen Impressionismus. Ein von der Malweise Monet und Manets abgezo- gen Begriff wird hier zunächst ganz richtig auf die Versuche ihrer komponierenden Zeitgenossen angewendet, die Spiele des Lichts mit ihren Reflexen und Spiegelungen musikalisch wiederzugeben und von dieser Sehweise aus auch stark literarisch bedingte „Eindrücke“ genrehafter Art zu gestalten. Aber schon bei Debussy, dem Vater des musikalischen Impressionismus, kommt man mit dieser Bezeichnung nicht ganz durch. Recht abwegig erscheint es jedoch, mit „Claude de France“ auch Maurice Ravel in diesen Topf zu werfen. Wenn es dafür eines Beweises bedürft hätte, so erbrachten ihn im zehnten Orchesterkonzert der Festspiele Dimitri Mitropoulos und der französische Pianist Robert Casadesus mit einer kongenialen Interpretation von Ravel für den einarmigen Pianisten Paul Wittgenstein geschriebenen Klavierkonzert für die linke Hand.

Hier zeigte es sich mit aller Deutlichkeit, wie stark bei diesem Meister unter der Oberfläche einer sehr differenzierten Clarté und Latinität der Erbanteil seiner baskischen Heimat als elementares rhythmisches und klangliches Erleben nach außen drängt. Gleichsam aus Urgründen steigt dabei mit den Klängen des Kontrafagotts eine hellharte, von gespannter Rhythmik skandierende Welt herauf, gegen deren eiskalten Anhauch sich ein prometheischer Trotz zur Wehr setzt. Man begreift von diesem einsamen Werk nur zu gut, daß Debussy menschlich und auch künstlerisch zu Ravel keinen Zugang finden konnte, ja daß er sich sogar verletzend über den ihm durchaus mit Bewunderung begegnenden Meister des „Bolero“ äußerte. Auch vom Formalen her ist diese große, balladeske Improvisa-

tion ein reines Wunder; jenseits des konzentrierenden Prinzips erreicht der Komponist hier eine Einheit von Solist und Orchester, die diesen weder nach berühmten modernen Mustern zum reinen Schlagzeug herabwürdigt, noch ihn in dem dichten Klangrausch des Orchesters untergehen läßt. Dimitri Mitropoulos brauchte sich daher mit Recht nicht auf das „Begleiten“ zu beschränken, sondern konnte zusammen mit dem intuitiv und offenbar völlig überzeugt auf seine Intentionen eingehenden Casadesus aus dem Vollen seines affektgeladenen Temperaments schöpfen. Wir bekennen, dieses Konzert noch nie in solcher ganzheitlichen Vollendung und mit einer so brennend zeitnah wirkenden Leidenschaft gehört zu haben wie hier. Der Solist selbst gehört gewiß zu den profiliertesten Gestalten unter den heutigen Meistern des Klaviers; man wird sich in Salzburg gern seiner hervorragenden Mozart-Interpretation bei den Feiern des Jubiläumsjahres erinnern. Aber daß er über Mozart und die Romantik hinaus durch die Präzision seines rhythmischen Empfindens, die un-nachahmliche Körperhaftigkeit seines Klavierspiels und die spezifisch männliche Interpretation sich als ein so glühender Vertreter der Moderne erweisen würde, das riß das Publikum zu wahren Begeisterungsstürmen für ihn und den genau aus der gleichen Geisteshaltung nachgefolgten Dirigenten hin. Die hinführend musizierenden Wiener Philharmoniker hatten an dieser Meisterleistung ihren gebührenden Anteil; Mitropoulos, ein Dirigent mit ausgesprochenem Bläserempfindung, weiß, daß er gerade dieser Gruppe des Orchesters auch das Unwahrscheinlichste abverlangen kann.

Dieser Jubel steigerte sich noch nach dem Vortrag der Sinfonia Domestica op. 53 von Richard Strauss. Der Dirigent steht ja, wie wir im Vorjahr anlässlich der „Alpen-Symphonie“ erleben durften, dem Werk des Münchner Meisters besonders nahe. Die Tendenz zum biedermeierlich-Gefälligen, die bei dem 1903 entstandenen Stück schon durch die Werkidee des „Häuslichen“ (und des häuslichen Krieges!) gegeben ist, läßt ja schon die Komposition selbst weitgehend vergessen. Wir brauchen die spezifischen Erläuterungen gar nicht mehr, wollen es gar nicht wissen, ob hier an Eheglück an ländliche Spiele, an Mann und Frau oder an das Erwachen am Morgen gedacht wird. Strauss war musikalisch eine viel zu starke Potenz, als daß er sich im malerisch-Programmatichen verloren hätte. So konnte denn diese Musik auch unter dem Zaubertab von Dimitri Mitropoulos zu einem Stück absoluter Musik werden, das sich wohlthuend von der noch

etwas zu durchsichtigen Pose etwa des „Heldenlebens“ abhebt. Aber der Dirigent mußte nicht er selber sein, wenn er nicht auch diese intimere Sphäre mit dem weitgespannten Elan seiner stets auf große Stelgerungsverläufe und sinnvolle Kontraste gerichteten Gestaltungsweise erfüllte. Auch in diesem Falle übertrafen die Wiener Philharmoniker sich selbst.

So sehr Mitropoulos Richard Strauss liebt, so mühsam findet er den Zugang zu der Welt Robert Schumanns, dessen 1. Symphonie in B-dur op. 38 den Abend einleitete. Gewiß handelt es sich auch bei dieser Gestaltung der „Frühlings-Symphonie“ des Zwickauer Meisters um eine glückliche, nachschöpfersche Leistung. Aber das eigentlich Poetische an Schumanns stets vom Klavier abhängigen Symphonie-Stil, das einen Pfitzer so begeisternde deutsch-Romantische wirkt hier merkwürdig unlebendig und farblos. Selbst der naive Schwung des Scherzos hat nicht das typisch Schumannsche Brio. Derart starke Innenspannungen wie sie Mitropoulos dieser Musik gibt, sprengen ihren Rahmen. Trotzdem gab es des Herrlichen genug zu hören, und der Dank der Hörer kam aus ehrlicher Überzeugung. Hans Georg Bonte

From AUG 13 1957

DAILY WORKER
New York, N. Y.

MUSIC

Gershwin Young Composers Contest Closes Aug. 31

The 13th annual George Gershwin Memorial Contest for the best orchestral composition by a young American composer will close Aug. 31, it was announced by the contest's sponsors, the George Gershwin Memorial Foundation of B'nai B'rith Victory Lodge, Inc. This year's winner will receive a \$1,000 cash award and the winning composition will be world premiered by the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Society at one of its regular concerts at Carnegie Hall with Leonard Bernstein conducting.

Dimitri Mitropoulos will again serve as honorary chairman of the Judges' Committee and Dr. Carleton Sprague Smith, chief of the Music division, New York Public Library, will continue on as chairman. Others serving on the judges' committee are: Robert R. Bennett, Morton Gould, Peter Menin (a Gershwin award winner, himself), Vincent Persichetti, Quincy Porter and Roger Sessions.

The contest, which is sponsored annually by the George Gershwin Memorial Foundation of B'nai B'rith Victory Lodge, Inc., in co-operation with B'nai B'rith Hill Foundations, is open to composers under 30 years of age, regardless of race, creed or color; credit will be allowed towards the maximum age limits for time spent in the U. S.

Armed Forces.

An important feature of this contest is that all entries are submitted anonymously to the judges and are only identified with the composer after final judgment has taken place.

All entries must be original unpublished compositions suitable for orchestral performance, no longer than 15 minutes in length.

The Gershwin Memorial Foundation was established 13 years ago by the Victory Lodge of B'nai B'rith to be a living memorial to the late George Gershwin.

In addition to the cash prize of \$1,000, the winner will be invited to New York as a guest of the Foundation, with all expenses paid, for the week preceding the performance of his work by the New York Philharmonic. His composition will also be placed in the rental library of Chappell & Co., with the composer receiving the standard contract and customary royalties.

The winner of the 12th annual contest was Gordon Sherwood of Ann Arbor, Michigan. Robert Stern of Paterson, N. J., was awarded an honorable mention with a \$100 cash prize.

Entry blanks, which must accompany each composition, may be obtained by writing to the B'nai B'rith Hill Foundations, 165 W. 46th St. New York, 36, N. Y.

Salzburger Volksblatt

Der Klang war alles

Dimitri Mitropoulos dirigierte das letzte Orchesterkonzert

Man braucht gar nicht bis in Furtwänglers Lebzeiten zurückzuschauen, um feststellen zu können, daß das letzte der Festspiel-Orchesterkonzerte eines jeden Sommers einem Programm von — sagen wir — feierlichem Gewicht verschrieben war. Ausklang- und Abschiedsstimmung kamen so, manchmal mehr, manchmal minder eindringlich, zu ihrem Recht, und wer wollte, konnte darin auch noch das Benehmen zu einer stillen Verpflichtung und ein tröstliches Versprechen hinsichtlich der Konzerte der Zukunft sehen. Das letzte, zehnte, Orchesterkonzert der Festspiele 1957, das am Mittwoch die Wiener Philharmoniker unter dem Stab von Dimitri Mitropoulos, mit dem Pianisten Robert Casadesus gestalteten, hat sich in seinem Programm diesem Herkommen nur andeutungsweise gebeugt. Es brachte Robert Schumanns Symphonie Nr. 1, B-Dur, dann das Klavierkonzert für die linke Hand von Maurice Ravel und nach der Pause die Sinfonia domestica von Richard Strauss.

Schumanns „Frühlingsinfonie“ — wie er seine „Erste“ nannte — als romantische Introduktion des Konzerts hätte einem weiteren

Aufbau des Programms keine Schwierigkeiten bereitet. Mitropoulos, dessen ganzer Körper in der Erfüllung seines leidenschaftlich besessenen Dirigierens mitunter wie von Schauern geschüttelt schien, machte solcherart anschaulich, daß Schumanns Orchester-Erstellung „in feuriger Stunde geboren“ worden ist. Die Wiener Philharmoniker hatten anfänglich so etwas wie eine Reserviertheit zu überwinden, bis sie dem „Sturm“ des Dirigenten rückhaltlos nachgaben und — selber hingerissen — hinreißend musizierten. Schumanns Gefühlswelt wurde zu be-räuschendem Klang.

Berausende Klänge von südlicher Farb-keit bot anschließend auch das Klavierkonzert Ravels für die linke Hand, das der Komponist für den einarmigen Pianisten Paul Wittgenstein geschrieben hat. Robert Casadesus, der Solist des Abends, führte in dem Klavierkonzert die Virtuosität seiner Linken vor, so ohne Not die eigene Tugend exemplifizierend. Eine attraktive Leistung, die im Verein mit dem blendenden Spiel der Philharmoniker, die der beschwörend bewegten Zeichnung durch Mitropoulos

nichts schuldig blieben, das Auge fast noch mehr als das Ohr ansprach.

Artistik bestimmte das Gepräge des Konzerts, zu dessen Beschluß Mitropoulos noch die ganze sinnbetreffende Pracht des Orchesterklanges entfaltete, die Richard Strauss auch in seine Sinfonia domestica gelegt hat. In diesem Werk hat Strauss bekanntlich die musikalische Schilderung von häuslichen Szenen in der eigenen Familie vorgenommen. Die Domestica ist aber ihrer voluminösen orchestralen Anlage nach weit über das hausbackene Motiv hinausgewachsen, sie trägt — cum grano salis begriffen — schier den Charakter eines „Heldenlebens“, und dieser Umstand war es wohl, der Mitropoulos, eine in der Vorliebe für großartigen klanglichen Prunk selbst großartig wirkende Dirigentenpersönlichkeit, dazu veranlaßt haben mag, sich der Domestica anzunehmen.

Der Beifall, der schon nach dem Klavierkonzert auch für Casadesus stürmisch laut geworden war, steigerte sich zum Schluß zu Ovationen für die Philharmoniker und vor allem für Dimitri Mitropoulos. Man fühlte ihn so heftig, daß — darüber aufgeschreckt — plötzlich eine Fledermaus durch den Saal flatterte. Sie stand allerdings in keiner Beziehung zu dem gerade zelebrierten Strauss, trug aber mit dazu bei, daß man des Gedankens, es sei soeben das letzte Orchesterkonzert eines Festspielsommers verklungen, erst recht nicht inne wurde.

Hans Kutschera

Freitag, 16. August 1957

Salzburger Nachrichten

DIE FESTSPIELSTADT 1957

Dem Neuen zugewandt

Zwei Konzerte zeitgenössischer Musik im Mozarteum

In doppelter Weise wurde heuer der zeitgenössischen Musik im Repertoire der Festspiele gedient: durch Aufnahme einzelner Stücke in das Programm einiger Veranstaltungen und durch die Durchführung zweier ihr allein gewidmeter Konzerte. Auch die Erstaufführung der Oper Liebermanns, ist in diesem Zusammenhang zu erwähnen. In allen diesen Maßnahmen erblicken wir eine sehr begrüßenswerte Förderung des zeitgenössischen Musikschaffens, die auch weiterhin unbedingt bei den Festspielen ausgebaut werden sollte.

Amerikanische Werke unter Leitung von Mitropoulos

Das sehr bunt zusammengesezte Programm des Konzerts vom Mittwochvormittag bot ein getreues Abbild der Vielfalt des gegenwärtigen

Musikschaffens in den USA. Es war auch in besonderer Art mit der Person des Dirigenten verbunden, auf dessen Anregung die drei ersten Werke der Spielfolge entstanden.

Die viersätzige Symphonie für Blechbläser und Schlagzeug von Gunter Schuller hatte für unser Empfinden vor allem Studiencharakter: die aus vier Hörnern, sechs Trompeten, zwei Barytonen, drei Posauern und einer Tuba gebildete Bläsergruppe wurde bis an die äußersten Grenzen ihrer technischen Möglichkeiten geführt, wobei die Virtuosität der Darbietung mehr imponierte als die etwas robusten thematischen Entwicklungen.

Sehr eindrucksvoll hatte Morton Gould in seinen „Jekyll- und Hyde-Variationen“ einen merkwürdigen literarischen Gedanken in

musikalische Symbole ausgedeutet: Die Grundidee des berühmten Romans von Robert Louis Stevenson — die Aufspaltung eines Menschen in zwei, sein gutes und sein böses Wesen repräsentierende Figuren — ergab eine Doppelthematik, die sich im großen Orchester sehr eindrucksvoll entwickeln und variieren ließ und zu einer „symbolischen Dichtung“ führte, deren inhaltliche Folgerichtigkeit und rein musikalische Bedeutsamkeit unmittelbar einleuchteten.

Die einsätzige „Phantasie für Orchester“ von Robert Mann zeichnete sich insbesondere durch einen ungemein kunstreichen und ausdrucksvollen Streichersatz aus; ihre rhapsodisch auf mehrere kontrastierende Episoden verteilte thematische Erfindung war nicht sehr be-

deutend und diente vor allem einer gewaltigen dynamischen Steigerung. Vom Bildhaften her leicht zu erfassen waren zwei Stücke aus dem Medea-Ballett von Samuel Barber: die in ihrer bitteren Wehmut sehr eindringlich gestaltete Meditation und der in wilder Rhythmik zu enormen Klangstärken anschwellende Raketentanz der Titelheldin.

Unbeschwertes Ausleben in Turbulenz und eingänglicher Klangsymbolik ereignete sich in der Zirkus-Ouvertüre von William Schuman, die in jedem Takt ihre Herkunft von der Revue- und Freiluftmusik erkennen ließ. Tonmalische Effekte gemahnten nicht nur an die Bewegungen einiger Zirkustiere, sondern auch an die Anpreisungen der Artisten und an Ausrufe der staunenden Zuschauer. Auch hier wurden gelegentlich Lautstärken erreicht, die die akustische Fassungskraft des Saales schier zu sprengen drohten.

Dimitri Mitropoulos führte die ein Äußerstes an technischer Brillanz und unerschöpflicher Klanggewalt leistenden Wiener Philharmoniker durch das bunte Programm mit souveränem Können und sichtlichem Behagen. Letzteres schien auch auf das ihm begehrte zubelebende Publikum überzugreifen. DR. WILLI REICH

rom

HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

MUSIC AND MUSICIANS

By PAUL HENRY LANG

Jazz: A New Interpretation

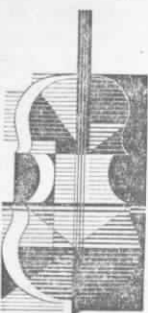
The Italians have their opera, the French their literature, the Germans their philosophy, and the Russians their inventors. To doubt the primacy, superiority, and sole validity of these intellectual possessions indicates blatant ignorance. There are those who would add to the list of copyrighted national cultural assets an American achievement, jazz.

Now there is certainly some justification for this attitude. Jazz is indisputably of American origin, its outstanding practitioners are American, it is celebrated all over the world, and it appeals to prince and pauper. Even the so-called "serious" or "classical" composers, from Ravel to Copland dip into it for inspiration and raw materials. But when it comes to assaying its role in the musical hierarchy we encounter some strange points of view.

Jazz needs no such pugnacious defense, and comparisons with classical music are irrelevant and futile. I much prefer Mr. Mitropoulos' conclusions arrived at in the same issue of "High Fidelity." In his disarmingly naive pantheistic view of music he says with simple and earnest conviction: "Why make comparisons? . . . I do like to serve only the kind of music I represent. Yet I also accept the right of other people to express themselves differently, and therefore I feel no impulse either to hate them or to belittle for the sake of defending my art."

Das erste Konzert mit den Wiener Philharmonikern

Mitropoulos dirigiert Schumann, Barber und Beethoven



Sa. Es ist ein kluger Schachzug von den Organisatoren der Luzerner Musikfestwochen, für das letzte Drittel ein zweites Orchester zu engagieren. Das schiebt allfälligen Ermüdungserscheinungen bei den Hörern den Riegel vor und sorgt noch einmal für Auftrieb. Mit den Wiener Philharmonikern hat man sich eines der besten Orchester der Welt verpflichtet. In Rob. Schumanns 1. Symphonie B-Dur op. 38, das Dimitri Mitropoulos am Anfang des VI. Symphoniekonzertes stellte, kam die prachtvolle Ausgleichlichkeit der Wiener gut zum Ausdruck. Nie wird man im Forte vor unangenehme Härten gestellt. Die Kultur ist hier selbstverständlich. Dabei könnte vielleicht gerade ein Dirigent wie Mitropoulos einem anderen Orchester gefährlich werden, denn er leitet seine Musiker mit auffallend elektrisierenden Gesten, jeder Muskel zeugt von seinem intensiven inneren Mitgehen. — Der satte und weiche Streicherklang der Philharmoniker kam in der Frühlingssymphonie köstlich zur Geltung. Man spürte das Drängende und Schwellende in dieser Musik, die von Schumann geschrieben wurde in jenem Frühlingstrang, der den Menschen wohl bis ins höchste Alter hinauf und in jedem Jahr von neuem überfällt. Skizziert wurde das Werk im Januar 1841, also wohl in bitterer Kälte,



Links der Dirigent Dimitri Mitropoulos, rechts der Pianist Robert Casadesu.

Photo: Hans Blättler.

die das Sehnen nach neuer Wärme verständlich macht. In Gedanken ist Schumann ein paar Monate vorwärtsgeschritten und hat der ganzen Daseinsfreude und jugendlichen Kraft, die einen im Mai durchströmt, in seiner Musik zum Durchbruch verholfen. Mag der Symphonie auch der durchgehende große Zug fehlen, so kann man als Hörer doch in der Melodiosität schweben. Und vom leichtfüßigen — nicht Sommernachtsraum, sondern — Frühlingstrang des letzten Satzes, den Mitropoulos besonders fein und tänzerisch gestaltete, wird man unwillkürlich angestekt.

Auf Wunsch des Dirigenten wurden beim modernen Zwischenspiel, das die beiden Hauptwerke des Abends trennte, nicht Morton Goulds «Variations on Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde», sondern zwei Sätze aus Samuel Barbers Ballettmusik «Medea», komponiert 1946, vorgetragen. Damit lernte man einen repräsentativen amerikanischen Komponisten kennen, der eine originelle Persönlichkeit ist, was sich schon darin äußert, daß er nicht — wie üblich — in seiner Jugend ein Experimentierwerk war und nachher in gemäßigtere Bahnen einschwenkte, sondern im Gegenteil zuerst der traditionellen Musik verpflichtet war und nachher von Jahr zu Jahr an Kühnheit gewann. Der heute 47jährige Barber will in seinem Ballett «Medea» die zeitlos seelischen Situationen der Rache und der Eifersucht ausdeuten, was bei einer Bühnenaufführung wohl eher zum Ausdruck kommt als im Konzertsaal, wo man beim Anhören der Musik eventuell auf ganz andere Deutungen kommen könnte. Aber die beiden vorgetragenen Stücke waren ja ohnehin nur eine kleine Kostprobe aus dem Werk. In «Medea's Meditationen» herrscht ein träumerischer Klang vor, das Orchester wird meist gedämpft und nur in Gruppen eingesetzt, mit aparter Beziehung des Xylophons. Der «Rachetanz» hat dann einen ekstatischen Charakter, Schlagzeug und Blech kommen zum Zug, das Klavier mischt sich mit markanten Boogie-Woogie-Rhythmen hinein und trägt dazu bei, daß das Publikum von dieser lebendigen Musik animiert Kenntnis nimmt und sich ausgezeichnet dabei unterhält —, ohne darin ein gewichtsmäßig gleichwertiges Gegenstück zu Schumann und Beethoven sehen zu wollen.

Beethovens Klavierkonzert Nr. 5 Es-Dur op. 73 ist eines der schönsten Werke dieser Gattung überhaupt, man kann es nie genug hören und wird unmittelbar in Bann geschlagen, wenn nach dem ersten Akkord des Orchesters der Pianist im Fortissimo mit seiner Kadenz einsetzt. Wenn irgend etwas, dann kann man dieses in jeder Beziehung ausgewogene, konzentrierte, vom Intimsten bis zum Heldischen reichende Konzert klassisch nennen. Dem Zauber des empfindungsstarken Adagios kann sich nie-

mand entziehen, und der spannungsgeladene Uebergang zum Rondo, das nach dem vorhergegangenen Zögern davonsprengt wie ein feuriges Roß, gehört zu den einmaligen Einfällen eines Genies. In Robert Casadesus, dem französischen Meisterpianisten, hatte Mitropoulos einen Solisten zur Seite, dessen künstlerische Reife dem Werk entsprach und der sich in den zarteren Partien ganz besonders hervor tat, mit einer unvergleichlichen Durchsichtigkeit und Klangkultur spielte. Leider war die Übereinstimmung zwischen Solist und Orchester nicht immer ideal, es gab minime, aber immerhin ungemütlich wirkende Bruchstellen. Die Routine deckte sie jeweils schnell wieder zu. So war der Eindruck von Werk und Wiedergabe dennoch stark, Beethoven triumphierte einmal mehr, und das Publikum kargte nicht mit laut geäußertem Dank.

«Luzerner Tagblatt» — Seite 7

Im 6. Sinfoniekonzert musizierten erstmals die Wiener Philharmoniker

In erster Linie möchten wir anerkennend erwähnen, daß in diesem Konzert die Sinfonie am Anfang, das Konzert mit dem Solisten nachher, als Abschluß, gespielt wurde. Das war umso gebotener, da die Sinfonie von Schumann, das Konzert von Beethoven stammte. In dem gebürtigen Griechen Dimitri Mitropoulos lernte man einen in Luzern noch nie aufgetretenen Dirigenten von Format kennen, der in Amerika Bruno Walter am Philharmonischen Orchester New York abgelöst hat. Diese Kenntnis veranlaßte so hohe Erwartungen, daß die Wirklichkeit damit fast nicht Schritt zu halten vermochte. Außerdem ist die 1. Sinfonie B-dur von Schumann, obschon sie viele glückliche Einfälle verwendet, in bezug auf Formvollendung nicht zu vergleichen etwa mit Beethovens Fünfter, die wir tags zuvor in kongenialer Wiedergabe hörten. Schumann wiederholt sich sehr viel, und die gleichmäßige dynamische Wellenbewegung erzeugt eine ermüdende Monotonie. So wenigstens empfanden wir die beiden ersten Sätze, während welchen wir besonders der eigenartigen, aus den Schultern erfolgenden Dirigiertechnik unser Interesse widmeten. Im Scherzo, das wir uns vielleicht noch etwas leichter (molto vivace) gewünscht hätten, war jedoch, besonders am Schluß, eine vermehrte Ausstrahlung fühlbar, und der Finalsatz «Allegro animato e grazioso» hatte «Sommernachtsraum»-Stimmung und ließ keine Wünsche offen.

Inzwischen hatte man sich auch an den neuen Orchesterklang gewöhnt. Die Wiener Philharmoniker haben vor dem Festspiel-Orchester den Vorzug voraus, daß sie das ganze Jahr zusammen musizieren, andererseits ist in unserem Orchester die Elite der ganzen Schweiz beisammen. Wir wollen jedoch noch keine voreiligen Schlüsse ziehen und Vergleiche anstellen. Auf besonderen Wunsch des Dirigenten spielte das Orchester nach der Sinfonie noch zwei Stücke aus dem Ballett «Medea» des amerikanischen Komponisten Samuel Barber, unseres Wissens einer der bedeutendsten amerikanischen Tonsetzer der Gegenwart. Für die Musik selbst ist es von nebensächlicher Bedeutung, ob es sich dabei um Medea, die griechische Frauengestalt, handelt, welcher Grillparzer im «Goldenen Vließ» ein literarisches Denkmal setzte. Die Musik ist gehaltvoll genug, um absolut, d. h. ohne Programm, in hohem Maße zu fesseln. Das Ballett freilich bedarf einer Handlung. Die Wirkung, welche dann von «Medea's Meditation» und dem «Rachetanz» ausgeht, muß ungeheuer sein, genügte doch schon die konzertmäßige Aufführung, um den Zuhörer aufzuwecken und in atemlose Spannung zu versetzen. Das Orchester wird bereichert durch Xylophon, Klavier, kleine Trommel (sehr nützlich angewendet) usw., und der Gesamtklang ergibt ein Kaleidoskop von unerhörter Farbenpracht. Wie ein Hexenmeister stach Mitropoulos in das Orchester, schlug Funken aus den Instrumenten und führte mit überlegenem Willen die rhythmischen Verschiebungen im Jazzstil, wie die verwirrendsten Dissonanzen zu einem guten Ende.

Eine ganz andere Welt tat sich auf mit dem großen Klavierkonzert Es-dur von Beethoven, dem Robert Casadesu ein idealer Interpret war. Hätte Beethoven nur dieses eine Werk für Klavier komponiert, sein Name als Klavierkomponist würde unvergänglich bleiben. Es ist die reife Frucht einer geläuterten Seele und verbindet pianistisch wirkungsvolle Passagen mit innigem Ausdruck und einer Formvollendung, die nicht mehr zu übertreffen ist. Casadesu besitzt den wunderbar gedachten Anschlag, welcher diesem Werk gebührt, den singenden Ton der Cantilene, den Duft perlender Läufe, die Noblesse der Interpretation, die musikalische Wärme und geistige Beherrschung, welche das Konzert restlos auszu schöpfen vermögen. Begeistert jubelte ihm der vollbesetzte Saal minutenlang zu. Auch das Orchester, das die Tuttistellen ausdrucksvoll gestaltete, jedoch bei den Einsätzen es an Präzision hier und da fehlen ließ, sowie der Dirigent wurden herzlich mit Beifall bedacht. B. St.

phonie von Schumann, die der Dirigent allzusehr auf äußere Brillanz anlegte, wobei er der bei Schumann fast immer vorhandenen geruhlosen Intimität widersprach, als in den an Stelle der ursprünglich vorgesehenen Variationen von Morton Gould gebrachten zwei Ballettszenen von Samuel Barber und in der Begleitung von Beethovens Klavierkonzert in Es-dur, bei der das Streichervorspiel des Adagios zum ergreifendsten Klangereignis wurde. Die beiden Stücke aus dem 1946 entstandenen «Medea»-Ballett von Barber konnten auch losgelöst von den szenischen Vorgängen als «absolute» Tonstücke gut bestehen: die «Meditation» als grüblerisches, sich aus leidenschaftlichen Streicher- und Holzbläserfiguren allmählich zu einem Ausbruch des ganzen Orchesters steigendes und dann wieder schattenhaft zurückziehendes klangpoetisches Gleichnis, und der «Rachetanz» als wilde rhythmische Orgie, die das Orchester zu atemberaubender Virtuosität aufpeitschte. Hier war auch der stärkste persönliche Einsatz des Dirigenten erforderlich, während er sich bei Schumann und Beethoven oft damit begnügen durfte, das mit seinen Intentionen völlig vertraute und verständnisvoll auf sie eingehende Orchester mit ein paar knappen Bewegungen an einige besondere Nuancierungen zu erinnern. — Solist des Beethoven-Konzerts war Robert Casadesu, der seinen Part etwas kühl, aber mit mustergetriggter klarer Linienführung und rhythmischer Verve exekutierte; wunderschön gelangen ihm die Verbindung mit dem Hornklang in der Kadenz des ersten Satzes, der Schluß des Adagios und die weitaußere Vorbereitung des Rondos, das in allen seinen Episoden und Refrains zu glanzvoller Wirkung gebracht wurde.

ÉVÉNEMENT MUSICAL AU FESTIVAL DE LUCERNE

Mitropoulos et l'Orchestre Philharmonique de Vienne

Il s'agit bien d'un événement musical, tant l'apparition de Mitropoulos et de l'Orchestre philharmonique de Vienne a élevé l'initiative lucernoise à un niveau qu'elle a rarement atteint... En fait, c'était bel et bien l'atmosphère des inoubliables séances de 1938 et 1939 qui flottait, en ce dernier dimanche, sur un Kunsthaus archicomble, à l'instant où le prestigieux directeur de l'Orchestre philharmonique de New York, Dimitri Mitropoulos, gravissait les degrés du podium.

Tout d'un coup, l'«Orchestre de Vienne», nos prévisions étaient depuis longtemps établies, les «Philharmoniker» comptant parmi les meilleurs instrumentistes du monde. Quant à Dimitri Mitropoulos, son prestige est celui que peut revendiquer l'un des chefs les plus prodigieux de notre temps, l'un de ceux auxquels l'Amérique a procuré une consécration quasi universelle.

Écoutant Mitropoulos, nous pûmes mesurer d'emblée les raisons de sa gloire et de sa réussite. Pour ma part, je n'ai point souvenir d'avoir jamais entendu un chef — hormis peut-être le Furtwängler des interprétations uniques de Beethoven, Brahms ou Bruckner — possédant une connaissance aussi parfaite de la partition musicale, dont il a mission d'entreprendre le commentaire.

Conduisant «tout» de mémoire — et cela avec une monstrueuse facilité — Dimitri Mitropoulos anime son discours d'une telle intensité, que l'auditeur le plus fermé à l'appel de la grâce, ne pourrait y demeurer insensible. Mais, il y a plus encore: je ne connais pas un directeur réalisant une aussi harmonieuse synthèse entre l'expression musicale dont il est pénétré, et les gestes dont il use pour l'exprimer.

J'entends par là que les éléments essentiels de la partition ne sont point évoqués par le relief des nuances seulement, mais tout autant, par une gestique d'une souplesse inouïe, qui nous permet, sans démonstration scolastique aucune, de suivre la trame de l'ouvrage, au travers des divers compartiments de l'orchestre.

Oui, je sais... Les «mômiers» de la musique n'y trouveront là point leur compte. Il en était même, dimanche, qui auraient souhaité un exposé de la «Première Symphonie», de Schumann, plus intime... et un accompagnement

orchestral du «Cinquième Concerto», de Beethoven, moins éclatant... Je répondrai à ces esprits chagrins que l'amant fougueux de Clara aurait été sans doute pleinement satisfait de découvrir un interprète traduisant ses émois avec une pareille force de conviction...

Pour certains encore, l'attitude sans cesse vibrante de Mitropoulos apparaît manquant de discrétion... Mais, qu'importe: le résultat seul compte... Et quel résultat! Une interprétation magnifiquement élan et de dynamisme, et qui réussit à faire de la souriante et printanière «Symphonie» schumannienne, une véritable épopée, qui s'acheva en apothéose...

En juste hommage à ce Nouveau Monde qui l'a si bien accueilli, Dimitri Mitropoulos dirigeait deux mouvements du Ballet «Medée», de Samuel Barber, pages de divertissement, trahissant leur origine scénique première, et valant avant tout par leur vigueur rythmique.

Robert Casadesu était, en deuxième partie du programme, l'interprète du «Cinquième Concerto», de Beethoven. On devine ce que fut la rencontre d'un virtuose, d'un chef et d'un ensemble d'une pareille qualité. En vérité,

On en arrive au point culminant du Festival international de Lucerne; voici, très gracieusement fleuri, Dimitri Mitropoulos qui participe pour la première fois à ce festival. L'Orchestre philharmonique de Vienne s'est fait apprécié d'emblée par sa très haute tenue. La tradition n'est pas près de se perdre.



«DER BUND» BERN

BASLER NACHRICHTEN

Mitropoulos und die Wiener Philharmoniker

Wie verschieden Musik erlebt und so ganz anders aufgefaßt und weitergegeben werden kann, dafür war das 6. Sinfoniekonzert ein eklatantes Beispiel. Der Dirigent hieß Dimitri Mitropoulos, wie Keilberth erstmals in Luzern aufgetreten. Bei diesem amerikanisierten Griechen und bekannten Chef der New-Yorker Philharmoniker ist alles sozusagen auf Hochspannung gebracht. Wie er in seiner dirigierenden und gestischen Besessenheit, mit letzter Präzision und unerbittlicher Virtuosität, Arme und Körper fast ständig von «Schüttelfrösten» durchbebt, Ströme knisternder Elektrizität durch Schumanns 1. Sinfonie jagte (die «Frühlingssinfonie» notabene), das war eine üble Sache für Ohr, Gemüt und Auge. Bei den Wechselbädern der Dynamik, die der deutsche Romantiker über sich ergehen lassen mußte, bei den heftigen Attacken und all dem klanglichen Raffinement kamen die Wiener Philharmoniker mit ihrer sonoren Spielmanier, vor allem mit ihrer Streicherwärme gar nicht zum Blühen. Die Poesie und das wundersame Helldunkel der Schumannschen Muse schien sozusagen ausgeschaltet. Das unermüdlich Antreibende dieser Art, Musik zu machen, war dann in zwei inhaltlich zum Teil sehr belanglosen Stücken aus dem Ballett «Medea» des Amerikaners Samuel Barber durchaus am Platz.

Am Schluß erklang Beethovens Es-dur-Klavierkonzert, von Robert Casadesu gespielt und von ihm in jene Sphäre der «clarté» gehoben, die blitzende Helle, Glanz, seelenhaftes Leuchten zu vereinigen wußte. Der prachtvoll konzertante Schwung seiner Interpretation, eine überaus klare, straffe aber unerhört wendige Begleitung durch die viel gesanglicher wirkenden Wiener lösten Stürme der Begeisterung aus und riefen Solist und Dirigent immer wieder aufs Podium.

Nach der Pause dann eines jener Wunder, wie sie nur die Musik hervorzubringen vermag: die Musik eines Deutschen, um die sich ein französischer Pianist, ein griechisch-amerikanischer Dirigent und ein österreichisches Orchester gemeinsam unter hohem Einsatz bemühen. Nicht als ob Beethovens fünftes Klavierkonzert in Es-dur eine, sagen wir: plattenfertige Wiedergabe erfahren hätte. Doch die Noblesse von Robert Casadesu, die Bereitschaft von Dimitri Mitropoulos und die Schmiegsamkeit der an diesem Abend in Luzern erstmals hervortretenden Wiener Philharmoniker, von denen ja noch mehr zu reden sein wird, drückten der Vermittlung den Stempel des Aussergewöhnlichen auf.

rité, nous atteignons là à l'un des hauts moments du Festival. Respectueux toujours d'un style d'une pareille dignité, Robert Casadesu nous proposa, du «Concerto», un commentaire d'une souveraine noblesse, affirmant par ailleurs cette impeccable technique dont il a le privilège.

Quant à l'accompagnement, si fréquemment «baclé» en une seule et unique répétition d'orchestre, il nous fut, en l'occurrence, une véritable révélation... tant Dimitri Mitropoulos mit de soin à souligner les incidences instrumentales revêtant une importance mélodique.

Il est d'usage de classer les virtuoses du piano et du violon dans un ordre numérique de prestige et de valeur... Je ne crois guère me tromper en disant que nous avons acclamé à Lucerne le premier chef de notre temps... celui auquel l'auditoire du Kunsthaus réserve — ainsi qu'à son brillant soliste, Robert Casadesu — une ovation délirante et interminable, à laquelle l'«Orchestre Philharmonique de Vienne» fut légitimement associé.

C'est désormais la prestigieuse phalange viennoise que nous entendrons, successivement, sous les ordres de Raphaël Kubelik et André Cluytens. Ainsi donc, ce Festival de Lucerne 1957 s'achèvera en beauté...

Henri Jaton.

Internationale Musikfestwochen

Luzern 1957

XIV

6. Symphoniekonzert

O.M. Mit dem sechsten Symphoniekonzert der Musikfestwochen erschien das Wiener Philharmonische Orchester. Am Abend nach dem fünften war beim offiziellen Empfang des Stadtrats von Luzern im Hotel Schweizerhof, dem zahlreichen Ehrengästen beiwohnten, das Schweizerische Festspielorchester, dessen Musiker die Arbeit an ihren Stammorchestern mit dem 1. September wieder aufnehmen müssen, abgefeiert worden. Stadtpresident Paul Kopp begrüßte die Gäste, darunter den Bundespräsidenten Dr. Streuli, und teilte in einer mit Humor gewürzten Ansprache mit, dass unser Festspielorchester den Ertrag seiner Radioübertragungen den Musikern des Luzerner A.M.I.-Orchesters zur Verfügung gestellt habe; eine noble Geste. Des weiteren stellte er besonders glanzvolle Musikfestwochen für das nächste Jahr, das zwanzigste ihres Bestehens, in Aussicht, wobei er die Hoffnung auf eine internationale Kunstausstellung aussprach, und gelangte mit der Bitte um bessere Verbindung, vorab mit Zürich, an die Bundesbahn. Die Möglichkeit, dass Luzern, nachdem beim Wasserturm ein uraltes Schwert gefunden wurde, demnächst die 5000-Jahr-Feier begehen werde, sei nicht von der Hand zu weisen. Das in der Einladung erhoffte «ungezwungene freundschaftliche Beisammensein» war jedenfalls gewährleistet.

Wir dürfen den Veranstaltern dankbar sein, dass es ihnen gelungen ist, eines der besten — es gibt Leute, die behaupten: das beste — Orchester Europas, eben die Wiener Philharmoniker, für den letzten Teil der Festwochen zu gewinnen. Bei allem Respekt für die Glanzleistungen unsres eigenen, die Homogenität eines solchen auf ältester Tradition ruhenden Orchesters, wie es die Wiener sind, ist natürlich von einem ad hoc zusammengesetzten nicht zu erreichen. Schon mit den ersten Takten erquickte der Klang und Einklang, der da unser Ohr trifft, beglückt der Zuhörer dieser einzigartigen Streicher, und, was die technische Vollendung

der Einheitlichkeit und Einsatz-Akkuratesse betrifft, so kommt dieses Orchester den grossen amerikanischen nahe. Dass der erste Gesamtklang bei Beethovens Klavierkonzert ebensowenig vollendet war wie der am Abend vorher bei Beethovens fünfter Symphonie, mag dem Schweizerischen Festspielorchester ein Trost sein. Davon abgesehen war eitel Hörfreude.

Dimitri Mitropoulos, der zum ersten Male in Luzern dirigierte, ist zweifellos einer der bedeutendsten Dirigenten der Gegenwart von virtuoser und doch echt musikalischer Gestaltungskraft. Man sieht, dass er trotz ausladender und fast ununterbrochener detaillierter Zeichengebung kein Bänderer ist, kein Dressur, er wirkt vielmehr als primus inter pares, teilt seinem Orchester seine Freude, sein eigenes Hörglück mit, passt auf, dass das Werk seine richtige Gestalt annimmt, und wirkt, wenn die Stab- und Körperbewegung gelegentlich einmal ganz aufhört, wie ein Freund seiner Musiker, mit denen er einerlei Meinung ist. — Seine Bewegungskraftigkeit allerdings schien uns, seit wir ihn das letztmal sahen, zugenommen zu haben, und wenn man nicht hinschaut, hat man, da das, was herauskommt, hervorragend ist, mehr davon.

Die B-dur-Symphonie von Schumann erklang in all ihrer, den Frühling künden wollender Pracht, mitunter, wenn man, was Schumann selbst darüber geschrieben hat, nachliest, — der Trompeteneinsatz aus der Höhe — schon etwas hochsommerlich, in herrlicher Klangfülle und -schönheit. Danach gab es Medea's Meditation und Rachetanz aus dem Ballett «Medea» des Amerikaners Samuel Barber — bisschen viel Ballett im diesjährigen Programm — ein sehr zeitgenössisches, raffiniert instrumentiertes Werk, das aber zu seiner richtigen Wirkung des Optischen kaum entbehren kann. Ebenfalls grossartig gespielt.

Den Beschluss machte Beethovens grosses Klavierkonzert Es-dur, und damit wurde in jedem Betracht die eigentliche Vollendung am Abend erreicht. Robert Casadesu spielte mit dem ganzen Aufwand seiner meisterlichen Reife, und Mitropoulos begleitete auf ebenso vollendete Weise, so dass das Konzert, das man weiss Gott oft genug gehört hat, wie ein neues, mit dankbarer Freude akzeptiertes Werk erschien. Der Beifall entsprach der Vollendung der Darbietung.

NEUE ZÜRCHER ZEITUNG

Sechstes Symphoniekonzert

Rh. Die Ablösung des Schweizerischen Festspielorchesters durch die Wiener Philharmoniker leitete am 1. September die zweite Phase des Luzerner Festivals ein. Die speziellen Vorzüge des traditionsreichen Wiener Meisterorchesters — höchstgradige allgemeine Musikalität, besondere Wärme und Strahlkraft des Streicherkörpers, zwangloses, förmlich «gesprächswieses» Aufeinander-Eingespieltsein aller Mitglieder — traten schon am ersten, von Dimitri Mitropoulos geleiteten Abend imponierend in Erscheinung. Weniger vielleicht in der zu Beginn gespielten Ersten Sym-

NATIONAL ZEITUNG, BASEL

Borkh als Elektra: Kunst der Selbstaufgabe

Dimitri Mitropoulos dirigierte in der Wiener Staatsoper Richard Strauss

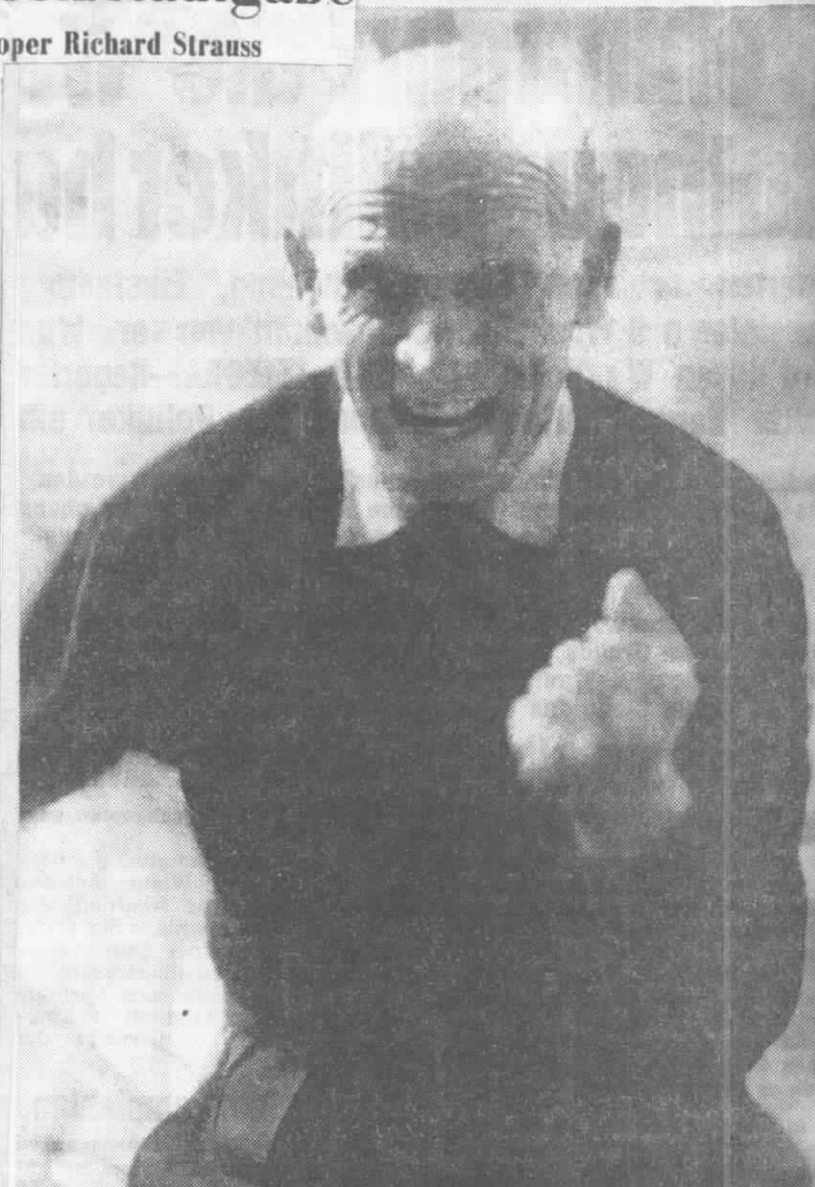
Als Donnerstag abend in der Wiener Staatsoper nach einer Aufführung von Richard Strauss' „Elektra“ der Vorhang fiel und ein Herr aus einer Loge im noch abgedunkelten Zuschauerraum, fast in den letzten Takt Musik hinein, laut „Bravo!“ schrie, war das mehr, als die etwas zu schnell einsetzende Begeisterung über einen grandiosen Opernabend. Es war die Reaktion auf knappe zwei Stunden höchster Spannung, erregendster Dramatik, packendster Theatralik. Wir alle hatten in den vorangegangenen knappen zwei Stunden angestrengt gearbeitet: Den Sängern auf der Bühne war die Erschöpfung ebenso anzumerken wie dem Dirigenten, und das Publikum sah sich von der Last einer gewaltigen menschlichen Tragödie befreit, die hier mit schonungsloser Aggressivität und Kühnheit über die Rampe getragen worden war.

Dimitri Mitropoulos hat dieses musikalische Schauspiel ungezügelter Leidenschaften zuletzt bei den Salzburger Festspielen dirigiert. Wenn diesmal die Wirkung der Musik noch stärker war, so mag das an den in Wien doch günstigeren akustischen Verhältnissen liegen, mehr aber noch an dem Fehlen eines szenischen Konzepts, wodurch die Persönlichkeiten auf der Bühne weitgehend auf ihre Aktivität angewiesen waren.

Die Art seiner Darstellung rückt auch Mitropoulos in diesen Kreis, denn das Orchester wird unter seinen suggestiv beschwörenden, beredten und seismographisch sensiblen Händen zum Mitspieler, zum Akteur, und der Orchesterraum ist ein Teil der Bühne, wo die Handlung mit rein akustischen, aber darum nicht weniger sinnfälligen Mitteln realisiert wird. Man kann die „Elektra“-Musik nicht kühner, erregender, differenzierter und spannender darstellen, als es diesmal geschah.

Man kann auch für die gigantische Hauptrolle dieser Tragödie kaum eine zweite Sängerin finden, die mit einer ähnlichen Konzentration das Unsagbare, Unausgesprochene und Unausprechliche sichtbar und spürbar macht. Inge Borkh steht auf der Bühne, mit blassem, eckigem Gesicht, ihre Arme fahren ekstatisch ins Leere, ihr Blick irrt über die Mauern des Königspalastes von Mykene, ihre Gebärde ist hoheitsvoll, aber ihre Körperhaltung ist die einer gehetzten Kreatur. Das ist nicht mehr Schauspielkunst, sondern Selbstaufgabe. Das ist nicht mehr Gesang, sondern musikalisch erhöhter Ausdruck von Stammeln, Schrei, Angst und Triumph. Es ist unbegreiflich, daß Inge Borkh nach einem solchen Abend das Opernhaus wie jeder andere darin beschäftigte Mensch durch den Bühnenausgang verläßt, daß sie nicht sich selbst erst wieder finden muß... Welch eine Künstlerin!

Neben ihr Hilde Zadek als wunderschön singende, aber darstellerisch zu wenig gebändigte und konzentrierte Chrysothemis, Jean Madeira als effektvolle Klytemnestra, Hermann Uhde als vorbildlich deklamierender, in Erscheinung und Spiel idealer, stimmlich gut profilierter Orest und Max Lorenz als Aegisth. Das Mägdchen- und Dienerschaftsensemble war mit Ausnahme von Christa Ludwig und Hilde Rösse-Majdan ungenügend, die „Regie“ zufällig, die Lautsprecherübertragung der von Lorenz produzierten Todeskriege in solchem Rahmen peinlich und eher komisch. Was aber alles den ungeheuren Eindruck des Abends und seine aufwühlende Wirkung nicht im mindesten beeinträchtigen konnte. Den begeisterten Schlussbeifall möchten wir nachträglich gerne auf die wieder heimgekehrten Philharmoniker ausdehnen. Karl Löbl



MIT GEWALTIGER ENERGIE ist Dimitri Mitropoulos in Wien am Werk. Der berühmte Chefdirigent der New-Yorker Philharmoniker leitet derzeit Schallplattenaufnahmen der „Elektra“ und hat die Richard-Strauss-Oper gestern abend erstmals auch in der Staatsoper dirigiert — in einer den Salzburger Aufführungen ziemlich ähnlichen Besetzung. (Eine Kritik der Wiener „Elektra“ finden Sie morgen auf dieser Seite.)

Seite 8

Wien, Freitag

Theater und Kunst

Die Premiere von gestern

„Madame Butterfly“ in der Staatsoper

Nach „Elektra“ und „Falstaff“, die Salzburger Festganz auch in das Haus am Ring brachten, begann die Staatsoper gestern abend mit einer Neuinszenierung von „Madame Butterfly“ nicht minder glanzvoll ihre Premieren in dieser Spielzeit. Unter dem Dirigentenstab von Dimitri Mitropoulos erhielt Puccinis Werk eine erstaunliche und überzeugende dramatische Akzentuierung. Die Bühne wurde von der menschlich und stimmlich prachtvollen Cho-Cho-San der Jurinac beherrscht, die nach ihrer großen Arie im zweiten Akt langen Beifall auf offener Bühne erntete. Als Linkerton war ihr Giuseppe Zampieri ein männlicher Partner.

Wir werden auf die Aufführung, die mit stürmischen Ovationen für die Jurinac und deren Partner sowie allen übrigen Mitwirkenden endete, noch ausführlich zurückkommen. p. r.

Theater und Kunst

Großer Opernabend: „Elektra“

Salzburger Besetzung in Wien — Mitropoulos dirigiert

„Elektra“ in der Felsenreitschule mit Inge Borkh in der Titelrolle, mit Jean Madeira als Klytemnestra und mit Dimitri Mitropoulos in der führenden Rolle des Dirigenten, gehörte zu den großen und unvergleichlichen Musik- und Theaterereignissen dieses Sommers. Mit jenen faszinierenden Persönlichkeiten steht die Aufführung des Werkes nun auch in der Chronik unserer Wiener Oper gleich groß und gleich denkwürdig. Kein superlativisches Wort der Bewunderung sagt zuviel oder läuft Gefahr, über das Ziel zu geraten.

Dimitri Mitropoulos: wenn er vor Bühne und Orchester steht und mit immer wacher, eindrucksvoller Gebärde den Strom der Musik ordnet und lenkt, erhält man nicht den Eindruck einer musikalisch technischen Funktion. Es ist kein Dirigieren, kein Kapellmeistern oder Taktschlagen. Es ist vielmehr, als ob sich durch ihn Idee und Wille der Komposition direkt und aus eigener, lebendiger Kraft mitteilten. Er ist den Sängern auf der Bühne und den Spielern im Orchesterraum nicht bloß Vermittler dessen, was in der Partitur steht, sondern er ist gleichsam die personalisierte Partitur selbst: so richtet er sich auf, so schlägt er sich auf, Seite um Seite, und auf direktem Wege üben die Notenzeichen mit allem, was sie sagen und ausdrücken wollen, ihren Zauber.

Inge Borkh: auch bei ihr denkt man nicht an singen, spielen, an die Ausübung einer künstlerischen Funktion. Sondern man steht im Banne einer schrankenlos und mit wahrhaft genialen Instinkt sich aufschließenden, sich entsetzenden Persönlichkeit. In der Gesamtheit, in der Einheitlichkeit der Leistung liegt ihre außerordentliche und einzigartige Bedeutung. Diese Bedeutung erscheint freilich wunderbar erhöht und gesteigert durch die Schönheit, die Sonorität, die meisterliche Führung der Stimme sowie durch die suggestivkraft der großen, stillvollen Tragödienengeste, zu der sich die stolze Haltung des Körpers, das tänzerische Schreiten und das von ästhetischem Empfinden regulierte Spiel der Arme und Hände formen. Alles Individuelle, das ihr Wesen ausmacht, objektiv

viert sich in der Figur: sie ist nicht Sängerin, nicht Darstellerin, sie ist die mädliche Elektra, wie sie Hofmannsthal und Strauss erschaut haben. Seit Maria Jeritz hat es auf der Wiener Opernbühne keine ähnlich starke und faszinierende Persönlichkeit mehr gegeben.

Jean Madeira: sie gibt eine kaum weniger faszinierende Klytemnestra. Aber sie gibt sie. Sie ist sie nicht. Sie gibt sie allerdings mit dem ganzen Raffinement, dessen eine originelle und hochbegabte Künstlerin nur fähig ist. Sie rast, tobt, klagt und zeigt dann wieder ergreifende und erschütternde Einblicke in die zerstörte Seele. Sie zwingt ihrem prächtigen Mezzosopran die kühnste Individualisierung ab und weiß bei aller Kraft und Rücksichtslosigkeit im Gesang und im schauspielerischen Ausdruck immer ästhetisches Maß zu halten.

Als das Werk neu war und das Publikum mit den vielen schwärmerischen Kantilenen verblüfft, die sich neben den schärfsten Charakterdissonanzen ausbreiten, sprach man — natürlich cum grano salis — von einer Belkanto-Oper. Mit Sängerinnen wie Inge Borkh und Jean Madeira ist es in Wahrheit Belkanto-Oper. Und ganz ohne Körnerchen Salz. Diesen Charakter der Komposition bestätigte auch Hilde Zadek als Chrysothemis, die dritte im Bunde, die sich mit sehr erfreulichen, klar gefaßten und wohlwollenden Gesangsbeiträgen beteiligte. Hermann Uhde verleiht dem Orest Männlichkeit und Resolute. Trotz der schönen und ergiebigen Stimme wirkt seine Darstellung merkwürdig trocken und unpersönlich. Ein Spezialfall ist Max Lorenz als Aegisth: das Persönliche wird typisch, und umgekehrt empfängt man das Typische seiner Darstellung als persönliche Kundgebung.

Unbeschreiblich schön spielte das Orchester, das sich in Gegenwart eines großen Dirigenten immer auch an der eigenen Kapazität erwärmt und vom eigenen Ingenium inspirieren läßt. Der Klang solcher Musizierens dringt über Zeit und Raum und klingt in die Ewigkeit. Kr.

Archaische Größe und dramatische Wucht

In der Staatsoper: Dimitri Mitropoulos dirigierte „Elektra“

Wir wußten es schon von Salzburg her: Wie Dimitri Mitropoulos Richard Strauss' „Elektra“ dirigierte, das ist ein Ereignis. In archaischer strenger Größe beginnt da die geballte Dramatik dieser vom Melos der Geigen bis zum grellen Schrei des großen Orchesters erregenden Partitur zu klingen. Das Unheil der bluttriefenden Tragödie, das Rachegrollen, Schluchzen und Leiden und die Ekstase Elektrins, die Bosheit und die Verderbtheit des Weibes Klytemnestras, vorgezeichnet durch die geniale Bildhaftigkeit der Partitur, wurden durch die ungeheure Plastik, die der Dirigent der Wiedergabe in thematischer-motivischer wie auch klanglicher Hinsicht aufzutragen vermag, wiederum in vollster Spannung und Stärke hör- und spürbar. Man mag diese Musik sinnhafter schwelgend und schillernd äußerlich bewegter gehört haben, aber man hört sie kaum je voll so intensiver, dem Thema und Geist des Werkes entsprechender dramatischer Wucht. Mitropoulos bewirkt dies sowohl durch seine phänomenale Kenntnis der Partitur wie durch seine zwingend aufbauende Hand und seine spontane Hingabe an das Werk.

Inge Borkhs Elektra stellt gleichsam an die klinische Studie einer durch ein Übermaß an

Leid seelisch zerrütteten Menschengestalt dar, deren Ekstase zwar mehr passiv, aber jedenfalls erschütternd ist. Ihre mimische Haltung an den tänzerischen Höhepunkten erscheint in dieser Art weniger als Ausdruck eines bis zur Selbstzerstörung gesteigerten barbarischen Rachekultes, sondern vielmehr als die Konsequenz eines geistigen Zustandes. So ist diese Elektra weniger theatralisch und mehr psychologisch wirksam, und die Stimme, die nicht triumphalen Glanz und triumphale Größe hat, aber mühelos durchhält, innerlich mitschwingt, verstärkt diesen sehr einheitlichen und sinnhaften Eindruck. Jean Madeiras prachtvoll gesungene Klytemnestra ist von der entsprechenden abschauerregenden Verderbtheit, wirkt aber wohl etwas zu sehr gespielt. Hilde Zadeks merkwürdig kühle, stimmlich freilich mit höchster Intelligenz aus reichen klangreichen Mitteln schöpfende Chrysothemis, der dramatisch prägnant akzentuierende Orest Hermann Uhdes, der mit vollster Charakteristik ausgestattete Aegisths Max Lorenz — jeder Ton ist da ein Beweis für den intensiven mitlebenden Opernsänger — und das übrige schon oft bewährte Ensemble, in dem mir nur Therese Stich-Randall als etwas blasse, doch gesanglich rein geformte fünfte Magd neu war, veranlassen sich zu einer Aufführung, die zwar in der Routine einer nicht immer glücklich verlaufenden Inszenierung verhaftet blieb, aber von der musikalischen Seite her, befeuert durch die vom Orchester ausströmende Kraft, einen repräsentativen und gehaltvollen Opernabend darstellte.

Der Aufführung wohnte in den zwei am zentralsten gelegenen Logen des ersten Ranges links König Paul von Griechenland samt Familie bei. Nach der Vorstellung, die die hohen Gäste sichtlich beeindruckte, erschien der Dirigent in der Loge, wo ihm das königliche Paar die Anerkennung für seine Leistung zum Ausdruck brachte und die Königin ihn zur Brustung führte, um ihm dem stürmisch applaudierenden Publikum zu zeigen. -t-k

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Seite 6

ÖSTERREICHISCHE NEUE TAGESZEITUNG

Elektra war eine blonde Königstochter

Wiedersehen mit Inge Borkh in der Staatsoper — Mitropoulos am Pult und in der Loge des griechischen Königspaars bejubelt — Ein Galaabend am Ring

Griechenland auf den Brettern, Griechenland am Dirigentenpult, Griechenland in der Festloge — das war der Umriss dieses glanzvollen Abends, mit dem die Staatsoper einen der wesentlichsten Eindrücke des heurigen Festivalsommers für sich gewann. Strauss' Hofmannsthal's „Elektra“ in der Felsenreitschule, die dafür wie geschaffen erschien, unter Dimitri Mitropoulos' großartiger Stabführung, mit Inge Borkh in der Titelrolle zählte zu den diesjährigen Höhepunkten in Salzburg. Nun sah man Inge Borkh wieder in ihrer großen Partie, und der starke Eindruck von Salzburg bestätigte, ja vertiefte sich noch. Eine große, schöne Stimme, die in der Tiefe und in der Mittellage dem gewaltigen Ansturm des symphonischen „Elektra“-Orchesters nicht immer standhalten kann, aber in der Höhe leuchtende Kraft und sieghaften Glanz besitzt, eine Elektra ohne den düsteren Nimbus der rasenden Mänade und dampfenden Blutrache, wie sie uns Christl Goltz verkörpert, vielmehr eine stilisierte, blonde und blauäugige Königstochter mit opheliahaften Zügen, vom heiligen Wahnsinn unwirtet, auch in ihren leidenschaftlichsten Ausbrüchen nie ungebärdigt und immer unverkennbar von königlichem Gebüt.

Auch ihre Gegenspielerin, Jean Madeira als luxuriöse, von Angst und Laster zerfressene Klytemnestra, hält bei der Wiederbegegnung, was sie in Salzburg versprochen hatte: mit ihrer temperamentvollen Individualität und ihrem reichen, souveränen Organ. Dagegen ist Hermann Uhde besser als sein statischer Orest. Man weiß, daß der bedeutende Bayreuther Klingstor, der hervorragende Kreen in Orffs „Antigone“ (Wiens Konzertpublikum kennt diesen vom letzten Internationalen Musikfest her) über echte Dämonie und starken seelischen Hintergrund verfügt. Sein Orest, stimmlich bestens fundiert und mit überraschend jüngerlichen Zügen, bleibt innerlich merkwürdig unbeteiligt und starr, was besonders in der großen erschütternden Erkennungsszene mit Elektra empfindlich stört. Hilde Zadeks leidenschaftliche, stimmlich etwas herbe Chrysothemis und Max Lorenz' scharf profilierter, ausgelagerter Aegist sind oft bewährt und oft gerührt.

Die Wiener Besetzung der Nebenrollen kann mit der Salzburger Aufstellung durchaus wetteifern: Dorothea Frass und Liselotte Maikl im Ge-

folge Klytemnestras, Majkut und Pantscheff als Dienerschaft, Bierbach als Pfleger Orests, Ilona Steingruber als Aufseherin, vor allem aber das vortreffliche Mägdchenteint — Judith Hellwig, Margarete Sjöstedt, Hilde Rösse-Majdan, Christa Ludwig und Stich-Randall —, das starke Akzente ins Spiel setzte.

Robert Kautskys düsteres, eindrucksvolles, aber szenisch unzweckmäßiges Bühnenbild, mit dem viel zu kleinen geratene Tor von Mykenä und dem immer noch fehlenden Fenster, das die Regie zwingt, die Überwältigung und Ermordung Aegists wider die ausdrückliche Vorschrift des Komponisten hinter die Szene zu verlegen, kann freilich die großartige Monumentalität

der Felsenreitschule nicht ersetzen. Adolf Rotts dichte Inszenierung „sitzt“ immer noch — bis auf die Schlussszene, wo das Gefolge während Elektras mädchenschem Tanz gelangweilt an der Mauer herumlehnt. Im schärfsten Kontrast zum musikalischen Geschehen, das Dimitri Mitropoulos zu erregenden Höhepunkten treibt. Er ist der ungekrönte König des Abends, der in den Wiener Philharmonikern über ein wahrhaft majestätisches Gefolge verfügt — so berichten wir seinerzeit aus Salzburg. Und das hat auch für diese Wiener Galavorstellung ihre Gültigkeit. Wieder begibt sich im Orchester, was die Szene nicht zeigt: wieder dampft hier das Blut, schwe-

len die Flüche, rast die Rache, vollendet sich im mädlichen Stampfen Elektras das blutige Mysterium. Wieder erweist sich Mitropoulos als ein ebenso überlegener wie elementarer Dirigent, der die Partitur völlig in sich hat, der jede Note, jeden Einsatz beherrscht, der das gewaltige expressionistische Richard-Strauss-Orchester zu entfesseln und zu bändigen, die Solisten aber klug zu führen und zu schonen weiß.

Der Jubel um ihn und Inge Borkh konzentrierte sich schließlich auf die Loge des griechischen Königspaars, in dessen Mitte Mitropoulos königliche Huldigungen des Wiener Publikums entgegennahm.

Alexander Witeschnik

DAS KLEINE VOLKSBLATT

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Griechendrama vor Griechenlands Königspaar

Die Staatsoper hatte wieder einen ihrer Galaabende: die erste Aufführung des Atridendramas „Elektra“ von Hofmannsthal und Richard Strauss unter der Stabführung des aus Griechenland stammenden Dirigenten Dimitri Mitropoulos im Haus auf dem Ring, in dem an diesem Abend das griechische Königspaar zu den Ehrengästen zählte, hatte den Rang eines künstlerischen und gesellschaftlichen Ereignisses. Für die außerordentliche künstlerische Bedeutung sorgte allein schon die überragende Leistung des Dirigenten: wie Mitropoulos dieser genialen Partitur mit unfehlbarem Zugriff alle Geheimnisse entreißt, wie er das Orchester zwingt, mit der geballten Wucht einer beängstigenden Tonsprache in den Ablauf des Geschehens einzugreifen, wie er aber trotzdem den Sängern den Vorrang einzuräumen weiß, und sich ihnen unterordnet, wenn Strauss ihnen den Vorrang zugewiesen hat, das ist fast ein Wunder an Einfühlungsvermögen und Selbstdisziplin. Die Philharmoniker erwiesen sich als ihres Dirigenten würdig, wuchsen über sich selbst hinaus, schufen ein Maß, das auch von ihnen selbst nicht immer erreicht wird.

Auf der Bühne beherrschte völlig selbstverständlich Inge Borkh, die Interpretin der

Titelrolle, jederzeit das Geschehen. Sie steigerte ihre Darstellung vom ersten gehetzten Auftreten zur entfesselten und doch stets gebändigten Ekstase der Schlussszene mit einem einzigen gewaltigen Bogen. Lichter flammten aus dieser verzehrenden, erschreckenden, erschütternden Gestaltung, die fast magische Gewalt besitzen. Inge Borkh am nächsten kam der unerbittlich starre Hermann Uhde, der den Orest gleichsam als unpersönliches Gesetz der Rache aufdeckt und dennoch menschlich ergreifend bleibt. Auch Jean Madeira fand als Klytemnestra völlig zur Höhe ihrer Aufgabe.

Etwas zu sehr im Unpersönlichen befangen blieb Hilde Zadeks Chrysothemis. Das Aufblühen eines mit allen Fasern dem Leben zugewandten Weibes wurde wohl angedeutet, konnte sich aber weder im Gesang, noch in der Charakterisierung überzeugend ausdrücken. Da war Max Lorenz' von Ahnungen gepeinigter Aegisth denn doch eine viel einprägsamere Persönlichkeit. Sehr gut waren auch die kleineren Rollen besetzt. Es gab stürmischen, begeisterten Beifall, der sich zum Jubel steigerte, als sich Mitropoulos in der Loge des griechischen Königspaars zeigte.

Ma.

amstag

Die Presse

21. Septe

Theater und Kunst

Die Neuentdeckung der „Butterfly“

Staatsoper: Mitropoulos am Pult, Sena Jurinac als Cho-Cho-San

Puccini weinte, als er auf einer kleinen Londoner Bühne ein Rührstück sah, das das tragische Liebesschicksal einer Japanerin behandelte, die von einem Weißen im Stich gelassen wurde. Es war ein kitschiges Rührstück, aber Puccinis Träne war echt. Aus ihr erwuchs die Musik zu „Madame Butterfly“, der das Rührstück zugrunde liegt, und die ursprüngliche Echtheit ist es, die ihr die immer wieder bezwingende Wirkung sichert. Freilich, Puccini, dieser Grandseigneur des Lebens wie der Kunst, faßte die Träne, die ihm das Schicksal der kleinen Geisha Cho-Cho-San entlockt hatte, mit einer aller Effekte kundigen Artistik ein. Diese Artistik hat man gelegentlich und zu Unrecht mit Kunstgewerbe, mit Konfektion verwechselt. Aber waren es nicht eher die Kunstgewerbetler, die Konfektionäre der Musik, die Puccini strapazierend und kopierend, die Sicht auf die Originalwerte verdeckten, die der Meister schuf? Könnerschaft, noch dazu eine von so großer innerer Noblesse wie die Puccinis, ist ja nicht unbedingt ein Gegensatz zu Kunst.

Die Wiederentdeckung der Kunst hinter der Könnerschaft, der echten Träne in der effektvolleren Fassung — das ist das Erlebnis der Neuinszenierung von Puccinis „Madame Butterfly“, die Donnerstag zum erstenmal über die Bretter der Staatsoper ging. „Tragödie einer Japanerin“ steht unter dem Titel, und von hier, von der Tragödie aus, setzt die großartige Interpretation ein, die Dimitri Mitropoulos vom Dirigentenpult der Musik gibt. Die Handlung selbst, die Heirat Cho-Cho-Sans, der kleinen Japanerin, die drei Jahre lang auf den geliebten Mann wartet, der diese Heirat niemals ernst genommen hat, ist in ihrer großflügeligen Anlage von schöner, eindringlicher Einfachheit. Das außerordentliche Seelendrama, das sich in ihr verbirgt, packend, atemberaubend herausgearbeitet zu haben, ist die Entdeckung des Dirigenten. Wenn im dritten Akt, beim letzten musikalischen Monolog Butterflies, ehe sie sich den Tod gibt, Mitropoulos gestreckten Leibes beide Hände in gewaltiger Spannung hochwirft, dann sieht man förmlich die Tragödie aus dem Orchester ungehört groß emporwachsen. Indem er die Musik von der dramatischen Seite nimmt, fällt von ihr wie durch einen Zauber, den nicht zuletzt auch unsere Philharmoniker bewirken, all das, was sich im Laufe von Jahrzehnten an Rührseligen, an billig Sentimentalem an ihr angesetzt hatte, fort. Blank steht sie da, in ihrer strömenden, wirbelnden, bald kraftvoll sich stauenden, bald zart versprühenden Bewegung. Und als Element des dramatischen Vorgangs erhalten auch die lyrischen Partien eine neue, unerwartete Leuchtkraft.

Das alles gilt gleicherweise und ohne Einschränkung für die Cho-Cho-San der Sena Jurinac. Ihre Darstellung ist die kongeniale Verwirklichung der Neuentdeckung des Werkes durch Mitropoulos auf der Bühne. Keinen Augenblick erliegt sie der Versuchung, aus der Exotik der Figur billige Effekte herauszuholen. Nichts mätzchenhaft „Zierliches“, nichts puppenhaft „Stüßliches“ ist an ihr. Das „Japanische“ ist nur ganz leicht, beiläufig, angedeutet. Dafür steht ein Mensch vor uns, unbedingt in seinem Glück und in seinem Schmerz. Aus heißem Herzen erwächst ein Schicksal, das vom ersten Augenblick an bannt, ergreift, erschüttert. Die Träne ist echt. Die große, glühende Menschlichkeit der Darstellung ist untrennbar von dem Gesang. Sie durchdringt die Stimme, die alle Hürden der Partitur, das Piano und das Fortissimo, das Zarte und das wild Dramatische mühelos nimmt; sie entfaltet sich in dieser Stimme zu einer verschwenderischen Fülle zauberhafter Blüten. Es ist eine Stimme, von echter Persönlichkeit erfüllt.

Ganz auf das innere, aufwühlende Seelendrama gestellt, läßt die Aufführung die übrigen Gestalten der Oper nur als kontrastierende Tonfarben am Rande erscheinen. Da ist vor allem die stimmlich hervorragende Suzuki Hilde Rösse-Majdans. Giuseppe Zampieris Linkerton ist von vornehmer, männlicher Zurückhaltung, Rolando Panerai, Konsul von sympathischer Degagiertheit, während Renato Ercolani aus der sonst nicht sehr auffälligen Figur des Goro ein feingeschmiedetes Kabinettstück macht. Josef Gliens Regie folgt einfühlsam den Intentionen des Dirigenten, die Bühnenbilder Tsuguhara Foujitas schaffen einen stimmungsvollen, wenn auch konventionellen Rahmen. Der stürmische Jubel, mit dem die Aufführung aufgenommen wurde, galt vor allem Sena Jurinac und Dimitri Mitropoulos, der uns ein als „abgedroschen“ geltendes Werk in seiner Bedeutung neu erkennen ließ.

R-9

Aus jedem Ton strömt Erleben

Neuinszenierung von Puccinis „Madame Butterfly“ in der Staatsoper

In der Monatsschau der Zeitschrift „Musica e musicisti“ erschien unter dem Datum des 17. Febr. 1904 ein Bericht über die Uraufführung der „Madame Butterfly“. Es heißt da unter anderem: „Grinsen, Brüllen, Blöken, Gelächter, Elefantengeschrei, Hohngehohe und Dacaporufe, die nur bezwecken sollten, die Zuschauer aufzureizen: das war alles in allem die Aufnahme, die die Besucher der Scala dem neuesten Werk Puccinis bereiteteten... Die Vorgänge im Zuschauerraum schienen ebenso gut organisiert zu sein wie die auf der Bühne.“ Nach diesem katastrophalen Mißerfolg der „Butterfly“, die damals in einer zweiaktigen Fassung gegeben wurde, zogen die Autoren im Einverständnis mit dem Verlagshaus das Werk zurück. Aber wenige Monate später, am 28. Mai, erlebte das Werk in der dreiteiligen Fassung und mit ein paar Retuschen in Brescia seine ruhmreiche Auferstehung und begann seinen Erfolgsweg durch die Welt.

mit dessen Details sich Puccini immer aufs neue mit seinem ausgeprägten dramatischen Empfinden kritisch auseinandersetzte — u. a. mußte eine Konsulatsszene fallen, „die geradezu der Ruin gewesen wäre“.

Man wirft der „Butterfly“ gerne vor, daß sie von jener billigen Rührseligkeit sei, die man Sentimentalität nennt. Man tut ihr damit unrecht, und es tun ihr auch die Künstler unrecht, die nicht mehr als diese Sentimentalität in ihr zu spüren vermögen. Denn das Schicksal dieser Frau, die eine momentane, gespielte Liebe und die oberflächlich geschlossene Scheinehe echt nimmt und an der Enttäuschung ihrer innigen Liebe zugrunde geht, das ist kein billiges rührseliges, sondern ein wahrhaft tragisches, menschlich erschütterndes Thema. Und in der Tat hebt auch die Musik Puccinis den Stoff und den Text weit über die Sentimentalität hinaus. Es ist ein schlechthin genialer Wurf, ein künstlerisch inspiriertes Spiel zauberhaft farbiger Harmonien, ein Überströmen von Melodien voll Innigkeit und Tragik. Manchmal ist es, als ob die Kirschblüten zu tanzen begännen. Dann wieder leuchtet und wölbt sich die italienische Kantilene, duftige Klänge mischen sich ins Spiel, die ebenso delikate wie dramatisch bereite Instrumentation fesselt, mit symphonischer Dichte und zugleich opernhafter Begleitart zeichnet das Orchester die aus der sonnigen Stille des Glückes hervorbrechenden leidvollen Gefühlsregungen der rührenden Cho-cho-san in ihrer kleinen Welt voll naivem Zauber.

Die Neuinszenierung in der Wiener Staatsoper bringt dieses Meisterwerk, das wir lange haben entbehren müssen, zu voller Geltung. Hiefür gab die Besetzung der Titelrolle mit Sena Jurinac und die musikalische Leitung Dimitri Mitropoulos' den Ausschlag. Sie bewirkten, daß diese Premiere einer jener großen Abende wurde, an deren Schluß man einige Zeit vor Ergriffenheit einfach nicht sprechen kann, sich erst sammeln muß, um wieder reif zu werden für den Alltag. Dimitri Mitropoulos dirigierte ein Seelendrama, in dem die Kräfte der Lyrik und der Musik dramatisch ineinandergriffen. Er dirigierte mit einer Passion ohnegleichen, mit einer Überlegenheit über das rein Materielle der Partitur. Präzision und Stillerfülltheit scheinen uns

nicht mehr überbietbar. Farbe und Melodie leuchten unter seiner Hand beglückend zart und transparent. Aus jedem Ton strömt Erleben. In der Sparsamkeit der Effektschöpfung liegt die Größe der Wirkung. Man kann ohne Übertreibung sagen, daß man in der Wiener Oper schon lange nicht ein so restlos intensives, mit Gefühlsspannung melodisch geladenes Musizieren gehört hat.

Auch an Sena Jurinac' Cho-cho-san ist nichts auf äußerliche Effekte und auf bloße Paradedarstellung hin angelegt. Diese Künstlerin erlebt diese Frauengestalt mit einem Höchstmaß an Echtheit und Innerlichkeit. Die blühend schöne, seelenvolle Stimme, von kostbarster Zartheit, doch den Raum mühelos füllend, rein bis in jeden Ton hinein, mit erlebter Kultur geführt, formt eine in jeder Hinsicht vollkommene, konsequent und differenziert aufgebaute Leistung, auf die sich zweieinhalb Stunden lang die Aufmerksamkeit konzentriert. Alle anderen Personen haben nur die fundamentale Nebenfunktion, Anlaß zum Vollzug eines Schicksals zu geben oder dieses mit Anstand zu begleiten. Hilde Rössel-Majdan als Suzuki tut dies mit schöner Stimme und intelligentem Spiel. Giuseppe Zampieri findet für die Darstellung des Leutnants Linkerton die rechte labile Haltung; seine Stimme hat wohl italienisches Timbre und klingt sympathisch, wirkt aber flach und melodisch nicht ausstrahlend. Daß Konsul Sharpless in der Handlung die denkbar ungünstigste Aufgabe hat, beeinflusste Rolando Panerai wohlklingenden, korrekt präsentierten Bariton spürbar retardierend; er konnte diesmal nicht so recht aus sich gehen und blieb auch in der stimmlichen Position etwas gezwungen. Renato Ercolani beweglicher Goro hat Charakterprofil, Endre Korehs Onkel Bonze mutete wegen seines unauslöschlichen Sprachakzents wie ein ungarischer Emigrant an; Hans Schweigers Fürst Yamadori, Dorothea Frass als Kate Linkerton, der kaiserliche Kommissär Harald Pröglhof und der Ständesbeamte Lubomir Pantcheffs sind verlässlich am Ort. Tsugouhara Foujita hat mit seinen Bühnenbildern ein Bild von zarter, allerdings deutlich europäisierter Realistik und mit den Kostümen echt japanisches Kolorit auf die Bühne gebracht. Josef Gielen betreute die Inszenierung mit geschmackvollem Verständnis für das Wesen der Handlung und Stimmung.

Sena Jurinac und Dimitri Mitropoulos standen im Mittelpunkt der langandauernden Publikumsovationen. Norbert Tschulik

Tragödie des Hasses und der Vernichtung

Gestern Abend in der Oper: „Elektra“ unter Mitropoulos, mit Inge Borkh in der Titelpartie

Das Atridendrama von Hofmannsthal und Richard Strauss, der Dirigent Dimitri Mitropoulos und in zwei Logen die griechische Königsfamilie: Griechenland war gestern in der Staatsoper zu Gast. Man hat sich gegenseitig Ehre gemacht, man wurde Zeuge eines großen künstlerischen und gesellschaftlichen Ereignisses.

Zu bedauern war nur, daß der szenische Rahmen, daß die Restbestände der alten Inszenierung dem Dirigenten und der Hauptdarstellerin nicht angemessen waren; sie hatten nichts miteinander zu tun. Die Wucht

des Grundkonzept der Darstellung ist unverändert geblieben. Dieses stufenweise Anwachsen eines Gefühls, an einem geradezu beängstigend ausdrucksvollen Körper bis zur Greifbarkeit sichtbar gemacht, dieses reale Fortschreiten auf das eine Ziel, bis das von den mächtigsten Impulsen des Hasses und der Liebe geschüttelte Geschöpf unter den Wogen des Triumphes über die befriedigte Rache zusammenbricht, ist in der fast grauenvollen Intensität seiner Darstellung bereits ein Kapitel Theatergeschichte. Geändert haben sich nur Ausmaß und Zahl der Bewegungen. Die Konzentration ist gewachsen, die Überzeugungskraft hat sich dadurch eher noch gesteigert. Die Stimme aber setzt weiterhin Höhepunkt auf Höhepunkt.

Im Gegensatz zu anderen Darstellern des Orest geht Hermann Uhde hoheitsvoll aufgerichtet, mit wie aus Stein gemeißeltem, unbewegtem Gesicht an die Ausführung seiner Tat. Er scheint noch nicht die furchtbare Gewissenslast zu spüren, die ihm der Mutttermord auferlegen wird. Eine durchaus mög-

liche, durch die eindrucksvolle Persönlichkeit auch absolut überzeugende Auffassung der Rolle.

Mit überraschender Sicherheit hat sich Jean Madeira in die Person der von Furien der Angst gepeinigten Klytämnestra gefunden. Als weiteres Plus hat sie dazu ihre immer gefestigter werdende, ausdrucksstarke und in satter Pracht strömende Stimme einzusetzen. Hilde Zadeks Sopran, durch Überanstrengung wohl auch etwas reduziert, scheint uns gerade für die Partie der Chrysothemis ein wenig zu kühl, oder, wenn man will, zu diszipliniert-instrumental zu sein. Mit Max Lorenz als Aegisth und dem Mägdlein Hilde Rössel-Majdan, Margareta Sjöstedt, Christa Ludwig, Judith Hellwig und Teresa Stich-Randall rundete sich ein Ensemble schöner Stimmen und stark profilierter Persönlichkeiten.

Der Jubel am Ende der Vorstellung war des Anlasses würdig. Dimitri Mitropoulos zeigte sich in der Loge des griechischen Herrscherpaares. Rudolf Weishappel



des Musizierens, zu der Mitropoulos das Orchester emporheischt, zerbricht fast an den kleinen Mäßen (Tor!) des Raumes; man mußte manchmal die Augen schließen, um den Visionen, die diese ungeheuren musikalischen Spannungen und Entladungen auslösten, nachhaken zu können. Welch ein Dirigent, dieser Grieche mit den nervösen Händen, welch ein Sinnemensch in seinem Klangfanatismus, und gleichzeitig: welch ein ordnender Geist! Man erfährt völlig bewußt eine stets gegenwärtige Organisation, und glaubt doch nur einen unmittelbaren Impuls, aufrüttelnde Spontanität zu spüren. Die Philharmoniker zeigten sich dieses Meisters würdig und spielten rauschhaft schön.

Und dazu Inge Borkh! Sie ist heute die Elektra der Opernbühne, sie war es schon von Anfang an. Der unterzeichnende Referent hat sie schon vor Jahren in der Inszenierung der Städtischen Oper in West-Berlin gesehen:

Musikfeste im Opern-Presscalltag 22-9

Zwei genußreiche Opernabende liegen hinter uns: „Falstaff“ unter Karajans Leitung und „Madame Butterfly“ mit Mitropoulos am Pult. „Falstaff“ mit den Kräften der Mailänder Scala war ja schon bei den Festspielen in Salzburg ein Gipfelpunkt. Man hatte freilich diesmal den Eindruck noch gesünderer Ursprünglichkeit, noch stärkerer Einstellung auf die tiefe innere Fröhlichkeit des begnadeten Werkes. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Giulietta Simonato, Tito Gobbi, Rolando Panerai und das köstliche Buffopaar Renato Ercolani-Mario Petri möchten wir hier besonders herausstreichen.

Dem großen Karajan-Abend folgte die von Dimitri Mitropoulos ausgedeutete „Madame Butterfly“. Dieses Werk, das so leicht einen süßlichen Beigeschmack erhält, wurde von Mitropoulos in vollkommen neuer Auffassung dargeboten. Er zeigte uns, daß es sich hier durchaus nicht um einen Schmachtstext, vielmehr um ein grandioses dramatisches Werk handelt. Er bewies dies im orchestralen Milieu, wobei ihm die Philharmoniker getreue Gefolgschaft leisteten, aber auch von der Bühne her, wo Sena Jurinac eine Cho-cho-san darstellte, die gesanglich und darstellerisch erschütterte. Neben dieser Meisterleistung konnte eigentlich nur Hilde Rössel-Majdan bestehen.

Samstag, 14. September 1957

NEUES O

Theater und Kunst

Faszinierende „Elektra“ in der Staatsoper

Inge Borkh und Dimitri Mitropoulos ließen die letzte „Elektra“-Vorstellung im hellsten Licht künstlerischer Begnadung und Vollkommenheit erstrahlen. Die Rolle der mykenischen Königstochter zählt nicht nur zufolge ihrer enormen stimmlichen Anforderungen zu den schwierigsten ihrer Art; auch im Darstellerischen birgt sie eine einzigartige Fülle divergierendster Gefühlsmomente, die von furienhaftem Haß bis zur ekstatischen Freude am Ethos eines furchtbaren Sühneopfers reichen. Die Partie senkt ihre Wurzeln tief in ethisches Erdenreich, man soll sich durch das Faktum des reinigenden Mutttermordes darin nicht irremachen lassen. In jeder Phase muß eine höchst vergeistigte Rollenauffassung spürbar bleiben, sogar der pantomimische Haßausbruch des ersten Auftritts darf niemals auf das emotionelle Niveau der keifenden Domestiken ringsum herabsinken. Eine Königstochter, eine von der Idee des sühnenden Opfers der gattenmordenden, buhlerischen Mutter, nicht aber eines bloß rächenden Mordes Besessene.

Inge Borkhs Verkörperung der Rolle erreichte ein derartiges Maß an Vollkommenheit, daß man schon mit Superlativen des stärksten Kalibers auffahren muß, um dieser singulären Leistung gerecht zu werden. Es ist nicht etwa die Vollkommenheit einer psychologisch bis ins Letzte ausgefeilten Interpretation, die primär gefangennimmt, vielmehr spürt man die ekstatische Urkraft echter Genialität, wird man Zeuge einer in die Bereiche des Metaphysischen weisenden Selbstbefreiung durch die Gewalt großer Musik. Ihre Mimik und Gestik haben den Ausdrucksreichtum, die Fülle subtilster Nuancen des Straußschen Riesenorchesters. Da bleibt keine Floskel des symphonischen Geflechts unberücksichtigt, scheint jeder geradezu tiefenpsychologische Zusammenhang der Musik mit den vorborgsten Triebkräften und Ursachen der Handlung mit intuitiver Gewalt, freilich auch mit letzter technischer Vollendung ins Optische übersetzt. Die Stimme, voll strahlender Brillanz und Durchschlagskraft in der Höhe, mit einem ganzen Arsenal von Ausdrucksregistern in der Mittel- und Klangvoll, dient ausschließlich der Intensivierung des Darstellerischen.

Dimitri Mitropoulos hat die Partitur nicht nur im Kopf, sondern auch in der Seele. Nur ein im tiefsten Innern Begeisterter, nur ein gläubiger Apostel der Musik vermag derartige Höhen und Tiefen zu durchmessen. Bei all seiner stupenden Virtuosität im rein Technischen ein schöpferisch begnadeter Interpret wie kaum ein zweiter unserer Zeit. Furtwänglers „Tristan“ ist gewiß ein authentischer Maßstab für vollkommene Interpretation. Nur an ihm wird Mitropoulos' „Elektra“ zu messen sein!

Hermann Uhde gab einen hoheitsvollen, sich ausschließlich als Vollstrecker einer heiligen Tat fühlenden Orest, vollkommen wie noch stets Jean Madeira als Klytämnestra. Hilde Zadeks Chrysothemis muß als bedeutsame und dem Niveau auch dieses Abends durchaus angemessene Leistung gewürdigt werden.

Der Beifall schlug alle Rekorde der letzten Zeit.

H-n

Fast eine Uraufführung: „Madame Butterfly“ als Musikdrama

Gestern Abend in der Staatsoper: Grandiose Puccini-Premiere mit e'ner erschütternden Cho-Cho-San

Die gestrige Premiere der Wiener Staatsoper war eine unverhoffte Uraufführung: Puccinis „Madame Butterfly“ wurde als Musikdrama entdeckt.

Man kennt das Stück. Die Tragödie einer Japanerin mit bittersüßem Nachgeschmack. Dutzende Primadonnen und Kapellmeister haben an ihm schon gesündigt, haben es verniedlicht, unter falschem Sentiment erstickt.

Man glaubt, das Stück zu kennen. Gestern Abend erkannte man es kaum wieder. Das war plötzlich das gewaltige, erschütternde Drama eines Menschen, der in seinem Glauben und seiner Liebe betrogen wurde, und uns dünkte es mehr ein Zufall, daß sich solches in einem japanischen Spielzeughaus und verspielten Kostümen begab. Denn ein Schicksal kennt keine Verkleidung.

Auf der Bühne steht Sena Jurinac. Kein Schmetterling, sondern eine Frau. Kein Trippeln, Lächeln und kokettes Zieren sind das Wesen dieser Cho-Cho-San. Wenn sie die Szene betritt, spürt man den Schatten der beginnenden Tragödie, der auf dieses junge Leben fällt.

Sena Jurinac lebt dieses Leben. Drei Akte lang. Sie trägt vor unseren Augen ihr Schicksal. Sie bietet keinen Augenblick ihre Trauer dem Publikum zur Konsumation an. Weil sie keinen Augenblick für dieses Publikum spielt, singt, denkt. Sie lebt in und vor ihren vier Wän-

den, und ihre Bewegungen, ihre Stimme, ihre bloße Existenz drücken so viel aus, sind so vielsagend, ergreifend, auf eine wunderbare Weise rührend (und eben doch nie rührselig), daß man zu zweifeln beginnt, ob das, was hier vor unseren indiskreten Blicken geschieht, noch Schauspielkunst, noch „Spiel“ ist.

Sena Jurinac ist kein Star. Ein Star würde seine gesanglichen Vorzüge pflegen. Die Jurinac drückt mit ihrem Gesang das aus, was sie bewegt. Er ist nicht von jener gleichmäßigen, glatten, gefälligen äußeren Schönheit, die so fatal

nach Konfektion klingt. Ihre Stimme besitzt die innere Schönheit, die keiner Fassade bedarf. Ich glaube nicht, daß seit der unvergesslichen Cebotari eine ähnlich erschütternde Butterfly auf der Opernbühne gestanden hat.

Vor der Bühne steht Dimitri Mitropoulos. Er ist der Mann, dem man diese „Uraufführung“ eigentlich zu verdanken hat. Denn er beweist, daß in der Musik dieser Puccini-Oper der ganze Expressionismus vorweggenommen ist, daß der dramatische Affekt stärker ist als die meist überbetonten Lyrismen. Seine „Butterfly“ ist eine hinreißend

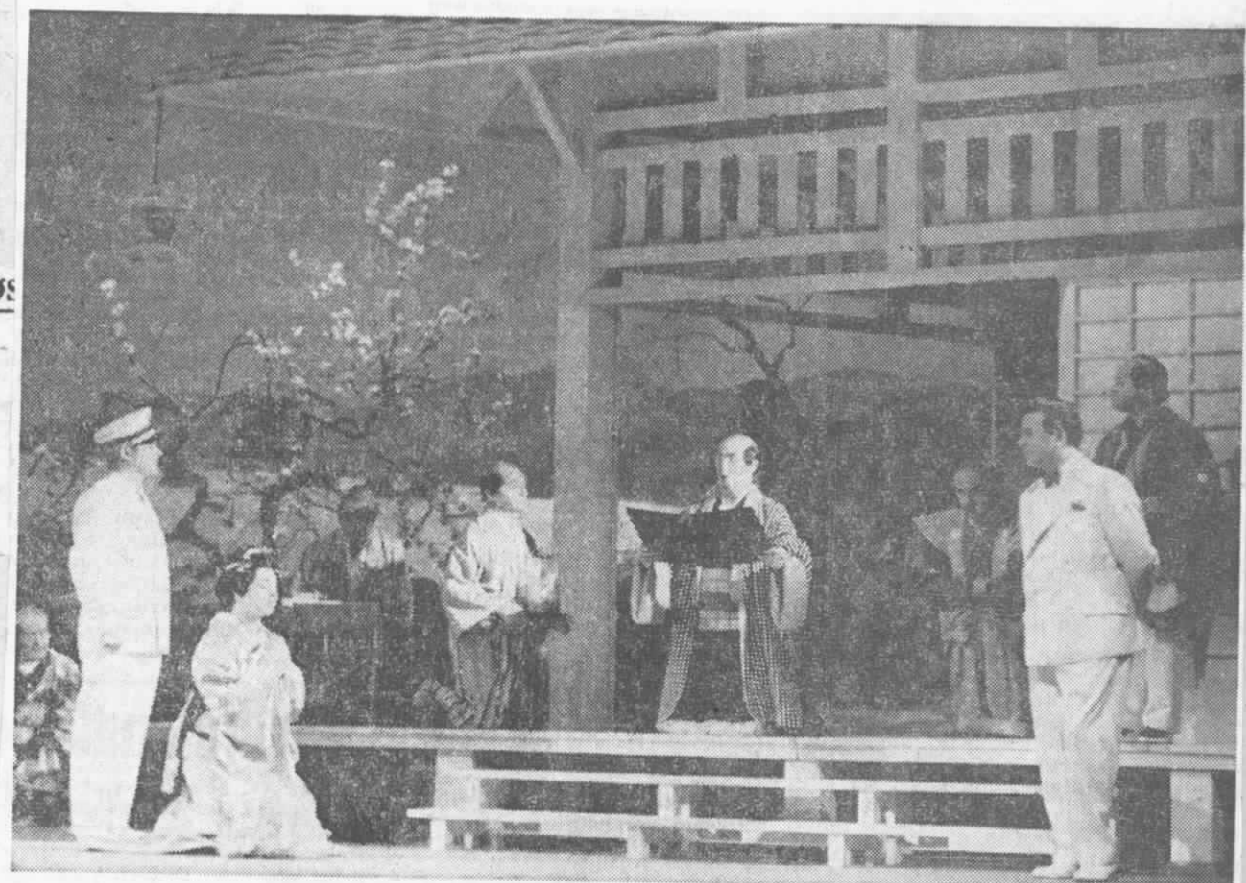
realisierte Kombination von symphonischem Tongemälde und differenzierter Begleitung. Mit dem ersten heftigen Einsatz ist die Spannung da. Sie läßt den ganzen Abend nicht mehr nach.

Dieser grandiose Dirigent, der vor dem Orchester — das diesmal wieder hinreißend schön, transparent und subtil gespielt hat — physische und psychische Schwerarbeit leistet, musiziert eigentlich, wenn man's genau nimmt, gar keine italienische Oper. Seine Technik des ständigen Ritardierens, sein Aufstauen der Musik, die er dann plötzlich wieder strömen läßt, ist eher unitalienisch. Aber er dient dem Werk, Eigenwillig, doch überzeugend. Und das Werk wächst unter seinen Händen, als wäre es der Schöpfer.

Rund um diese beiden faszinierenden Künstler begab sich eine gelungene Premiere, mit einer sehr fein ausgearbeiteten, psychologisch klugen Regie (Josef Gielen), in minuziös genauen, pedantischen Bühnenbildern (Tsugouhara Foujita) und mit Sängern aus Wien und Mailand, von denen Hilde Rössel-Majdan durch schönen Gesang, Renato Ercolani durch köstliche Charakterisierung und Rolando Panerai durch erfolgreich natürliches und sogar humorvolles Spiel besonders auffielen. Der Linkerton des Giuseppe Zampieri war wieder einmal bloß eine halbe Portion Tenor.

Der Abend hieß aber für mich Jurinac und Mitropoulos. Ihre Partner mögen verzeihen, wenn sie hier zu kurz gekommen sind.

Karl Löbl



JAPAN AUF DER WIENER OPERNBÜHNE: Tsugouhara Foujita entwarf die Bühnenbilder für die neue „Butterfly“-Inszenierung, die gestern Abend am Ring Premiere hatte. Unser Szenenbild (aus dem ersten Akt) vereint die Sänger der Hauptpartien, Sena Jurinac und die beiden Italiener Giuseppe Zampieri (links) und den Konsul Rolando Panerai (ganz rechts)

Theater und Kunst

Grandiose „Butterfly“ unter Mitropoulos

Man neigt in unseren Breitengraden nur zu gern dazu, das Opernphänomen Puccini zu unterschätzen. Man tut nicht gut daran. Gewiß: die anhaltende Beliebtheit seiner Musik beim breitesten Publikum macht den Meister des Verismo von vornherein verdächtig, und für den Rest sorgen dann jene sattem bekannten Repertoire-Aufführungen, in denen ein drittklassiger Kapellmeister von der psychologischen Feinmaschigkeit, vom impressionistischen Instrumentationszauber nur eine grobe Zwei-glatt-zwei-verkehrt-Reproduktion vermittelt und ansonsten im Vertrauen auf die Tragfähigkeit der Musik die Sänger im berausenden Melos schwebeln läßt. Man kann leider nicht sagen, daß die Wiener Staatsoper hierin normalerweise eine rühmliche Ausnahme machen würde. Eher im Gegenteil...

Gerade an der „Madame Butterfly“ — das liegt schon durch das Sujet nahe — wurde diesbezüglich wohl am schwersten und entscheidendsten gesündigt, und seit dem „Land des Lächelns“ vollends stand für viele Opernbesucher die ganze Japaneserie hart am Abgrund zum sentimental Kitsch. Aber ge-

bild und Regie ohnehin zu primitiven Hilfskräften degradiert werden...

Die „großen“, die „schweren“ Opern hat man oft und viel in blendenden Aufführungen unter bedeutendsten Dirigenten und mit Weltklassensängern erlebt und genossen, aber einen „kleinen“ und „leichten“ Puccini haben wir von einem Taktstockmagier, wie Dimitri Mitropoulos einer ist, bis dato kaum noch gedeutet gehört.

Hier freilich, gleich am Beginn der Kritik, sind ihr zugleich die unüberwindlichen Grenzen gesetzt. Mitropoulos hat an diesem Abend die Partitur neu erschaffen. Wie ein guter Komödiant (dieses Wort als höchster Ehrentitel) die Verse der Klassiker spricht, als müsse er die Sätze erst just in diesem Augenblick formulieren, mit eben dieser Spannung und Anspannung baute Mitropoulos die musikalischen Linien auf, gab ihnen jede nur denk- und fühlbare Dynamik, gliederte sie und formte sie zu einem bruchlosen, sich bis zur Schlußkatastrophe steigenden und überhöhen den Ganzen. Die Feinervigkeit der Musik vibrierte durch das Orchester und legte ihre Kraftfelder über die Szene, die starke Gefühlssphäre des Werkes wurde unaufdringlich aber um so eindringlicher lebendig, und in einem verblüffenden Ausgleich von exakter Straffheit und weitausholendem Rubato zerriß das falsche Mittelmaßbild Puccinis, und einzig sichtbar blieb der Seelenmusiker, der tief und scharf blickende Seelendramatiker. Kurz: ein Theaterkomponist von Gottes Gnaden. Das so schwer zu realisierende Parlando verschmolz mit den süßen melodischen Bögen zur Einheit, jeder Takt atmete, war durchglüht und durchpulst, war ergreifend in seiner Wahrheit und faszinierend in seiner absoluten Schönheit. Wie wird man nun die „Madame Butterfly“ jemals wieder von einem unintelligenten, unmusikalischen und in Sachen der musikalischen Psychologie ahnungslosen Dutzendkapellmeister dirigiert anhören können?

Das zweite — und vielleicht sogar noch überwältigendere — Erlebnis dieses Abends hieß Sena Jurinac. Die Intensität, mit der diese begnadete Künstlerin eine Standardrolle der Opernliteratur völlig neu gestaltet, die Ursprünglichkeit und Echtheit, mit der sie ein tragisches Frauenschicksal nachlebt (und bis in das kleinste Schweben zwischen Hoffnung und Verzweiflung hinein nachlebt), ist nicht nur von erschütternder Wirkung; mit dieser Leistung steht Sena Jurinac unseres Dafürhaltens endgültig in der vordersten Reihe eines vollkommenen, nur noch wie ein Geschenk dankbar anzunehmenden Künstlertums. Ihr Spiel meidet jede Übertreibung, jedes pseudojapanische neckische Getue, jeden schroffen Theaterausdruck. Vom ersten Auftritt an umgibt sie eine Sphäre fraulicher Herzlichkeit; vom ersten Ton an, den sie noch hinter der Bühne singt, ist man von ihrer Stimme gefangen. Diese Stimme strahlt in allen Registern und bis in die exponierten Spitzentöne unendliche Wärme aus, sie ist von makelloser Klarheit und Reinheit, von strahlendem Glanz. Der minutenlange Applaus im zweiten Akt war tatsächlich Spontanreaktion auf ein nahezu Unfassbares, das hier Wirklichkeit geworden war. Die innere Übereinstimmung zwischen Mitropoulos und Sena Jurinac reichte bis in kleinste, beglückende Details. So war es ein vollendetes Musizieren, das sich an der vollendeten szenischen Interpretation entzündete und umgekehrt.

Dem gemischten Ensemble muß man zu nächst ein Pauschallob aussprechen, denn

die Aufführung stand in ihrer Gesamtheit auf sehr hohem Niveau. Im einzelnen freilich schneidet etwa unsere Hilde Rössel-Majdan (Suzuki) weitaus besser ab als der Italiener Giuseppe Zampieri, dessen Stimmvolumen einerseits für den Linkerton nicht immer ausreicht, dessen Musikalität andererseits zu wünschen übrigläßt. Verfrühte Einsätze und rhythmische Schlamperien, die den Spannungscharakter von Mitropoulos' Rubati zu zerstören drohten, empfand man als höchst peinlich. Aber ausschauen tut er gut. Vorzüglich hingegen war — wie schon im „Falstaff“ — wieder Rolando Panerai (Sharpless), dessen dezentem und intelligentem Spiel wir gesondert anführen wollen; scharf zeichnete Renato Ercolani die Charge des Goro. Endre Koréh und Harald Pröglhöf füllten kleine Rollen verblüffend aus.

Über die Regie Josef Glielens sprachen wir schon eingangs. Sie war um Charakterisierung sehr — und mit Erfolg — bemüht, arbeitete im ersten Akt den Kontrast zwischen der Oberflächlichkeit des amerikanischen Marineleutnants und der Gefühlstiefe der kleinen Cho-cho-san ebenso zwingend heraus wie später den Gegensatz, in den sich Butterfly zur Gesellschaft stellt, und an dem sie zerbricht. Aber der vom Theaterregisseur Glielens übernommene Hang zur Episode beeinträchtigte die positive Wirkung einige Male sehr; in der Oper muß das Spiel nun einmal aus der Musik herauswachsen. Wenn die amerikanische Hymne im Orchester erklingt, dann muß man auf der Bühne darauf Rücksicht nehmen (und den Sänger wenigstens die Hände aus den Hosentaschen nehmen lassen); wenn ein Tenor vom Feuer in den Augen seiner Geliebten singt, dann darf er nicht am anderen Ende der Szenerie stehen. Daß Butterflys Kind zum Harakiri seiner Mutter das Stenbanner schwingt, darf auch nicht als geschmackvoll ausgelegt werden.

Die Philharmoniker spielten konzentriert; bei Mitropoulos geht es nicht anders. Kleine Unbenheiten sind kaum wert, erwähnt zu werden. Das Publikum folgte ebenso konzentriert und feierte Sena Jurinac und Mitropoulos mit aller Überschwenglichkeit.

Nochmals: wie wird man in Hinkunft den landesüblichen Durchschnitts-Puccini ertragen können?

MUSIK • THEATER • I

„Madame Butterfly“ unter Mitropoulos Diesmal wars keine Operette

Über die Oper „Madame Butterfly“ wurde im Verlauf der Zeiten manch Abfälliges gesagt: Das Libretto drücke allzu bewußt auf die Tränendrüse, die Musik sei stark auf äußeren Effekt bedacht, und dem ganzen Werk hafte etwas von einer tragischen Operette an. Aber immer wieder läßt man sich von Puccinis grandiosem Melodienreichtum, der raffinierten Instrumentation und der unerreichten Stimmungsmalerei betören, um schließlich von Liebe und Leid der Titelheldin gerührt zu werden.

Voraussetzung für ein solches Gefühl, das man sich selbst fast widerstrebend eingesteht, ist allerdings eine so geniale Gestaltung, wie sie diesmal Dimitri Mitropoulos gelang, der alles Süßliche und Sentimentale zu echter Gefühlsstärke umzuwandeln wußte. Sein großartiges musikalisches Konzept ging bei Sena Jurinac völlig auf. Obwohl schon zu Beginn mehr leidenschaftlich liebende Frau als hingebungs-volles Mädchen, hielt ihre Chocho-san dem Vergleich mit berühmten Vorgängerinnen restlos stand und zeigte ihre herrliche Stimme im vollen Glanz ihrer Schönheit. Für die berühmte Arie im zweiten Akt erhielt die Künstlerin verdienten Sonderapplaus. Als Suzuki sekundierte

ihr vortrefflich Hilde Rössel-Majdan mit ihrem klangvollen Alt.

In Giuseppe Zampieri von der Mailänder Scala stand leider kein ebenbürtiger Partner zur Verfügung. Seinem etwas flachen Tenor fehlt es an Kraft und Wohlklang.

Sehr nobel in Gesang und Spiel war Rolando Panerai als Konsul. Renato Ercolani lieferte als Goro einen weiteren Beweis seiner Charakterisierungskunst.

Josef Glielens Regie wies wohl manche einfallsreiche neue Nuance auf; im letzten Bild das Söhnchen Chochosans — wenn auch mit verbundenen Augen — bei den Todes-zuckungen seiner Mutter dabei sein zu lassen, ist aber eine böse Entgleisung.

Für die Gestaltung und die schöne Farbwirkung der Bühnenbilder ist Tsugouhara Foujita sicher der zuständige Fachmann. Der Fehler liegt demgemäß nur an uns, wenn wir den Eindruck hatten, die Szenerie nach unseren Vorstellungen schon typischer japanisch gesehen zu haben.

Der Jubel des Publikums konzentrierte sich besonders und mit Recht auf Mitropoulos und Sena Jurinac, die immer wieder vor die Rampe gerufen wurden. RB.

Bild Telegramm
20-9-57

SIK • FILM • LITERATUR • BILDENDE KUNST

Die Butterfly der Cho-Cho-Sena Jurinac

Bei der gestrigen Puccini-Premiere der Staatsoper wurde Japan in eigener und anderer Regie erledigt

Einen Bericht über den gestrigen Premierenabend mit Puccinis „Madame Butterfly“ nicht mit einem Hymnus auf Sena Jurinac zu beginnen, hieße, dem Leser ungehörig lange vorenthalten, wer und was an dieser Premiere zu allererst sehens- und hörens-wert war. Auch läßt sich der wenigstens bei der ersten Premiere der neuen Saison wünschenswerte positive Beginn der Kritik kaum anders be-werkstelligen als eben durch ein Hinweisen und Sichfesthalten auf und an jene künstlerische Leistung, die den nicht zu kurzen Abend erträglich und über weite Strecken sogar zum Erlebnis machte. Man hätte andernfalls gleich mit Mitropoulos beginnen müssen, der doch aus gute Ende des Referats soll...

Sena Jurinac also ist die kleine Frau Schmetterling, obwohl sie gar nicht klein ist, gar nicht sonderlich „zierlich, nippefigurlich“ wirkt und sich in Maske und Gebärden allen übertriebenen Fernostrealismus erspart. Aber sie verkörpert das Wesen der Figur, gestaltet die Rolle und lebt ein Frauenschicksal,

sein Gesang ist angenehm, leicht und klang-voll, allerdings nicht genug kräftig und zu wenig sinnlich, um im Kampf gegen ein solides Orchesterfortissimo oder im Wettstreit mit der Glutstimme der von ihm Angebeteten bestehen zu können. Überraschend Zampieris Abhängigkeit vom Dirigentenstab, über-raschender noch, daß er dennoch dem Or-chester gerne vorausleiste, unpatriotischerweise sogar in der Nationalhymne, und dann mehr-mals im großen Liebesduett vor der Braut-nacht. O diese Ungeduld...

Die beiden anderen Scala-Gäste füllten ihre Plätze besser aus: Rolando Panerai war ein nobler Konsul, sympathisch, nicht ohne Humor und mit sonorem Timbre, und der Goro von Renato Ercolani eine runde Charakterstudie ohne Überzeichnungen. Diskret gespielt auch die prachtvoll gesungene Su-zuki (Hilde Rössel-Majdan), geboten auf-trumpfend Koren als Onkel Bonze, unzu-länglich Hans Schweiger als Yamadori, des-sen einziger Mangel (laut Textbuch) doch

jitta), wird's wohl genau stimmen. Aber Authentizität bedeutet nicht Schönheit, und das Theater ist kein Museum. Ein Bühnen-bildner namens Sepp Hintermoser hätte das nie so mildegetreu und genau „hingekriegt“ (was gar nicht wichtig ist), aber vielleicht stimmungs- und poetischer, geschmack-voller. Was schon was wert gewesen wäre. Das gleiche gilt von den Kostümen: die besten von ihnen sind die, die kaum auffallen. Im übrigen zeigen Butterflys Verwandte, daß sie die Saisonschlussverkäufe in Nagasaki zu schätzen wissen.

Josef Glielens Regie geht über die Konven-tion kaum hinaus, und das ist gut so, wenn man sich der wenigen „Ausgänge“ erinnert; der eine besondere Einfall präsentiert sich in der Position Linkertons im Liebesduett, als er bei der Stelle „Mädchen, in deinen Augen liegt ein Zauber...“ eine Zimmerlänge von Cho Cho Sena entfernt steht und — zum Dirigenten schaut; der zweite läßt im Schluß-bild Butterflys Kind neben der sterbenden Mama mit verbundenen Augen ein Papier-fähnchen mit dem Sternbanner schwenken. Hätte Puccini das gewußt — er hätte den „Wozzeck“-Schluß vorweggeschrieben...

Apropos Puccini! Mitropoulos dirigiert die zu Unrecht vielgeschmähte Musik, und sein Wirken ist jeden Takt lang eine einzige Ehrenrettung der Partitur, die er impressionistisch leuchten läßt, rhythmisch schau-mariert und mit heftigen dramatischen Rubati durchwirkt, solcherart aller Sentimentalität aus dem Wege gehend. Das Orchester spielt unter seiner Führung mit berückender Kultur des Tones, und die Sänger haben genau so viel Zeit und Raum zum Atmen, als es der Poesie und der Lebendigkeit der Puccini-Phrase entspricht.

Sena Jurinac und Dimitri Mitropoulos wurden stürmisch gefeiert. Herbert Schneider

SCHENKER LANGER



das auf der Bühne zu formen immer-währenden Traum aller dramatischen Sänge-rinnen bleiben wird. Der Verzicht auf „lokale Echtheit“ im Gebaren, die allen im Parkett anwesenden Japanern doch nur ein höfliches Lächeln entlocken kann, wird durch den Gewinn von durchaus nicht lokal be-grenzter Intensität und Ausdruckskraft mehr als wettgemacht.

Stärke und Nuancenreichtum im Gefühl aber hat diese Butterfly, die weniger ein trippelndes Teehausmädchen als eine schöne, die Unschuld ihres Herzens voll überblühende Frau ist, nicht nur im Spiel, in den hold-seligen Augenblicken nach dem Trauungsakt, in den Stunden des Wartens und Hoffens und in den Sekunden, in der sie von der Härte des Schicksals zu jener Größe im Handeln bestimmt wird, die ihr die Stille des Landes gebietet; auch der Gesang von Sena Jurinac strömt über vor Gefühl und Wärme, und er strömt auch so, in allen Lagen vom schwebenden Piano bis zum leuchtend strahlenden Fortissimo Wohlklang und Glanz verbreitend. Der Schmelz dieser Stimme, ihr Timbre, ist wie geschaffen für Puccini und seine empfin-dungssatte Kantilene. Wie man solche Bogen singt, hat Frau Jurinac gestern eindrucksvoll demonstriert: dem Wiener Publikum und ihren Kollegen von der Scala...

Wenn die Butterfly eine der rührendsten und poesievollsten Frauengestalten der Opern-literatur ist, so ist der Linkerton eine der lächerlichsten und erbärmlichsten, — am meisten natürlich durch die peinliche Realistik in der Zeichnung eines erst treu- und gewissenlosen und dann noch weinerlichen Dutzendmannes. Doch: im ersten Bild ist er für Butterfly der Liebesgott in Person, und Giuseppe Zampieri macht, als solcher in weißer Uniform und mit gewelltem Haar keine üble Figur. Sein Spiel beschränkt sich freilich auf eine etwas leger Habtacht-stellung, wie sie amerikanischen Seeoffizieren offenbar für die Freizeit anempfohlen wird,

„Butterfly“ als zeitloses Frauendrama

Es kann wohl keinen Zweifel geben: von den Opern Puccinis ist das Stück „Der kleine Schmetterling“ — besser bekannt unter dem Titel „Madame Butterfly“ — am stärksten vom Wandel der Zeiten entwertet worden. Die Massenheiraten von Japanerinnen mit amerikanischen Soldaten nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg lassen die Geschichte von Cho-cho-san, die einst vor langer Zeit von einem allzu flotten Marineoffizier der Ver-einigten Staaten nur aus Jux geheiratet wor-den ist und zuletzt sogar noch ihr Kind pflichtschuldigen „abzuliefern“ hatte, ledig-lich als einen Alptraum aus Anno „Gib's denn das?“ erscheinen. Es ist daher verständ-lich, daß bei der Neuinszenierung des Werkes in der Staatsoper nur mit knappen An-deutungen das Milieu, das ohnedies aus den Bühnenbildern spricht, im Spiel umrissen wird. Darüber aber erhebt sich die Gewalt eines zeitlosen Frauendramas von Liebe und Verlassenwerden.

Das ist — der eine Vorzug der Neuinszenie-rung. Der andere ergibt sich aus der Be-trauung von Sena Jurinac mit der Dar-stellung der Titelrolle des Werkes. War man bei manchen Aufführungen von „Madame Butterfly“ geneigt gewesen, zu bedauern, daß sich das Stück eigentlich als ein ge-waltiger Monolog präsentiert, in dem sich Cho-cho-san mit ihrem Schicksal ausein-ander setzt, so erschien einem das diesmal als ungeheurer Vorzug, denn die grandiose Leistung von Sena Jurinac war das Ereignis des Abends. Stimme und Spiel dieser faszi-nierenden Künstlerin halfen in gleicher Weise zu einer Charakterzeichnung, wie man sie auf Opernbühnen nur ganz selten vor-gelebt bekommt. Von ihren Partnern mehr oder weniger im Stich gelassen — wie un-beholfen und unsicher war doch Giuseppe Zampieri (Leutnant Linkerton) in der Liebes-szene! —, formte sie aus sich und für sich allein eine Bühnengestalt von erregender Unmittelbarkeit.

Zur Seite stand ihr dabei freilich die mäch-tige Persönlichkeit des Dirigenten Dimitri Mitropoulos, der aus Puccinis Partitur ebenfalls ein Drama herauszulesen verstand und daher ganz folgerichtig alles ornamen-tierende Beiwerk den dramatischen Akzenten unterordnete. Wie Sena Jurinac und Dimitri Mitropoulos miteinander, einer auf den anderen liebevoll und verständnisvoll ein-

gehend, musizierten, das gehört auf ein gold-umrandetes Blatt der Operngeschichte.

Um so unverständlicher war es, daß Giuseppe Zampieri sich nicht einmal einen Augenblick lang in eine ähnliche Be-ziehung zu Mitropoulos setzen konnte. Zam-pieri begnügte sich mit vagen Andeutungen, verpatzte mit seiner Hölzernheit das be-rühmte Duett am Schluß des ersten Aktes, und sang zudem mit ungleichmäßiger Ton-gebung so ungenau, daß zwischen ihm und dem exakten Orchester wiederholt unüber-hörbare Unstimmigkeiten auftraten. Besser hielt sich Rolando Panerai, der dem Kon-sul wenigstens sichere Konturen gab und sein ergiebiges, wenn auch nicht sehr wert-volles Organ geschmackvoll einsetzte. Der dritte Italiener im heimischen Ensemble, Renato Ercolani, verdrang nichts, formte den zwielichtigen Heiratsvermittler mit kon-ventionellen Mitteln. Jedenfalls überholte Hilde Rössel-Majdan mit einer vorzüglichen Darstellung der Suzuki die Gäste aus dem Süden. Die kleineren Aufgaben wurden von Endre Koréh, Harald Pröglhöf, Dorothea Frass und Hans Schweiger sauber gelöst.

Die Regie Josef Glielens unterstützte Sena Jurinac im Bemühen, aus der vergilb-ten Geschichte ein zeitloses Drama zu machen, nach Kräften; in der Bewegung der Massenszenen und in der Führung der Ge-genspieler der Madame Butterfly hielt Glielens an bewährten Vorbildern fest: es entstand gerade dadurch ein sehr günstiger Gesamt-eindruck. Auch die Bühnenbilder und Kostüme Tsugouhara Foujitas boten nichts Außergewöhnliches; den schönsten Kimono im Hause trug jedenfalls die aparte Japanerin im Opernparkett.

Hoch zu rühmen ist das Spiel der Phil-harmoniker, die sich dem Dirigenten Mitropoulos willig unterordneten und trotz-dem ihre Selbständigkeit keinen Takt lang aufgaben. Die Einstudierung des Chores, die Roberto Benaglio besorgte, schien von anderen Ansichten ausgegangen zu sein, als Mitropoulos dann bei der Vorstellung durch-setzte: erst nach einigen Schwankungen konnte der rechte Kontakt gefunden werden. Der begeisterte Beifall des Publikums galt vor allem Sena Jurinac und Dimitri Mitropoulos, die mit Applaus überschüttet wurden. Ma.

Intensives Bekenntnis, geniale Schlichtheit

Bedeutsamer Philharmonischer Saisonbeginn unter Mitropoulos — Krips brachte Haydns „Schöpfung“ zur Aufführung

Zwei selten zu hörende Werke bildeten das Programm des 1. Abonnementskonzerts 1957/58 der Wiener Philharmoniker. Man dürfte kaum fehlgehen in der Annahme, daß für die Auswahl in erster Linie Dimitri Mitropoulos, der Dirigent des Konzerts, ausschlaggebend war. Es handelte sich dabei um Mendelssohn-Bartholdys sogenannte „Reformations-Symphonie“ und um die 6. Symphonie Gustav Mahlers. Wie das Programmheft besagt, wurde Mendelssohns Komposition in diesen Konzerten seit 1879 nicht mehr gespielt. Freilich darf man nicht vergessen, daß die offizielle Nummerierung des Werkes als 5. Symphonie irreführend ist, da es entstehungsmaßig vor den bekanntesten Vertretern des Genres, der „Italienischen“ und der „Schottischen“, liegt. Dazu kommt noch sein Charakter als Gelegenheitswerk für die Dreihundert-Jahr-Feier der „Augsburgischen Konfession“. Mit Rücksicht auf diesen Zweck besitzt es einen ernsten, herben Charakter, in dem sich die luzide, zarte und verbindliche Klanglichkeit des Meisters nicht so ursprünglich aussprechen kann. Überrascht mochte mancher Hörer gewesen sein, hier schon dem ihm aus Wagners „Parsifal“ vertrauten Gralsmotiv zu begegnen. Außerdem findet der programmatische Choral der Protestanten „Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott“ reiche kontrapunktische Durchführung. Das Bekenntnishafte des Werkes wurde vom Dirigenten sehr zwingend herausgearbeitet.

Auch Mahlers „Sechste“ ist wesentlich stiefmütterlicher behandelt als ihre Geschwister, vor allem die, bei denen Gesang entsprechenden Anteil besitzt. Sie ist in ihrer Gefühls- und Stimmungsthematik vielleicht am meisten begrenzt, was jedoch die Intensität ihrer Persönlichkeitsaussage in keiner Weise berührt. Sie ist echter Mahler, was sich in der Vorliebe für Marschrhythmen, im Hang zum Naturidyll wie zur biedermalerischen Sphäre vor allem aber in der Zwiespältigkeit des innig gläubigen und gleich wieder grotesk parodistischen Ausdrucks ausdrückt. Mitropoulos, dem jede Note des zu interpretierenden Werkes in Fleisch und Blut übergegangen ist, erzielte eine ideale Verknüpfung der Partitur, da er das Orchester voll in seinen Bann zu ziehen wußte.

Zu Beginn des Konzerts gedachte der Dirigent in bewegten Worten des verewigten Meisters Jean Sibelius und forderte das Publikum und die Musiker auf, sich zu einer Schweigeminute der Trauer von den Sitzen zu erheben.

PRESSE 24-9-57

Ein Raritätenprogramm: Mendelssohns „Fünfte“ und Mahlers „Sechste“. Nicht ohne Grund wird das Mendelssohn-Opus selten gespielt. Er hat stärkere Symphonien geschrieben als jene programmatische, der Reformation gewidmet. Der Mangel liegt indessen nicht im Programm des formal leicht gefügten Werkes, als vielmehr in der Tatsache, daß die musikalische Substanz zu gering ist und in ihrer Auswertung den Eindruck einer gewissen Dürftigkeit nicht vermeiden kann.

Beim ebenfalls selten gespielten Mahler-Opus scheint es eher umgekehrt zu sein. Hier überwiegen Gedanken und Empfindungen, Erlebniswerte und Ausdruckswert die Form nicht selten beträchtlich. Eine Riesenform, die sicher mit Bedacht gewählt wurde — Mahler komponierte immer mit bedeutender Zielsetzung. Aber seine „Sechste“ ist wohl ein Bekenntniswerk geblieben, in dem die überzeugende Objektivierung der unerlässlich

Mahler leitete und läutete die Saison ein

Philharmonischer Auftakt mit Mendelssohn und Mahler unter Mitropoulos

subjektiven Substanz nicht jene Stufe erreicht hat, die dem nicht analytisch präparierten Hörer einen Zugang zum Werk zu erschließen vermag. Die respekt- und liebevolle Einführung, die Prof. Ratz der Symphonie des von ihm so verehrten Meisters gegeben hat, kann diesen Eindruck eher verstärken.

Genug Interessantes schenkt das Riesenopus dennoch: Zeugnis von Mahlers aufwühlender Intensität und seiner qualvollen Zerrissenheit, Beweise für die Kühnheit seines musikalischen Denkens und Handelns als einer Brücke zur Atonalität und die Demonstration der Beherrschung eines riesigen Orchesterapparates, in dem der Naivität des intellektuellen entsprechend, inmitten der individuellsten Aussage die Kuglocken läuten.

Mitropoulos und die Philharmoniker, die sich an der Wiedergabe zu einer großartigen Leistung emporsteigerten, wurden lange umjubelt.

Herbert Schneider

Mahlers Sechste unter Mitropoulos

Ein gewaltiges, ein niederdrückend gewaltiges Werk, nicht nur durch seine enorme Ausdehnung und durch die großräumige Konzeption der musikalischen und außermusikalischen Gedanken, sondern vor allem durch die leidenschaftliche Selbstanalyse, durch den massierten Zweifel und die ausweglos erscheinende Weltsicht, die hier musikalisch verdichtet wurde; durch die Summe pessimistischer Ahnungen und Erkenntnisse, die dem künstlerischen Schöpfungsakt stärker als in anderen Mahler-Symphonien ihr tragisches Siegel einprägen.

Bei diesem Mahler ist Musik wirklich alles andere denn „klingende Form“ als Selbstzweck. Hier bricht sich eine erst heute voll zu verstehende Angst vor dem Kommenden Bahn, hier wird inmitten jener satten und äußerlich zufriedenen Welt von damals mit unheimlicher, unerbittlicher Klarheit der Todeskeim des totalen Niederbruchs sichtbar, hier steht die zwingende Not des sehenden Künstlers, die Dringlichkeit des Anrufes weit über den Forderungen der absolut musikalischen Gesetzmäßigkeit.

Diese erschütternde Gedanklichkeit verleiht der Sechsten Symphonie Mahlers auch in unserer Zeit ihre eindringliche Gültigkeit. Mehr noch: diese außermusikalische Ideenkraft allein gibt ihr die überragende Wertbeständigkeit. Denn bei aller Verehrung und Bewunderung für einen der österreichischen Meister, für einen, der stärker und intensiver als andere die Seele Österreichs in seinen Werken einfing, und der in dieser Seele tatsächlich wirksam wurde, bei aller Liebe zu einer Musik, die ein ganzes, ein großes und schönes Kapitel der österreichischen Musik und der weltweiten Musikgeschichte zugleich in sich begreift: die direkte Form, in die

Mahler sein Programm kleidet, droht heute die Tiefe seiner geistigen Aussage zu verdunkeln; der Drang, das Einfachste mit komplizierten Komplexen zu überladen, schwächt die Intensität des Erlebnisses ab. Es mag an uns liegen — und diese Zeilen wollen als durchaus subjektive Stellungnahme zu einer durchaus subjektiven Musik gewertet sein —, aber wir sind nach den Weltkatastrophen, die hinter uns liegen, vielleicht auch hellhöriger geworden für den künstlerischen Appell, man muß nicht mehr mit immerwährender Wiederholung und wie über einen Ozean hinweg die Anklage gegen uns schreiben — wir hören sie auch aus dem knapp formulierten einfachen Satz heraus, wir verstehen sie auch ohne den ständigen, pausenlosen Einsatz des vollen Orchesters und ohne jene Instrumentations-Übersteigerungen, deren weit fortgeschrittene Antiquiertheit man geradezu befremdet konstatiert.

Mahler fordert vom Hörer ein konzessionsloses Mitgehen. Seine großen Symphonien sind zu sehr persönliche Offenbarung, zu sehr in sich geschlossenes Seelendrama, zu sehr ein Ringen um letzte Dinge, als daß irgend eine andere Musik mit ihnen in ein Konzertprogramm zusammengepackt werden dürfte. So bleibt denn auch über die eingangs gespielte Reformations-Symphonie von Mendelssohn nur zu sagen, daß sie virtuos und mächtig interpretiert wurde, aber man mußte sie vergessen, wollte man bei Mahler noch miterleben.

Mitropoulos hat mit der Pioniertat dieses Programms und dieser Werkgestaltung die philharmonische Konvention durchbrochen. Seine Leistung kann nur mit ehrfürchtigem Verstummen vor der nachschöpferischen Größe bedankt werden.

DIE FÜRCH

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Die ersten Opernpremieren und Konzerte

Nach einer Aufführung von Puccinis „Madame Butterfly“ im Jahre 1935 schrieb der Münchener Musikkritiker Alexander Berrsch, daß für ihn der Gegensatz zwischen dem Schicksal eines wahllos gültigen und demütigen Geschöpfes und der eingänglichen Unterhaltung durch eine süße, mondäne und geistreiche Musik zur körperlichen Qual geworden sei. Daß dem so sein konnte, lag nicht an Puccinis Musik, deren eigentliche Domäne die große Trauer ist und deren echt japanische Sparsamkeit und romanische Formsicherheit man nicht mit Mondänität verwechseln darf, sondern es mag Schuld des Dirigenten und einer konventionell trippelnden und sich zierlich gebärdenden Hauptdarstellerin gewesen sein. Die in der Staatsoper neuinszenierte „Butterfly“ unter der Leitung von Dimitri Mitropoulos war von anderer Art. Wir erlebten ein ereignisreiches menschliches Drama, dessen in jedem Ton und in jeder Bewegung überzeugende Heldin Sena Jurinac hieß. Und wir hörten eine hochdramatische, originelle Musik, deren Harmonien und opalisierende Klänge faszinieren und ergreifen. Wie Mitropoulos es fertigbringt, symphonisch zu musizieren und gleichzeitig geradezu ideal zu begleiten — das ist sein Geheimnis. Die natürliche Kraft und Anmut der Führung inspirierte die Philharmoniker zu einer ganz erstklassigen Leistung, deren Fixierung auf Schallplatten man sich dringend wünschte. Angenehm ruhig sang und agierte neben Sena Jurinac, deren Stimme immer mehr der großen Cebotari gleicht, Hilde Rössel-Majdan als Zuzuki, Giuseppe Zampieri gab einen sojnen, angenehm singenden Linkerton, Rolando Panerai einen sympathischen Konsul und Renato Ercolani einen grotesken, aber nicht übertriebenen Goro. Mit der Regie Josef Gielen konnte man — bis auf eine massive Geschmacklosigkeit am Ende des letzten Bildes — einverstanden sein. (Da dieser Faupax in der nächsten Aufführung vermutlich nicht mehr gemacht werden wird, wollen wir nicht darauf insistieren.) Die Bühnenbilder und die Kostüme des Japaners Tsuguhara Fougita sind realistischer und nüchterner, als wir's gewohnt sind. Sie passen irgendwie zu dem Ernst, mit dem der Dirigent und die Hauptdarstellerin die „Butterfly“ gestalteten.

Als Wiener Premiere kann auch die von Herbert von Karajan dirigierte und inszenierte Salzburger „Falstaff“-Aufführung gelten, die an dieser Stelle bereits besprochen wurde. (In den Hauptrollen: Tito Gobbi, Rolando Panerai, Luigi Alva, Tomaso Spataro, Renato Ercolani, Mario Petri, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Anna Moffo, Anna Maria Canali und Giulietta Simonato.)

Wie zu erwarten war, wiederholte sich in der Wiener Staatsoper der große Erfolg, den Dimitri Mitropoulos in Salzburg mit der Aufführung der „Elektra“ hatte. Neben Inge Borkh stand diesmal Hilde Zadek als Klytänneustra auf der Bühne. Hermann Uhde sang den Orest, Max Lorenz den Agast.

Als Don Carlos debütierte der junge Tscheche Ivo Zidek, Hermann Uhde, von der konzertanten Aufführung der Orffschen „Antigone“ in bester Erinnerung, war auch in Verdis „Don Carlos“ ein eindrucksvoller König. Martha Mödl sang die Eboli, Hilde Zadek die Elisabeth von Valois und Edmond Hurschel den Großinquisitor in der von Borislaw Klobucar geleiteten Aufführung.

In den letzten von Herbert von Karajan dirigierte „Carmen“-Vorstellungen fiel die gereifte und moderierte Gestaltung der Titelpartie durch Jean Madeira ebenso auf wie die glänzend gesungene und mit feinen Zügen ausgestattete Micela durch Hilde Güden. Zwei Gäste von der Pariser Großen Oper hatten einige Mühe, sich neben diesen beiden Damen zu behaupten.

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Als Auftakt zu dem Jubiläumsjahr, in welchem der Singverein seinen 100jährigen Bestand feiert, veranstaltete die Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde eine Aufführung von Haydns „Schöpfung“. 1798 wurde das Werk im Palais Schwarzenberg uraufgeführt, und schon zwei Jahre später begann sein Triumphzug durch die ganze Welt mit Aufführungen in Prag, Pest, Berlin, Leipzig, London und Paris. Lieber dieses vollkommene Werk, das an mehreren Orten den Anlaß zur Gründung leistungsfähiger Chorvereinigungen gab, sagt ihr Schöpfer: „Erst als ich zur Hälfte in meiner Komposition vorgerückt war, merkte ich, daß sie geraten wäre.“ Beides: die große Bescheidenheit und die Allgemeinverständlichkeit, wünscht man manchem zeitgenössischen Komponisten. — Unter der Leitung von Joseph Krips hat der große Chor des Singvereins sauber und klarschön gesungen und in den Lobgesängen, welche die drei Teile beschließen, gemeinsam mit dem Orchester der Wiener Symphoniker wahrhaft mitreißend musiziert. Imgard Seefried, Julius Patzak, Gottlob Frick und Walter Berry waren die Solisten dieser festlichen Aufführung.

Die Wiener Philharmoniker eröffneten ihren heurigen Abonnement-Zyklus mit einem interessanten Konzert unter Dimitri Mitropoulos. Mendelssohns „Reformations-Symphonie“ wurde in diesen Konzerten 1879 (unter Hans Richter) zum letztenmal gespielt. Zufall oder Absicht? Man kann sich jedenfalls gut vorstellen, daß begeisterte Wagner-Dirigenten ihrem Idol nicht gern in den Stammbaum schauen lassen wollen. Denn die Choralweise, welche die Einleitung des 1. Satzes beschließt, ist zwar als „Dresdener Amen-Formel“ damals allgemein bekannt gewesen, aber die ganze Art, wie sie von Mendelssohn instrumentiert und

nerstag

Die Presse

26. Septe

Eine ideale Mahler-Aufführung

Dimitri Mitropoulos dirigierte die Sechste Symphonie

Für das erste Konzert der Saison hatte Dimitri Mitropoulos ein sehr interessantes Programm gewählt, weitab von den herkömmlichen Pfaden. Er eröffnete mit der Fünften Symphonie in D-dur von Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, der „Reformations-Symphonie“, die der 21jährige Komponist für die 300-Jahr-Feier der confessio Augustana geschrieben hat. Das Werk ist hierzulande — im Gegensatz zu den anglikanischen Ländern — fast obsolet geworden, geht doch nach den Archivaufzeichnungen seine letzte Aufführung in den Konzerten der Wiener Philharmoniker bis auf Hans Richter (1879) zurück! Auch Felix Weingartner, der die deutschen Romantiker mit Vorliebe aufs Programm setzte, führte das Werk nicht auf. Eine derartige Zurücksetzung hat immer ihre guten Gründe, hier liegen sie wohl zum Teil in den Schwächen, die fast jeder Gelegenheitsarbeit, auch der größten Meister, anhaften, vielleicht aber auch in der trockenen herben Grundstimmung, die nur an wenigen Stellen eine echt Mendelssohnische Melodienfreude aufkommen läßt. Als Themen werden Choräle, Volksweisen und Kampflieder der Reformationszeit verwendet, unter welchen auch die Dresdener Amen-Formel erklingt, in der wir freudig-erstaut das Gralsmotiv aus Wagners Parsifal wiedererkennen. So sehr die Aufführung seltener klassischer Werke zu begrüßen ist, so können wir doch kaum glauben, daß sich diese Symphonie in unseren Programmen behaupten wird.

Ein gewaltiger Sprung führte von den schlichten Weisen der Reformations-Symphonie zu der düster-schaurigen Ideenwelt Gustav Mahlers in seiner Sechsten Symphonie in a-moll, der von ihm selbst als „Tragische“ bezeichneten. Der Sprung ist so

groß, daß man sich fragen muß, ob er dem Hörer zugemutet werden kann und ob es überhaupt tunlich erscheint, ein derartig gigantisches Werk mit einer anderen Symphonie zu koppeln. Dem Orchester unter der genialen Führung seines Dirigenten ist der Sprung jedenfalls gelungen, es kam eine in jeder Hinsicht ideale Aufführung zustande, an die man noch lange zurückdenken wird.

So und nicht anders muß eine Mahler-Aufführung beschaffen sein! Gerade die Sechste Symphonie stellt in ihrem ständigen Wechsel der Stimmungen, in ihren gewaltigen Steigerungen und Übersteigerungen, in ihrer komplizierten Thematik und stellenweise überladenen Instrumentation unerhörte Anforderungen an die Musiker und auch an die Hörer. Dabei bewundern wir den gewaltigen Aufbau, wie er besonders im letzten Satz hervortritt, aber auch die überreichen Details dieses sichtlich mit dem Herzblut einer gequälten Kreatur geschriebenen Werkes.

Eine einmalige Leistung bot Dimitri Mitropoulos, der sich wieder ganz mit dem Werke identifizierte und so den entscheidenden Schritt vom ausführenden zum nachschaffenden Künstler tat, wie er nur ganz wenigen vergönnt ist. Das Orchester ließ sich willig führen und erstrahlte in erlesenem Glanze. Am Schluß gab es begeisterte Ovationen für die Ausführenden und den großen Dirigenten. Das seltene Programm wurde damit offensichtlich vom Wiener Publikum sanktioniert.

Zu Beginn des Konzertes gedachte der Dirigent des verstorbenen Komponisten Jean Sibelius.

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—ld.

Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott

Mitropoulos eröffnete das Philharmonische Jahr mit Mendelssohn und Mahler

Der Beginn der neuen philharmonischen Saison stand im Zeichen Dimitri Mitropoulos! Seine starke Persönlichkeit, sein leidenschaftlicher Dirigentenstolz, sein großartiges Vermögen, sich immer völlig einzusetzen und mit dem gebotenen Werk distanzlos zu identifizieren, ohne dabei etwas von seiner präzisen Disposition preiszugeben, verliehen diesem Auftakt das außergewöhnliche Gepräge. Und wie immer, ging Mitropoulos auch in der Programmwahl eigene und besondere Wege. Mendelssohns „Reformations-Symphonie“ — seine „Fünfte“ — ist in Wien beinahe so etwas wie eine Ausgrabung. Das philharmonische Publikum jedenfalls hörte sie zum letztenmal beinahe vor 80 Jahren unter Hans Richter. Mendelssohn schuf das Werk, das den Sieg Luthers verherrlicht, mit 21 Jahren anlässlich des 300-Jahr-Jubiläums der „Augsburger Konfession“. Er zeigt darin völlig überraschend eine Herbit wie in keinem seiner sonstigen Werke. Nur der Andantesatz, in dem Mendelssohn den Geigen eines seiner Lieder ohne Worte zu rezitieren gibt, läßt die typische noble Glätte erkennen. Der feierliche Finalsatz dagegen rankt sich nämlich um den lutherischen Choral „Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott“ und der erste Satz verarbeitet neben mittelalterlichen Volksweisen merkwürdig genug jene weihewolle „Dresdener-Amen-Formel“,

die man in der ganzen Welt für einen Originalanfall Wagners (Gralsmotiv aus „Parsifal“) hält. Die Philharmoniker statten das Werk mit verschwenderischem Glanz aus, Mitropoulos aber gab ihm mehr an Wucht, Kraft und Größe, als in der Partitur steckt. Es war eine anregende Bekanntschaft.

Nach der Pause erklang — nach Jahren wieder — Gustav Mahlers Sechste Symphonie, die der Komponist selbst seine „Tragische“ genannt hat und die wie Brahms' „Pörschercher“ am lieblichen Wörther See entstanden ist, freilich ohne dessen seelenlösende Landschaft widerzuspiegeln. Aus innerem Zwiespalt und seelischer Zerrissenheit ringt hier ein fanatischer Suchender mit großzügig dimensionierten, vielfach auch überdimensionierten und allzu realistischen Mitteln (Herdenglockengeläute als Symbol letzter Verlassenheit, Hammerschläge als Sinnbild des vernichtenden Schicksals) um Erkenntnis und Erlösung. Das herrliche Marchthema des ersten Satzes, die skurrile Diabolistik des Scherzos zegen das scharfe Profil des Pessimisten, das weitläufige Anandend, das läßt echte Ethos erkennen. Das Riesensfinale, das allein eine halbe Stunde dauert, übertrifft beinahe noch die Ausnahme der Brucknerschen Finali, freilich ohne zu deren Gehalt, Tiefe und erlösende Glaubenskraft zu finden.

Mitropoulos, der in seinem phänome-

nalen Gedächtnis offenbar jeden Einzelatz und jede Note verzeichnet hat, wo er sozusagen nur umzublaten braucht, gab dem intellektuellen Charakter des Werkes einen Zug von elementarer Monumentalität und legte damit eine imponierende Kraftprobe ab. Die Philharmoniker, die im Gegensatz zu den Hörern ohne Ermüdung durchhielten, leisteten Bewunderungswertes. Der Beifall für sie und Mitropoulos war groß.

Alexander Witeschnik

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Music

Philharmonic
Opens Season

By GEORGE ALAN SMITH.

Forty-eight hours after its cancelled opening concert, the New York Philharmonic succeeded in getting its 116th season under way. Carnegie Hall was filled to standing room capacity for the belated opening, the Philharmonic's 5694th concert, and the dim satisfaction for season subscribers, whom the musician's strike had deprived of officiating at the scheduled Thursday evening premiere, was to exchange tickets for later on.

Conducting for the first time since having received the National Music Council's conductor award for service to American music during the 1956-57 season, Dimitri Mitropoulos led his hastily rehearsed ensemble in Vivaldi's Concerto in G minor, Sibelius' "The Death of Melisande," interpolated into the program in memory of the Finnish composer who died Sept. 20, and, prior to the intermission, Lilian Kallir made her Philharmonic debut in Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 17, G major, K. 453. The evening closed with Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6, B minor, Opus 74.

Among other things, unsettling labor troubles, with resulting uncertainty as to when and if rehearsals would start, prevented this concert from being a completely satisfactory sendoff for the new season. By the time the "Pathétique" was reached, however, Mitropoulos and the orchestra evinced considerable enthusiasm, giving pizzicato brightness and vibrancy to the symphony's 3rd movement, and showing sympathetic comprehension of Tchaikovsky's troubled autobiography of a soul.

The amiable Vivaldi concerto was perfunctorily performed. All hands apparently felt that the season and the program had to start somewhere and that this would serve nicely as a warming-up exercise. Who could disagree if the piece were accomplished with all its technical pleasantness?

Sibelius' death unquestionably informed the memorial tribute taken from "Pelleas and Melisande," for in its ghost-like chords conductor and orchestra seemed to share a common sentiment.

Lilian Kallir's debut received a more tepid audience response than her burgeoning talent may deserve. She has an affectionate if rather restrained attack, shows devotion to the

task and notes on the conductor. In many ways this G major, No. 17, is a model Mozartian concerto, and a graceful effort was made to catch its fanciful effervescence. Altogether a nice fusion with the orchestra was achieved and a tremulous urgency colored the closing allegro.

From OCT 14 1957

TIMES
New York, N. Y.Philharmonic's 116th
Season Under Way

THE NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC, Andre Tchaikowsky, pianist, Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor, at Carnegie Hall.

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

AFTER the storm there was music. Having composed their differences with the management, the members of the New York Philharmonic were at their places this week-end in Carnegie Hall. In its first 115 years the orchestra had not failed to fill an opening date. If the start of the 116th has been delayed a couple of days, it may indicate only that the first century was not the hardest.

There was music yesterday at Carnegie Hall, but not much of it was serene. The major work was Vaughan Williams' Fourth symphony, which rages, keens and meditates morosely on a world not of the composer's making. And Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3, which served to introduce Andre Tchaikowsky, Polish-born pianist, to New York, has its share of the harshness and steeliness of our age.

Dimitri Mitropoulos, who with Leonard Bernstein has the title of principal conductor of the orchestra, has a special comprehension of the Vaughan Williams symphony. He directed a performance that conveyed its power and grimness of mood. There was sharpness of detail in the jagged outlines of this music, and even in the more subdued, inward passages there was an unwavering sense of tension.

The orchestra dug into the music with intensity. One would guess that in the limited time, Mr. Mitropoulos had at his disposal last week for preparation he lavished particular care on this symphony. He evidently has a feeling of identification with it and communicates it through the orchestra to the audience.

This is a disturbing, but always moving, symphony. The composer once commented that he was not sure he liked the work; undoubtedly he was being self-deprecatory out of a habit of modesty. For the question is not of liking in the conventional meaning.

In the mid-Thirties, when he wrote this music, Vaughan Williams had no desire to be amiable. He wrote as he felt, darkly and gravely. Mr. Mitropoulos reminded us that this music is not only a document of our time but also stirring and rewarding. The performance was a tribute to the composer, who was 85 Saturday.

The 22-year-old Mr. Tchaikowsky, whose personal history of wartime suffering is filled with the horrors of Nazi brutality, has carved out a name for himself abroad. He has been a winner of prizes in the big international competitions, and his arrival here has been preceded by glowing reports.

The Prokofiev Concerto, unfortunately, provides no measure of a pianist's taste, range and perception. There is no doubt that this personable young musician has a gift for the piano. His fingers are agile and secure, and he controls tone and dynamics resourcefully. He can play with deftness and with the force of a whirlwind. He gave a lively account of the Prokofiev concerto. One can be sure that he is at home in this music. For the rest we must wait and see.

The Vivaldi G minor Concerto, which began the program, had a routine performance. Let us assume that there was not time to get everything into the best of shape. As for the noisy Marche Slav by Tchaikowsky (no relation to the pianist), it may have been useful to establish that the orchestra was back and ready to give its all.

It is good to have the Philharmonic back, New York would not be the same without it.

From OCT 13 1957
TIMES
New York, N. Y.SEASON IS OPENED
AT PHILHARMONIC

Concert Given After Delay
Caused by Union Talks—
Lilian Kallir Is Soloist

The New York Philharmonic gave the opening concert of its 116th season last night in Carnegie Hall under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos. Disagreements with the musicians' union had forced the orchestra to cancel the first two concerts of the season scheduled for last Thursday and Friday.

Disputes over minimum wage rates, retirement pensions and the length of the 1957-58 and 1958-59 seasons had dragged out through last spring and summer.

Last Monday, the day rehearsals for the current season normally would have begun, negotiations deadlocked and were broken off. Resumed on Wednesday, they ended in agreement on Thursday, but not in time to rehearse for the scheduled Thursday night opening.

Last night's program was played substantially as it had been announced. It included the first appearance with the Philharmonic of the American pianist Lilian Kallir. Miss Kallir played Mozart's Concerto in G, K. 453. The other major work of the evening was Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony, the "Pathétique."

In honor of the Finnish composer Jean Sibelius, who died Sept. 20, the orchestra played "The Death of Melisande," from Sibelius' incidental music to Maeterlinck's play, "Pelleas et Melisande." A Concerto in G minor by Antonio Vivaldi completed the program.



The New York Times (by Sam Falk) and Bakalar-Corno

TUNE-UP TIME FOR A NEW SEASON—The New York Philharmonic, above, is scheduled to open its 116th season on Thursday evening at Carnegie Hall. In inset, conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos and André Tchaikowsky, Polish pianist, who will make his New York debut on the opening program, playing Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3.

rom OCT 14 1957
HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.Philharmonic Opens
Season Two Days Late

By Francis D. Perkins
The New York Philharmonic began its 116th season belatedly with Saturday night's and yesterday afternoon's concerts under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos in Carnegie Hall. A wage dispute had put off the opening originally scheduled last Thursday night.

A Concerto in G minor by Antonio Vivaldi, prefaced on Saturday by "The Star Spangled Banner," opened both programs, which had young pianists as soloists. Lilian Kallir, who is already well known here, played Mozart's Concerto in G major (K. 453) on Saturday; yesterday's performance of Prokofiev's Third Concerto, in C major, brought the New York debut of André Tchaikowsky, a talented twenty-two year old Polish musician. This would have been his third appearance here if the Philharmonic musicians and management had come to terms earlier about a new contract.

Saturday's program also paid tribute to the memory of Jean Sibelius with the Death of Melisande from his incidental music for "Pelleas et Melisande," and closed with Peter Tchaikovsky's Pathetic Symphony. Yesterday Mr. Mitropoulos and his musicians honored Ralph Vaughan Williams' eighty-fifth birthday with his Fourth Symphony, and completed the week end with Tchaikovsky's "Slavic March."

In most of Saturday's concert and all of yesterday's, the orchestra seemed in good form. In the earlier performance of the delectable concerto which Vivaldi composed apparently for the Dresden Orchestra there was a certain tentativeness in the interpretation of the first movement; its repetition had more color and savor and on both occasions the short largo had a marked poetic appeal.

The musical tribute to Sibelius was played with appropriate expressive warmth. It took a few pages of the score before the orchestra entered the essential spirit of the Pathetic Symphony, but as a whole its performance was vivid, emotionally revealing but not emotionally over-extravagant.

André Tchaikowsky revealed himself as an expert and sensitive young artist in the Prokofiev concerto. His technique was fluent and unerring, a medium of interpretation rather

than of display; the tone was constantly and engagingly musical, with pervasive lucidity, and he showed noteworthy understanding of fine points of volume and mood. Some of the most outspoken measures of the work might have received a more positive statement, but his abstinence from pounding was welcome.

Miss Kallir also played with technical proficiency, interpretative taste and dynamic judiciousness, showing an understanding of the style and much, if not all, of its expressive resources; the intimate humor of the finale fared particularly well. A slight cloudiness of medium in the joint performance early in the work suggested limited rehearsal time; clarity prevailed later.

The orchestra gave Mr. Tchaikowsky spirited, well played co-operation with a few rather too energetic moments. The Vaughan Williams symphony, in its range of color and mood, its coherence of structure and its fertility of ideas, wears well, and had an entirely convincing interpretation by its discerning conductor and his instrumentalists.

From OCT 16 1957
VARIETY
New York, N. Y.New York Philharmonic
(WITH ANDRE TSCHAIKOWSKY)

The 116th Season will be ringed with special historic significance in the Philharmonic record as the season that opened late because of the Musicians Union. This threw the schedule off and deprived Sol Hurok's promising 22-year-old pianist from Warsaw, Andre Tchaikowsky, of the prestige advantage of opening the season with three performances. He appeared at the Sunday matinee (13), instead of Thursday evening.

This young man has got a lot to build his career on. He was perhaps a bit deferential to the orchestra, rather than giving the firm lead as soloist, as more experienced virtuosi do. Prokofiev's Concerto No. 3 in C Major is a tumult of music, rather too much for the maiden display of a new talent. Though he was always fully knowledgeable and frequently dynamic the young pianist won recognition, to make an important distinction, rather than acclaim, though his four bows were fulsome and the Carnegie Hall crowd was indubitably admiring.

Young pianist attacks the keyboard with intensity and fiery technique and his future ought to be exciting, though judgment may at the moment be partly reserved. Incidentally since he is using a none-de-platform it's a pity one so hard to spell was adopted. Its Tchaikowsky, with a w, not not the composer, Tchaikovsky, who was on the program, spelled with a v.

The Philharmonic Musicians, now modestly fortified against the rising cost of groceries, were led by Dimitri Mitropoulos in a vitality-charged performance including in addition to the two composers already mentioned Vivaldi and Vaughan Williams (in his angry period). It was good listening all the way.

Land.

«ΤΟ ΒΗΜΑ» Κυριακή 24 Νοεμβρίου 1957

ΔΗΜΕΡΙΝΗ

Ο ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ ΚΑΙ Ο ΔΙΑΔΟΧΟΣ ΤΟΥ



«Ο αρχιμουσικός κ. Λέοναρντ Μπερνστάιν διωρίσθη, ως γνωστόν, μουσικός διευθυντής της φιλαρμονικής ορχήστρας της Νέας Υόρκης, διαδεχόμενος τον Έλληνα αρχιμουσικό Δημήτρη Μητρόπουλο. «Ο Μητρόπουλος, αναγγέλλων το γεγονός, υπεγράμμισε ότι ο Μπερνστάιν, που ήτο μέχρι τοδε συνδιευθυντής της ορχήστρας, θα φέρη έπαξίως εις πέρας τα νέα του καθήκοντα. Είς την φωτογραφίαν ο Μπερνστάιν (αριστερά) και ο Μητρόπουλος (δεξιά)»

«ΤΟ ΒΗΜΑ» Κυριακή 24 Νοεμβρίου

ΤΙΜΗΤΙΚΗ ΔΙΑΚΡΙΣΙΣ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΕΛΛΗΝΑ
ΑΡΧΙΜΟΥΣΙΚΟΝ ΔΗΜ. ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΝ

ΝΕΑ ΥΟΡΚΗ, 23 Νοεμβρίου. Ίδιαιτέρα Υπηρεσία.— Έγινωσθη ότι το Στέιτ Ντιπάρτμεντ ένοσηματοδοτούσε τμήμον περιόδεσιν της Φιλαρμονικής ορχήστρας της Νέας Υόρκης δια την Νότιον Αμερικην, η οποία έσ' προηγουμένωι μετά την λήξιν της έκτείνουσ μουσικής περιόδου. Η απόφασις άνεκονούθη εις το Στέιτ Ντιπάρτμεντ, το όποιον άνέθετε εις τον Έλληνα αρχιμουσικό Δημήτρη Μητρόπουλον έπος τελεή επικραδής της περιόδεας αυτής. Ο Μητρόπουλος όμως, λόγω άλλων ελθουσών υποχρεώσεων και συγκεκριμένων λόγων του φετιβάλ Πουστίν εις την Εύρώπην, δεν άπαδείχη την πρότασιν και υπέδειξε τον μέλλοντα διευθυντή της Φιλαρμονικής, Λέοναρντ Μπερνστάιν. Το Στέιτ Ντιπάρτμεντ έμεις έβλήσθη προς την Φιλαρμονικην ότι, εφόσον ο Μητρόπουλος έμ' δένεται να διευθύνη ως πρώτος μαεστρον την περιόδεσιν της ορχήστρας, θα έπρεπε να την ης ταύτης. Κατόπιν αυτού, ο διάσημος αρχιμουσικός, ης προκληθείς έμπρόσθε από το Στέιτ Ντιπάρτμεντ, έπέλεξε τελικώς να τελεή επικραδής αυτής κατά την περιόδεσιν.

New York's great birdcage at Thirty-ninth Street and Broadway, with its attached, sublimated hurdy-gurdy, is, we read, suddenly a-flutter. The famous *Vogelfänger*, or bird-catcher, Rudolf Bing, is at his nets anew, coaxing, chirruping and otherwise guiding the complicated enterprise the Metropolitan Opera.

For the opening night, Oct. 28, Mr. Bing has selected a work unheard at the Met since the year 1921. It is Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin," based on a romantic novel in verse by Russia's greatest and most beloved poet, Pushkin.

The new "Eugene Onegin" is to be sung in English, in a translation by Henry Reese. And this brings up the matter of the pronunciation of the title. The first name will presumably be pronounced as in English. In Russian, it seems, it would sound like Yevgenii (with the g hard). As for the patronymic, this, even in a Broadway version, will probably not become One Gin (as with a solitary toper, giving his order at a bar).

For this production London Mr. Bing has fielded a star team. Dimitri Mitropoulos will conduct. The staging is by Peter Brook, the scenery and costumes by Rolf Gerard, the choreography by Zachary Solov. Lucine Amara sings the leading soprano role. Richard Tucker sings the tenor role of Vladimir Lenski (killed in Act II—most unusual for a tenor). For the name part—this work is one of the few in which that robust and glorious organ, the baritone voice, can star—George London.

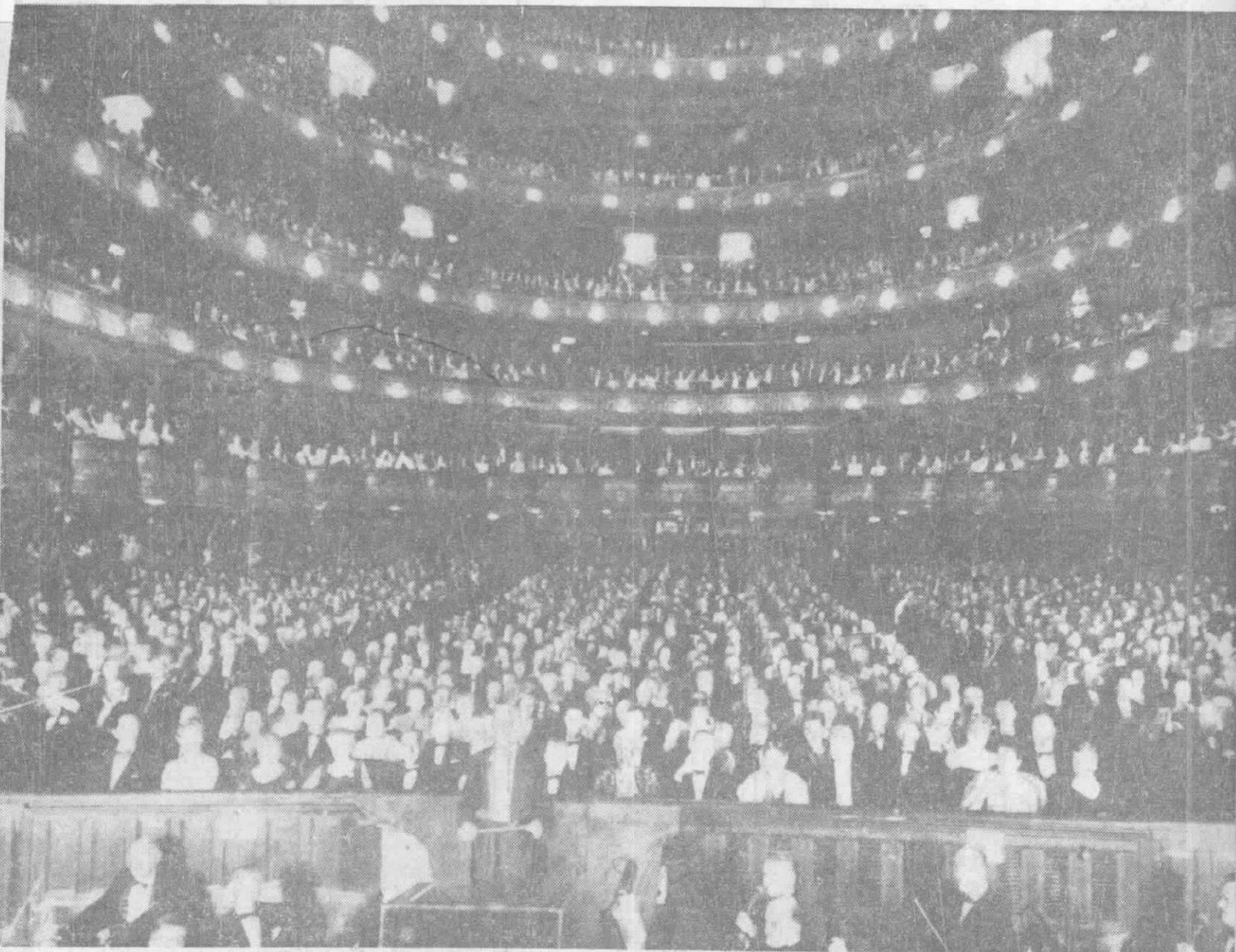
Mr. Bing's choice of the leading baritone has long been emphatically indicated by events abroad. As far back as 1950, London sang "Onegin" at the Vienna State Opera. He sang it in Russian (phonetically, it is reported) so like a native as to shake the Russian cultural attaché in Vienna to the roots. London's Russian repertory has developed, since then. His "Boris" was in that language, abroad, before it was in English here, and only the other night he added to his Russian-speech laurels with more Mussorgsky, at Town Hall. Now, this American is to have another chance to go native.

Russians today, The Unexpected Position of Pushkin it has been emphasized, have the greatest reverence for Pushkin and his most famous novel. This is rather curious, for Pushkin would seem to represent, in himself and at least in this work, everything which the Soviet gospel deplores. In "Onegin," people have detected many traits of its author. But Onegin's character was the perfect snob, he was the ultimate spokesman for a class society, the antithesis of the Soviet theory. Both Pushkin and his hero were romantics, not realists; aristocrats, not proletarians; dissipated elegants, disdainful cynics. (All this naughtiness, of course, as with so many Byronic heroes, is redeemed, one supposes, by hearts of gold, beating behind those tinsel breasts.) Fatuous plots are not rare in opera. Opera lovers who can swallow the warp, not to forget the woof, of Wagner's "Ring" can swallow anything. The fatuity in this case stems from the Romantic Age, and most likely old Goethe was originally to blame, with his saccharine "Sorrows of Werther." Yet Massenet made a delightful opera out of it, and the unromantic French have loved it for years.

In "Onegin's" final scene, the beautiful Tatiana renounces Onegin, the Poet reformed rake, as a lover, and on this rather inconclusive note the curtain descends. Pushkin never told what happened next, if anything. Perhaps he didn't have time. He was slain, at 38, in a duel, defending his wife's reputation. At any rate, the revival, after thirty-six years, offers a vivid musical and dramatic evening in its own way, standing on its own merits. Tchaikovsky's and the singer's, Mr. Bing's selection is stimulating, and allows for arpeggios of comment and understanding rather beyond those called forth by a more conventional opening night.

Local Color In Pushkin's poem of "Eugene Onegin," the picturesque attitudes of the characters, idealistic and bored, quarreling and dueling, in love with life and in love with loving—these are all made believable by the details of local color. The poet describes the climate and the seasons; he tells us how to pick berries and how to make jam; he shows us the slow tempo of living, the informal relationship of the landowner with his peasants in contrast to the absurd formality of his relations with his neighbors; he shows us the gentry attending a country ball, where pompous provincial manners mix with gossiping over tea from the samovar and where plates of jam are passed in and out of the waltzing couples. Beside this he sets the truly rigid manners of St. Petersburg, where stately polonaises parade between giant marble columns, where each step and gesture is frozen with the discipline of protocol. It is no accident that the idol of the Russian theatre was Stanislavsky, for he invented a style, meticulous and naturalistic, whose great virtue was that it corresponded identically with the best elements in the Russian classics. When Rolf

Opening Night at the Met



OUTSIDE—As Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted the Metropolitan orchestra inside the Met on opening night, this street violinist played his mournful serenades outdoors for an audience less glittering but just as appreciative.—UP Telephoto.

DRESS CIRCLE—This was the scene in the Dress Circle at the Metropolitan Opera House for the Monday night opening of

Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin." Socialites, ambassadors, nobles and just plain opera lovers came to see and be seen as

the Met opened its 73rd season. The conductor is Dimitri Mitropoulos.—UP Telephoto.

A REALISTIC APPROACH TO 'EUGENE ONEGIN'

By PETER BROOK

WHEN one thinks of Tchaikovsky and Pushkin, of Russia and the nineteenth century, the word "romantic" springs easily to one's lips; it is a word that seems the opposite of all that one means by "realistic," yet oddly enough the truth is a paradox: it is through their utter realism that the great Russian masterpieces are romantic. Realism is one of the strongest traditions in Russian art.

Today it is a political slogan, but for over a century Russian painting has been concerned with describing the Russian scene. Russian novels have found their savage drama and their wild comedy in the true facts of Russian life. The romantic quality whether of "Anna Karenina," of "The Cherry Orchard" or of "Eugene Onegin" is no distortion of events by authors who see life in dreamy, rose-tinted terms; on the contrary, it is photography—exquisite, sensitive photography—of real people, whose true reactions to circumstances lead them to what we now consider romantic behavior.

Local Color

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Stage Director Tells Why Metropolitan Production Will Be in New Form

Gerard and I started work on "Onegin," we both agreed that we had no choice: the only legitimate manner in which we could stage this opera was precisely in accordance with this particular Russian tradition. It seemed to us that we needed the very elements that in other operas one so often deplores; we felt that it was through the old-fashioned technique of painted vistas and realistic scenes that we would arrive at the climate in which this opera belongs.

I remember the scene painter at Covent Garden telling me how Puccini used to arrive with photographs he had himself taken in Japan with his plate camera. Similarly I arrived to work with photographs I had taken of the old palaces that still stand, crumbling, in Leningrad. Our aim has been to follow low Pushkin's method as faithfully, and to present in "Onegin" a complete cross-section of Russian provincial and town life at a particular moment in the last century.

We were fired by a great love for the opera—though not a completely uncritical one. Having studied "Onegin" along with Dimitri Mitropoulos—who, to our great good fortune, is not only conducting the piece but also is passionately interested in dramatic as well as musical problems—we felt two factors had stood in the way of popular acceptance of the work, which has not been seen on the Metropolitan stage for over thirty years. One is that Tchaikovsky had made no provision for the changing of scenery, with the result that in most performances the audience has to sit waiting during four major scene changes. To audiences accustomed to the continuity of modern staging these cold waits are acutely depressing and, to help to bridge them without losing the mood of the scenes, Mr. Mitropoulos has suggested several orchestral interludes, which Julius Burger has arranged and orchestrated from music of the opera.

Then we faced the problem

that in performance the last scene (and how important a last scene always is—and above all the final curtain) is strangely incomplete and lacking in atmosphere, despite the lyrical beauty of so much of the music. Even in Russia this has long been noticed and commented on, yet in Pushkin the end is satisfying and has a formal beauty. This is partly because he balances Tatyana's letter to Onegin, which precipitates the action at the beginning of the poem, with Onegin's letter to Tatyana at the end. On the stage, we try to make a similar parallel, contrasting the two secret meetings: the falling leaves in the autumn garden where Onegin rejects Tatyana's love in the first act, echoed by the formal ironwork and the falling snow of a St. Petersburg garden, where Tatyana finally rejects Onegin. We have thus moved the action from a room that is never a very evocative background into a setting that we have attempted to blend more closely with the lonely melancholy of the music of the last scene. We have sought a final image that will be a summing up and an expression of the culminating mood of the poem.

ONLY HUMAN: DIMITRI MITROPOULOS

In Service of Love, Music

By SIDNEY FIELDS

Dimitri Mitropoulos, the distinguished conductor, claims two beautiful mistresses: the New York Philharmonic and the Metropolitan Opera.

I am not sure who is the loveliest," he said, "but I am sure that when I go from one to the other I am refreshed." Mitropoulos is the Musical Director of the Philharmonic and a conductor at the Met. Tonight (Monday) he opens the Met's 73rd season, with a new production of Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin." As usual Mitropoulos will conduct the proceedings without a score.

Any man who calls two orchestras "my mistresses" should know if music and love are related. "Any expression of human experience has to do with human capacity for love," he replied. "Music, of course, is an expression of human experience. The basic axis of our behavior is the sex drive—love. Human experience becomes creative in direct ratio to the amount of love we put into it. That doesn't depend on our organic, but on our psychic potentials... This is too serious, isn't it?"

It sure is. "Well, what I mean is that some put more soul into things than others," he went on. "We say one singer is 'cold,' and another, 'warm.' It shows their capacity for love. You can always tell from the way a singer sings how he or she makes love."

It would be highly illuminating to read his mind during any rehearsals or performances at the Met.

ANYWAY, WITH two big jobs, does he have to forego the reading he loves (philosophy and the Greek dramatists), the company and

conversation of friends, the mountain climbing he liked so much?

"I've had to give up almost all personal pleasures," he said. "But when my services are demanded then my existence is justified, and my private life has no importance."

How does music fit into a world that makes Sputniks?

"The purpose of all art is to express human experience. The purpose of the Sputnik you know. Music is an expression of love in controlled form. It's not unlikely that music will defeat the Sputnik."

"But I'll tell you a secret, I don't read about these terrible things. If I let myself be depressed I would not be able to work. No, no, I do not live in an ivory tower. I am not a monk in a cell."

He almost did become a monk, a thought that possessed him when he was studying at the Conservatory in Athens, Greece, where he was born. Two of his relatives were monks, and his father, a leather merchant, was the son of a Greek Orthodox priest. But when Mitropoulos learned he'd have to leave all his musical instruments behind, he abandoned the idea of entering a monastic order.

HE BEGAN STUDYING the piano at seven and until he became a conductor was a distinguished pianist. He began composing at 14, and at 23 wrote an opera, "Sister Beatrice," based on Maeterlinck's play. The composer Saint-Saens thought it was great and wanted to take Mitropoulos to Paris for further study. But he had already arranged to study in Brussels. Later, in Berlin, he was accepted in Ferruccio Busoni's five member class.

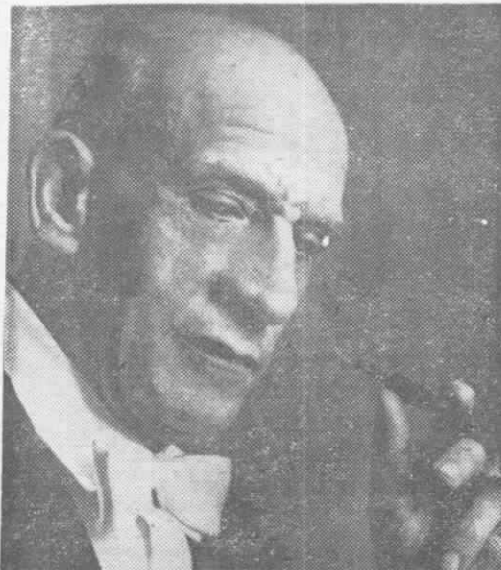
"And it was there I lost respect for myself as a composer," he said, "and ended up as a recreator instead of a creator."

In 1930, when he was 34, Mitropoulos was doing a guest-shot as conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic when he also had to substitute for piano soloist Egon Petri, one of his former teachers. He made music headlines across Europe when he conducted a Prokofiev Concerto while playing it. It brought him to America, and eventually to head the Minneapolis Symphony for 14 years before he came to New York.

WHEN HE WAS about to become an American citizen, some hairbrains raised a hue and cry about his associations and politics. A thorough investigation revealed him as a deeply devout man, who practiced his faith quietly; a man of silent and sweet charity, who helped college students and composers through their struggles. During the war he spent his vacation as a volunteer worker with a mobile blood unit, and whatever camp he'd stop he would play classical music if asked, or oblige just as readily with jazz or boogie woogie.

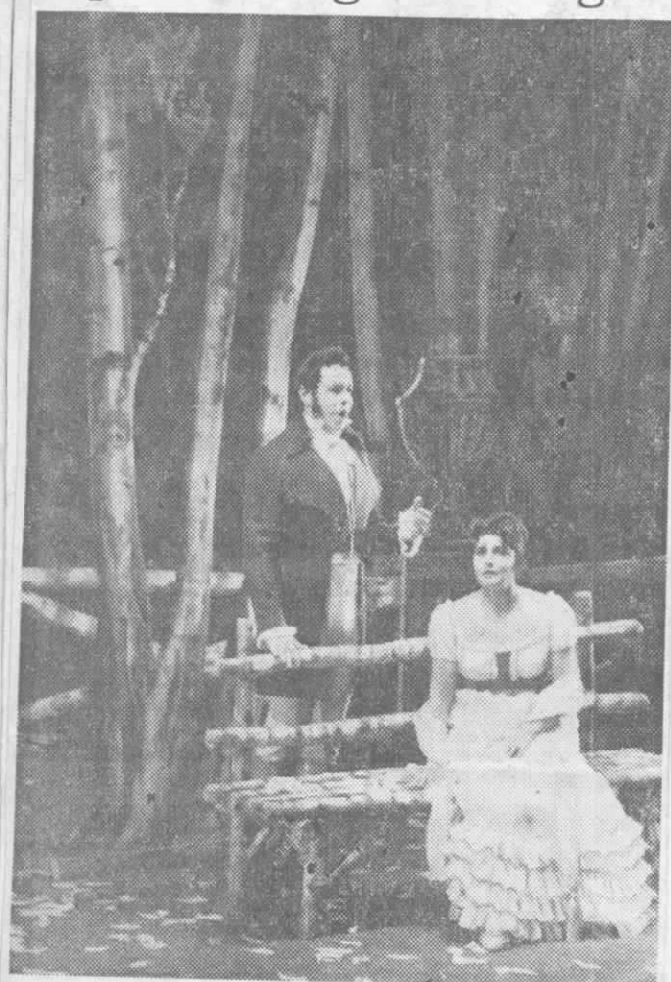
Now, he's the kind who trembles when he is referred to as "a great musician" or "saint."

"Both are repugnant to me," he said. "And they are uttered by people who do not know the meaning of faith. I do not want to be ever advertised as great or saint, but as a useful citizen serving those who love music."



DIMITRI MITROPOULOS: Useful citizen in the world of music.

Opera: 'Eugene Onegin'



George London and Lucine Amara in opera, "Eugene Onegin"

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

DO you have a weakness for period pieces? Is your heart moved by the sweet sorrows of love requited too late à la Russe? Do you find Tchaikovsky's tunes irresistible? If the answers are yes, "Eugene Onegin" is for you.

In its new production, which graced last night's opening, the Metropolitan has done handsomely by Tchaikovsky's opera. The musical conception and staging achieve and sustain a mood. The singers are among the company's best. "Eugene Onegin" is often as affecting as a sentimental old chromo.

Despite all the polish and the fresh touches of color applied by the Met, however, the chromo has a faded look. Life is reflected pallidly, though there is a duel and a killing. The fault may be with the way some Russians lived in the nineteenth century, but Chekhov, recording a similar milieu, made it throb with a truth that can still shake us.

Tchaikovsky is fundamentally to blame, not Shilovsky, his co-librettist, or the Pushkin poem from which the book is drawn. If a great gift for melody were all, Tchaikovsky should have become a titan of opera. But other things are also needed: an instinct for the theatre and a capacity to create in musical terms men and women in their diversity and in depth.

In "Eugene Onegin" there is scarcely any characterization worth the name. Tatiana is sweet and foolish, ardent and loyal. Lenski is jealous and mostly foolish, and Gremin is a noble cliché. Onegin, who should be the dramatic fulcrum, is a shadowy figure.

Alas, cynical, unhappy young men like Onegin, who toy with others and end by destroying their own hopes of felicity, are not unknown in Russian literature. There is every reason to believe that literature represents the truth. But Tchaikovsky fails to make this character credible. As a result, the opera sags as though it lacked fiber.

But Tchaikovsky could write fetching and meltingly lush tunes. Since "Eugene Onegin" has its full share, many opera-goers will refuse to worry over the opera's failure as lyric theatre. They will take delight in the Respighi Dance, the waltz, mazurka, polonaise and co-sa-sa, for these dances reflect the composer's genius for this genre.

They will be moved by the lyricism of Tatiana's "Letter Aria" and the bittersweet heartbreak of Lenski's aria before the duel. They will find nobility in Gremin's aria and, in the shape of its opening phrase, a reminder of Sarastro and of Tchaikovsky's

The Cast

EUGENE ONEGIN, opera in three acts by Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky, libretto by the composer and K. S. Shilovsky, after the Pushkin poem of the same name, sets and costumes by Rolf Gerard, staged by Peter Brook, conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. At the Metropolitan Opera.

Mme. Larina.....Martha Lipton
Tatiana.....Lucine Amara
Eugene Onegin.....George London
Lenski.....Richard Tucker
Prince Gremin.....Giorgio Tozzi
Filippovna.....Belen Amparan
A Captain.....Louis Sgarro
Zaretski.....George Cehanovsky
Triquet.....Alessio De Paolis

unlimited admiration for Mozart.

The Met's production, made possible by a gift from Mrs. John D. Rockefeller Jr., wisely accepts Tchaikovsky on his own terms. It has not attempted to magnify "Onegin" into a work filled with vital force. Realizing that the essential intimacy of the work could not be denied, the Met has stressed elements of time and place. It has caught admirably, despite the size of the theatre, the atmosphere of a period piece.

Peter Brook's staging is full of invention and has authentic atmosphere. Dimitri Mitropoulos' conducting is remarkably restrained and lyrical, particularly in view of his penchant for intensity. Rolf Gerard's sets are not out of key. Henry Reese's English translation, with its determination to rhyme if possible, has a stilted flavor that is oddly in place. And the singers do a good job of making it comprehensible in the vast reaches of the Met.

Lucine Amara sings with richness of voice as Tatiana. Richard Tucker brings vocal splendor to Lenski, though he phrases the melodies with an Italianate warmth. George London, undoubtedly the best choice for the role, does what intelligence and sensitivity can do in a determined, if vain, effort to make Onegin a creature of flesh and blood. Giorgio Tozzi sings Gremin's aria with fine sonority. Rosalind Elias as Olga, Martha Lipton as Madame Larina and Belen Amparan as the Nurse maw a remarkably gifted trio of mezzos in lesser roles. Alessio De Paolis turns in a delicious bit as the gallant old Frenchman, Triquet.

Zachary Solov's choreography, with its feeling for the period, and the Met's dancers contribute a great deal to the mood of the piece.

To cope with the long pauses between scenes, Mr. Mitropoulos asked Julius Burger of the Met musical staff to prepare orchestral interludes based on Tchaikovsky's themes. The interludes quote Tchaikovsky so extensively and are so hopped up in instrumentation that they sound like reprises plugging the show's hit tunes.

"Eugene Onegin" has never triumphed in this country. Will Tchaikovsky's graceful and haunting melodies and the Met's atmospheric production carry it off this time?

Met Opens 73d Season With a Russian Opera

Glitter Rivals Czarist Court

Charles Ventura writes about the Opera opening—Page 3, Section 2.

By Paul Henry Lang

Joseph Emerson, one of Ralph Waldo's ancestors, prayed every night that no descendant of his might ever be rich. What would the doughty old Yankee have said could he only have attended the opening of the Metropolitan Opera's 73d season. For last night's opening abounded in glitter, glamour, and elegance; everything and everybody seemed to exude a richness that would have rivaled the old Czarist court.

As a matter of fact, the atmosphere of splendor owed a great deal to Mr. Khrushchev's predecessors in office. The stage did not present Egyptian princesses and warriors, who are pleasantly exotic but whom you would not want to ask over to the house; or medieval dukes whose costumes are bad for spindly-legged tenors; nor even Germanic supermen and women of generous girth, whose luxuriant beards or thick blond braids evoke Liederkrantz and beer.

Last night's gentry was strictly a champagne crowd: imperial Russian guards officers in dashing uniforms, landed aristocrats in colorful finery, and ladies in the height of haute couture—those lovely Empire waistlines—bedecked with jewels that seemed every bit as genuine as the ones espied in the auditorium (and vice versa).

There are many operas with a ballroom scene, but "Eugene Onegin," Tchaikovsky's opening nighter offers two, and Rolf Gerard the stage designer, obliged with some really stunning interiors and costumes that doubled the glamour prevailing on and off the stage.

The exterior splendor was fully matched by a cast such as only the court opera of yore could muster. Lucine Amara sang Tatiana, the sweet maiden who does not know that written invitations to love are hazardous because the recipient has too much time to weigh the pros and cons. She is one of the prides of the Met and her ample and beautiful soprano pleased everyone. The other ladies, Mesdames Elias and Lipton, are both from the top drawer.

Richard Tucker (Lenski) is a tenor who although an American celebrity, even in Naples is ranked only by San Gennaro. His luminous singing was cheered to the rafters. The well-earned tributes were shared by George London (Onegin), who at the lower vocal altitudes is as supreme as Mr. Tucker is in the stratosphere. Giorgio Tozzi (Gremin) joined the two principals as their equal, even though he had only one song to offer. The supporting cast was every bit as good, Maestro Mitropoulos, shaking with enthusiasm, conducted with fire and devotion, and Peter Brook directed with a fine perception for the Russian equivalent of Victorian gentility, though the popular scenes were just as well handled.

Oh yes, the opera itself. Well,



Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor of last night's performance of "Eugene Onegin."

IN "EUGENE ONEGIN"
—George London and Lucine Amara at Met opening.

METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE

Opera in three acts, libretto by K. S. Shilovsky, music by Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky. The cast:

Madame Larina.....Martha Lipton
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Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; staged by Peter Brook; sets and costumes by Rolf Gerard; choreography by Zachary Solov.

It is not a good one, it is too pretty to be a good one. There are melodies galore and some really fine ones, but the industrious sparkling of Tchaikovsky's music, notably the elaborate details in the orchestra, and the eclectic and unbalanced optimism of his musical thought ruffle any listener alive to the graver graces and sterner elements of music drama. For want of a stronger grasp of theatrical realities, despite all its fine sense of beauty, "Eugene Onegin" misses a well-meant aim.

Perhaps the most curious shortcoming of this opera is its lack of true vocal concept. This does not mean that the songs are not singable, they are very much so, but most of them, such as Lenski's big aria before the duel, are of the "Melody in F" variety: general purpose elegant sob stuff, just as good for cello solo.

Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin" reminds me of one of Stainsbury's pithy remarks about some novelist whose name escapes me. It can be paraphrased to read: "Tchaikovsky had every faculty for writing operas, except the faculty of opera writing." Still, for those who want to spend a most pleasant evening listening to melting music superbly performed and watching a brilliantly staged and costumed production, "Eugene Onegin" will be no disappointment.

There are two more things this writer must report to the public. The first one is heartwarming: the excellent English diction of practically all the singers, which augurs well for the future. But the second is less pleasant.

Mr. Mitropoulos saw fit to commission Julius Burger, a member of the Met's music staff, to write (with his own orchestration!) some potpourris culled from the opera, which were played during the intermission between scenes. This is a bad lapse from good taste and unworthy of this great theater.

The remedy for an antiquated stage is not to while away ennui by questionable background music—Sherry's is much better for that—but a modern theater where changes in scenery can be made without delay. Let us hope that this will become a reality in the near future.

OPERA

PAUL HENRY LANG On: 'Eugene Onegin'

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From
MIRROR
New York, N. Y.
OCT 29 1957

ROBERT COLEMAN'S OPERA

A Memorable Met Opening

The most brilliant event of the semester—since Queen Elizabeth's visit here, of course—was the opening of the Metropolitan Opera Company's 73d season on Monday evening. For the occasion, Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin" was restored to the repertory. This was made possible by a gift from Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

"Eugene Onegin" was last presented at the Met back in 1921, with Muzio, De Luca, Martinelli and Didur in the leads. Of this famous quartet of artists from "the Golden Age," only Martinelli survives. Still hale and hearty, he was probably present in the audience for the premiere of the revival. In this instance, the roles were sung by Lucine Amara, George London, Richard Tucker and Giorgio Tozzi.

Tchaikovsky, who couldn't live with women but admired them from a distance, wrote one of his most haunting melodies for Tatiana in the letter scene. Here, the simple country girl pours out her heart to the foppish Onegin, who spurns her advances, only to pursue her later when she has become a glamorous Princess.

Miss Amara, whom we've admired over the years, particularly in Verdi works, sang Tatiana with notable feeling, though her approach to the part was dramatic rather than lyric. As she penned her note to the haughty man of the world, she seemed to us less a young girl in love than an experienced woman.

London, an excellent actor-singer, did justice to the coxcomb Onegin, disdainful of the bucolic romantic, but infatuated with the rustic Cinderella become a lady of high fashion. Tucker, in admirable voice, brought modest histrionics and beautiful singing to Lenski. And Tozzi stood out as Prince Gremin.

Tchaikovsky was superb as a composer of ballets and symphonies. No one, we think, has surpassed, or even equalled, him in writing music for dancers. But, let's face it, he was less than a genius in the operatic form. He

penned 10 of them, and "Onegin" is definitely his best.

For his masterpiece in this genre, inspired by a Pushkin poem, he wrote arias, duets and ensembles that vary from the impassioned to the lulling—music from the heart, and music to step by, including one of his most memorable waltzes. If this score be uneven, it does contain some of the loveliest melodies ever to come from the atelier of the morbid Muscovite.

Martha Lipton, Rosalind Elias, Belen Amparan, Louis Sgarro, George Cehanovsky and Alessio De Paolis helped to catch the mood of this opera, which ranges from the pastoral to the sophisticated. Kurt Adler's chorus and Zachary Solov's dances also lent atmosphere to this sometimes lethargic, and often colorful, piece.

PETER BROOK, brought over from England to stage the revival, has put as much pace and detail into it as any able director could. Rolf Gerard has designed handsome sets and costumes and Henry Reese has provided a serviceable English text. In fact, it served to remind us that operas are most effectively done in their original tongue.

The star of the evening, for us, was Dimitri Mitropoulos. This maestro from the Philharmonic Orchestra was a dynamic figure, a tower of strength, on the podium. He sought to bring vitality to the score, without destroying the sensitivity and delicacy of its texture.

"Eugene Onegin" has never been a great favorite in this country. It has failed to appeal to the "meat-and-potatoes" subscribers—those who perennially relish "Aida," "Carmen," "Bo-

gene Onegin misses a well-meant aim.

Perhaps the most curious shortcoming of this opera is its lack of true vocal concept. This does not mean that the songs are not singable, they are very much so, but most of them, such as Lenski's big aria before the duel, are of the "Melody in F" variety: general purpose elegant sob stuff, just as good for cello solo.

Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin" reminds me of one of Stainsbury's pithy remarks about some novelist whose name escapes me. It can be paraphrased to read: "Tchaikovsky had every faculty for writing operas, except the faculty of opera writing." Still, for those who want to spend a most pleasant evening listening to melting music superbly performed and watching a brilliantly staged and costumed production, "Eugene Onegin" will be no disappointment.

There are two more things this writer must report to the public. The first one is heartwarming: the excellent English diction of practically all the singers, which augurs well for the future. But the second is less pleasant.

Mr. Mitropoulos saw fit to commission Julius Burger, a member of the Met's music staff, to write (with his own orchestration!) some potpourris culled from the opera, which were played during the intermission between scenes. This is a bad lapse from good taste and unworthy of this great theater.

The remedy for an antiquated stage is not to while away ennui by questionable background music—Sherry's is much better for that—but a modern theater where changes in scenery can be made without delay. Let us hope that this will become a reality in the near future.

OPENING

"BIVOUAC AT LUCA," Robert Guy Barrow comedy-drama, presented at the Royal Playhouse. Cast includes Gerry Joad and Ben Hayes. Directed by Robert Guy Barrow.

heme," "Cav," "Pag," "Traviata," "Butterfly" and "Meistersinger." It took courage for Rudolf Bing to revive "Onegin." And we say "Bravo," for it has its merits. Popular, no. Worth hearing, yes.

UNDER BING'S management, first nights at the Met—praise be—are gala, but decorous. He has managed to eliminate those eccentrics and exhibitionists who would startle the staid by standing on their heads in the lobby, putting their feet on the tables in Sherry's or tossing garters to standees. He has brought dignity back to the venerable Met. He has again made it a haven for music-lovers who shun the shoddy and the spurious.

From OCT 29 1957

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

Tchaikovsky Opera Opens 'Met' Season

By ROSS PARMENTER

The Metropolitan Opera opened its seventy-third season last night with its great gold proscenium sharply dividing two different moods. On the stage was the sad-sweet melancholy of Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin." In the house there was that combination of glitter and excitement that traditionally prevails at the first night of the opera.

Again there were celebrities from many different fields. Women arrived wearing jewels, furs and richly fashionable gowns. The house was jammed with 4,000 people, and on the street spectators gathered to watch the ticket-holders as they passed from their limousines into the lobbies, where photographers were flashing bulbs at



"EUGENE ONEGIN" OPENS "MET" SEASON—The Tchaikovsky opera, absent from the repertory since the season of 1920-21, will return tomorrow evening. In the

scene above are, left to right, Lucine Amara as Tatyana; Rosalind Elias as Olga; George London, in title role, and Richard Tucker, Lenski. Dimitri Mitropoulos will conduct.

Glitter of Opening Night at the 'Met' Is Preceded by Traditional Coffee Giving Way to Vodka



Rudolf Bing, general manager, and his wife, left, entering Metropolitan Opera House last night through 39th Street lobby for the performance of Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin."



In the afternoon, in keeping with the Russian character of the opera, Mr. Bing served vodka on line outside. His hospitality to standees has usually been in the form of coffee.

3D 'MET' SEASON GETS UNDER WAY

Continued From Page 1

very famous face. The opera was scheduled to begin at 8 o'clock. However there was the usual trouble of getting all the fashion-conscious operagoers to their seats on the dot. Actually, it was 8:10 when Dimitri Mitropoulos came to the pit. After the National Anthem and a photograph of the audience taken from the stage the gold curtains rose to reveal the falling leaves of Tchaikovsky's autumnal opening scene at 8:17.

It cannot be said, though, that excitement ran quite so high as at last year's opening night when Maria Meneghini Tallas was about to make her debut in "Norma." Box-office receipts were \$74,777.50, which was \$733 below the record-breaking \$75,510.50 total of last year. And while the standees filled all of the 280 positions legally allowed, they had not assembled nearly so far in advance nor struggled so hard to hold their places in line.

It was generally conceded that the little-known opera was the chief factor that held the excitement within reasonable bounds. As an opera composer, Tchaikovsky has never stirred the enthusiasm generated by such composers as Verdi, Puccini or Wagner, and "Onegin" has only had seven previous performances at the Met, the last on Feb. 17, 1921.

When "Onegin" had its brief fling at the Metropolitan in the seasons of 1919-20 and 1920-21 it was given in Italian. Last night it was given in English, and the cast was made up almost entirely of American singers.

George London had the title role. Lucine Amara was Tatyana. Richard Tucker was Lenski, and Giorgio Tozzi was Prince Gremin, the man Tatyana ultimately marries. Rosalind Elias was Olga, Tatyana's younger sister, and Martha Lip-ton was Larina, their mother. The fact that "Onegin" was in English gave it the distinction of being the second opera in that language to open a Metro-

politan season. The other one was Deems Taylor's "Peter Ibbetson," which began the 1933-1934 season.

"Onegin" also had the distinction of being the second Russian opera to open the Metropolitan. Mussorgsky's "Boris Godunov," which began the 1943-44 season, was the prior one.

Vodka for Standees
The opera's Russian character led Rudolf Bing, the general manager, to alter the traditional form of his hospitality to the standees. Normally he offers them coffee, but when he emerged from the opera house at 4:35 yesterday afternoon he was followed by several assistants who were carrying vodka.

Conical paper cups were distributed to the forty-five people on line and Mr. Bing went from one to the other, tipping the bottles into the outstretched cups. The day was chilly, so the warming effect of the drink was welcome. Many a standee lifted his cup to Mr. Bing and drank "to a successful season."

There was disagreement among the standees as to who was first on line. Robert D. Shapiro, a 72-year-old writer, contended that he deserved the credit, but Ronald Klein of Brooklyn actually had the first place. The former said he arrived at 7 A. M., whereas Mr. Klein came at 7:30. All the standees agreed, though, that the advance line was unusually small and late in forming. One man said it was the smallest line of standees he had ever seen for an opening night. His experience, he said, went back to 1918.

Eighth Opener for Bing

That the standees did not start camping at the opera house the week-end before the opening, however, does not mean there has been a slackening of public enthusiasm. The money that has been paid in advance for subscriptions is greater than it has ever been. Francis Robinson, assistant manager in charge of the box office, would not reveal the exact figure, but he said it was well over 10 per cent more than the record-breaking \$1,584,824.40 advance sale of last year.

The opening was Mr. Bing's eighth as general manager, and in beginning the season with a new production he followed the practice he has pursued pretty generally since his first opening

night, in 1950, when he presented Verdi's "Don Carlo." That "Onegin" was designed by Rolf Gerard meant that Mr. Gerard established the record of designing five of the new productions of Mr. Bing's opening nights. "Don Carlo," "Aida," "Faust," and "The Tales of Hoffman" were the others.

Mr. Bing said he knew "Onegin" was a slow, lyric and delicate opera, but he had several reasons for selecting it for opening night. One, quite frankly, was that he likes it. Another was that he wanted to open with an opera in English, and this was one for which he thought he had "an outstandingly good cast" of American singers.

Most of the singers who had roles in the opera when it was given in Italian at the Metropolitan thirty-six years ago are now dead. A vigorous exception, though, is Giuseppe Martinelli, who was the Lenski in those earlier productions. Mr. Martinelli was in last night's audience, sitting in Box 6 as a guest of Mr. and Mrs. William Francis Gibbs.

Other celebrities who were present included Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary General of the United Nations; Sir Harold Caccia, British Ambassador to the United States; Edward Johnson, former general manager of the Metropolitan; Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Astor; Mrs. Hope Hampton Brulout, Lincoln Kirstein, Valentina, the dress designer; Roberta Peters, Zinka Milanov, Leonard Warren, Elsa Maxwell, Mrs. August Belmont, Mrs. Serge Koussevitzky and Mrs. Perle Mesta.

Looking over the boxes, it was hard not to recall the words of Marcel Proust who in a description of the Paris Opéra spoke of the boxes as looking like "great hampers brimming with human flowers."

One felt, too, that the opera house made a good setting for the particular opera that Mr. Mitropoulos was leading. After all, opera and house are practically contemporaries. "Onegin" was composed in 1878 and the Metropolitan opened in 1883.

And those feeling sentimental for times past were probably secretly glad at Mr. Bing's guess that it would probably be at least four years before the opera could open at its new home in Lincoln Square.

'Onegin' Is Moody Tale

From OCT 29 1957

World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Bing Picks Quiet Opera For a Tranquil Opening

By GEORGE ALAN SMITH

Write Rudolf Bing down as the man who dared to have a non-spectacular opening of the Metropolitan Opera season.

"Eugene Onegin" is surely as tranquil an autumn premiere as has graced the Metropolitan stage in many a year. Even the traditional first-nighters seemed comparably subdued.

Tchaikovsky's love-lorn opera, based on a verse romance by Pushkin, with libretto by Shilovsky, is probably the Russian composer's masterpiece in this medium.

Despite a production that is impeccable in many ways, "Eugene Onegin" does not bid to become a Metropolitan fixture. It is a slow-moving, moody tale about the heart-sickness called love, in which a supercilious man of the world, who rejects the proffered love of a young country girl, later is turned down by her when she has become a woman of beauty, fashion and importance.

Peter Brook has staged with enormous attention to reality and detail. Rolf Gerard has provided both stark and sumptuous settings, his barren rural Russia being in striking contrast to the sumptuous marbled ballroom of St. Petersburg. And above all, Dimitri Mitropoulos conducts with almost devastating fervor.

The opera is sung in English to a text of Henry Reese. A good part of it is managed with wholly admirable clarity, although curiously the chorus work now and then becomes faintly reminiscent of musical comedy.

As the lovesick maiden, who becomes a great lady, Lucine Amara sings with purity of tone and affecting insight. George London is Onegin, the boaster who thrusts love aside, kills his friend and later pays with a broken heart. London handles the role

with great aplomb, and his last act scenes with Miss Amara lend a much-needed emotional definition.

As the betrothed sister whose fiancée is killed by Onegin in a duel, Rosalind Elias displays her delicious contralto, favoring her role with poise, strength and direct attack. Richard Tucker appears as Onegin's unfortunate friend, not being afraid to introduce a dash of the heroic, yet singing the famous duel scene aria with perceptive depth.

As the heroine's princely husband, Giorgio Tozzi makes moving use of his statement

of connubial bliss in his aria that translates as "Onegin, I don't need to tell you."

Zachary Solov has vividly choreographed the frequent dance scenes, and to cover several awkward scene waits, conductor Mitropoulos has employed musical interludes adapted and orchestrated by Julius Burger. In fact, it's almost like having an opera and a symphony concert to boot.

So while the Metropolitan has slipped unobtrusively into its 73rd season, the faithful will have to await an opera of bolder format to fetch the "bravos." For the Met's "Onegin" is only good.

4000 Festgäste der Metropolitan

Mitropoulos macht aus Onegins jungen Leiden reife Musikfreuden

Von ROBERT PIK

Es gab keine Sensationen und Tumulte, weder Kassenkatzenbalgereien noch Indianergeräusche im Stehplatzschlingel. Alles hielt sich in Grenzen bei dieser wohltemperierten Eröffnungsvorstellung der Metropolitan Opera, und das war gerade das Schöne eines seit jeher "kritischen Abends". Wohlerzogene Zurückhaltung schließt Musikandacht und dankbare Begeisterung keineswegs aus. "Eugene Onegin", Tchaikowskys Herzenskind und Lieblingsober, wird meist stiefmütterlich behandelt. Aus — Macht der Gewohnheit. Ein weltabgeschiedenes stilles Werk, gegründet auf Puschkins Versromanze, mit der er Wertes Leiden in altrussische Adelskreise verpflanzt, — eine Oper, welche ein gehäuftes Maß ihres allerdings fast unerschöpflichen Melodienfühlens in den tiefen Keller von Baritonen und Bässen versenkt — dazu die alte Geschichte, die ewig neu bleibt (auf der Bühne aber längst durch kräftigere erotische Kost verdrängt worden ist) von irreder, enttäuschter und verspäteter Liebe — kann dergleichen überhaupt noch Enthusiasmus wecken?

Eine verjüngte Partitur
Es kann Mann stelle Dimitri Mitropoulos unten auf Orchesterpodium und die vernachlässigte, bis zum Überdruß geschnitzte Partitur dieses Russen (dem man seltsamerweise ankredite, er sei zu international...) ist einfach nicht wieder zu erkennen. Der Dirigent identifiziert sich mit dieser Musik, ihrer verhaltenen Zartheit, ihren Ausbrüchen, die plötzlich ihre ganze vulkanische Dynamik offenbaren.

Man muß die Blicke von diesem Magier losreißen, um szenische Akzente nicht zu veräumen. Der Symphoniker Mitropoulos, der sich bei seinem früheren Met-Debüt als Theater-Vollblutmusiker entpuppte, verwandelte sich diesmal abermals total. Der denkbar sensibelste Romantiker dirigiert. Mit den selbständig beweglichen Fingern der Linken entschmelzelt er den Instrumenten ihre Weisen, formt sie behutsam. Intervall für Intervall, feuert sie im Tutti zu elementarem Fortissimo, gleich darauf mit dem erhobenen Dach beider Hände den Klang dämpfend, weil nun der Sänger den Vortritt hat.

Neue Zwischenspiele

Die Intermezzi, die Mitropoulos selbst aus Tchaikowsky-Themen wählte und sich effektiv instrumentieren ließen, mögen ein kleines Sakrileg am Original sein — aber sie wirken hinreißend und waren nicht bloß Geräuschkulissen während des Umbaus, sondern fügten zum elegischen Ton mißglückter Amouren eine kräftige Dosis von dramatischem Impetus. Bemerkenswert an dieser Neuestudierung: sie ist aus einem Guß. Nicht nur der britische Regisseur Peter Brook und der griechische Maestro arbeiteten Hand in Hand, auch der besonders findige, geschmackvolle (kaum je triyale) Übersetzer Henry Reese, Chormeister Kurt Adler, Choreograph Zachary Solov gesellten sich in engster Tuchfühlung hinzu. Geist vom Geist, der alle unter Rudolf Bings neuer Ägide besetzte, atmete vor allem aus den superben Bühnenbildern und pastellfarbenen Empiriekostümen (zumal Uniformen!) des nie von Routine und Klischee befallenen Bühnenbildners Rolf Gérard — aus Frankreich. (Dagegen dominierte im Sängereensemble das amerikanische Kontingent.)

Die bewundernswürdig stillen Innenräume, etwa der hell-azurblaue Säulensaal beim Fürstengremin (3. Akt), die pantheistisch erfüllten Parks und Wälder brachten in künstlerischer Symmetrie, mit spärlich fallenden Blättern und zuletzt immer dichter niederrieselndem Schnee ein einziges jahrzeitliches Sinnbild zu ergreifendem Ausdruck: Herbst — der Natur wie der Liebe. In diesem Sinn war Lucine Amara als Tatyana anfangs sentimentalistisch angekränkelte Jugend, doch kam auch die Charakterdrehung um 180 Grad deutlich zur Anschauung; die ungehemmt strömende Stimme gab den vielen Quartetten und Ensembles letzten, "höchsten" Schliff und die seltsam psychoanalytische Briefszene wurde gründlich ausgelotet. Kann aber ein leidendes Mädchenherz in so fraulich abgerundetem Format schlagen?

Richard Tucker sang die Arie Lenskis knapp vor Torschlus, denn wenige Minuten nach dem wunderbar verhauchenden letzten Ton wird er im Duell erschossen, ganz italienisch, verdisch und erntete demgemäß "südlischen" Beifall. Wobei anzumerken wäre, daß das Orchester unter dieser Leitung oft ganz nach Puccini "schmeckte". George London hat Figur, Statur und Stimme für den Titelhelden, der aber doch, weil Tchaikowsky diesen Zyniker verabscheute, in Schatten der geliebten Tatyana bleibt. Den Weltmann, der über gebrochene Herzen geht, um zuletzt die Scherben des eigenen fassungslos zusammenzuklauben, hätte der Künstler ruhig weniger diskret hervortreten lassen können.

Rosalind Elias, die sonst meist schwer verkleidet in Rheinfluten paddelt oder auf feurigen Bühnenrosen den Walkürenpfad nach Walhall wandelt, erschien plötzlich als höchst attraktives junges Mädchen im Rampenlicht, eine gut getroffene kokett-kapriziöse Olga, die ihr Couplet im Alt-Register wirklich "lustig und sorglos" sang. Die junge schöne Mexikanerin Belen Amaran war eine glaubhafte, ihren Mezzosopran trefflich und sonor gebrauchende "alte Amme". Giorgio Tozzi, als Fürst, erhielt nach der, ach! so altmodischen und so wundervollen Hymne an Tatyana, seine Frau, eine minutenlange verdiente Ovation. Ein wahres Juwel musikalischer Charakterkomik ließ wieder der unvergleichliche Alessio DePaolis im Scheinwerferlicht glitzern; als formvollendeter Triquet sang er dessen selbstverfaßte Hymne an die Balkkönigin (Tatyana): "A cette fête conviée" entzückend französisch. Ein Kleinod auch dieser Musik, die bestimmt nicht zu verachten ist. Wir werden sie nächstens noch gesondert betrachten.



OPENING NIGHT—General view of Diamond Horseshoe at Metropolitan Opera House as Met opened its 73rd season.

Audience Outshines Opera

Eugene Onegin Revived for Metropolitan Opening

By ALAN BRANIGAN
Staff Correspondent

NEW YORK—Glamour was the byword last night when the white mink-chinchilla-top hat set turned out in full regalia for the opening of the Metropolitan Opera's 73rd season.

Society, the theater, government and the arts were represented in the gay, well-behaved crowd that came out to hear the rarely performed Tchaikovsky opera, "Eugene Onegin," sung in an elegant revival.

The audience was at absolute capacity, with 3,846 present, including 230 standees. The box office rang up a dazzling \$74,777 as intake for the evening, a new record even by the giddy financial figures usually achieved at Met opening nights. This averages out to almost \$20 per seat. Actually, the price ranged from about \$35 for some locations to \$2.25 for a seat somewhere up near the ionosphere.

Audience Spectacular

As usual, most of the spectacle was visible in the audience, rather than on the stage. The feminine contingent dressed to the teeth, with tiaras, diamonds, rubies, orchids, furs and new gowns in every possible mode, from daring to dowdy, prominently on display. There are few prettier sights in the whole New York year than this beauty parade.

Early in the evening the best vantage point was the 39th St. lobby, where most of the society folk entered. Here your reporter was lucky enough to throw out the first "Good Evening" to Rudolf Bing, the Met's general manager, as he arrived with Mrs. Bing for the performance. Nearby were Pearl Mesta,

Hope Hampton and other perennial favorites.

Another colorful scene was on display in Sherry's Metropolitan Opera Restaurant, a second floor hangout of fine repute. There a full house had been on hand for a pre-performance dinner—prix fixe at \$12—which included dishes dedicated to Tchaikovsky, the evening's composer, and to Tatiana, the opera's heroine.

Singers Attend

Among the opera singers that assembled here both before the performance and during the intermissions, were such notables as Giovanni Martinelli, who sang the role of Lenski in the previous staging of "Onegin," back in the sea-

son of 1920-21; Edward Johnson, who served several seasons as tenor and general manager; Roberta Peters, soprano; Zinka Milanov, soprano, and Leonard Warren, baritone.

Many of the personnel and ministers from the United Nations were on hand with their staffs. And they remained for the evening, quite unlike last year's opening when many were called away by the French-British-Egyptian unpleasantness over the Suez.

The Metropolitan put its best foot forward in presenting "Eugene Onegin," with a fine cast headed by George London, Richard Tucker and Lucine Amara, a bright new staging by Peter Brook and Dimitri Mitropoulos as con-

ductor. But it did not appear that the work would be a hit any more than it was first time around, 37 years ago.

Plentiful Applause

There was plenty of applause for some of the opera's more famous moments, like Lenski's lovely First Act air, the dramatic Letter Scene, and the various waltzes and mazurkas that dotted the action. But the work has a puzzling story, about a neurotic young man who rejects a young girl's love and then tries to win her back some years later, as well as a great lack of memorable melodies.

At any rate, the Met's magnificent orchestra under Mitropoulos soared through the instrumental portion of the Tchaikovsky work with unerring charm and registered the evening's most solid achievement. The opera was sung in English, in a new version by Henry Reese which spared nothing in setting forth old-fashioned clichés to match the early 19th Century story of romantic sadness and broken hearts.

Music on the Air

By Walter H. Stern

Summer Odyssey

One of the most ambitious musical schedules heard on any network has been the Columbia Broadcasting System's series of "World Music Festivals." Much of the credit belongs to James Fasset, intermission commentator on the Philharmonic broadcasts. He has toured Europe, and in some years the United States and Canada, to search out the finest of the musical presentations to the end of preserving them on tape for presentation here.

Some of the highlights of the summer season now ending have been calculated to be thought-provoking, but two of the concerts have become especially significant in view of the fact that the world lost one of its greatest contemporary composers during the past month—Jean Sibelius. The two broadcasts featuring Sibelius' music from Helsinki, Finland, have been in the nature of a farewell. There has always been something special in the air when this master's works were performed in his native Finland, and the concerts of July 7 and 14 provided special insight into the legacy which Sibelius left to the musical world.

On the first of these occasions, the program included two scores that have become standards in this country and have gained tremendous popularity. These were the Symphony No. 2 in D major and the tone poem "En Saga." It is the Symphony which has enjoyed the widest acceptance with, of course, the exception of "Finlandia." The broadcast also included "The Oceanides" and the Andante Festivo, two works which appeal largely to the connoisseurs. The tapes were made at the Sibelius Festival, where Paavo Berglund and Carl Garaguly conducted the Helsinki City Symphony.

The festival was continued the following week with readings by the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, led by Jussi Jalas, who is Sibelius' son-in-law, and Nils-Eric Fougstedt. This program opened with the Symphony No. 6 in D minor, a work in which the somber and the unadorned candor of Sibelius' musical concept is so eloquently expressed. This score was followed by Kullervo's Lament from his choral symphony "Kullervo." The work was composed in 1890, but the composer has never permitted a performance of it until now, only a short time before his death. Another American premiere on the same



WALTER H. STERN

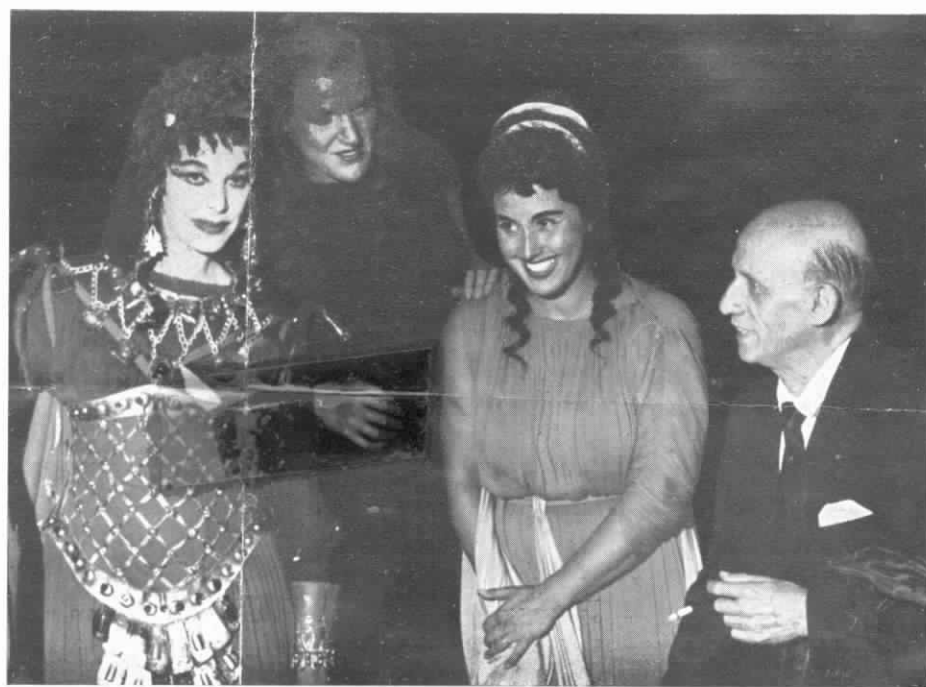
AUSTRIA

Luce di torce e chiaro li luna illuminano, nella «Elektra» di Strauss, la corte del palazzo di Micene. E' il tramonto di uno stato morente — tra giorno e notte, vita e morte, decadenza tragico-barbarica. Lo spirito superestetico di Hofmannsthal si deliziava di miti e di immagini e li arricchiva su di una base di fantasia moderna. Nel 1892, anni prima che egli componesse l'«Elektra», Strauss scrisse entusiasticamente nel diario dei suoi viaggi in Grecia, descrivendo la collezione di vasi nel Politecnico e le terracotte di Tanagra, simboli di Bacco e della fertilità. La musica di Strauss innalza grandemente la tensione del dramma e gli stessi temi si ripetono spesso, palesemente o intrecciati ad altri. E' il dramma musicale del sangue sacilego. Come i blocchi del palazzo di Agamemnone, gli accordi dell'orchestra si accavallano l'uno sull'altro. Il filo conduttore della poesia e dei simboli sono intrecciati insieme in un quadro di suoni che non può venir interpretato da parole sole...

Coloro che hanno profetizzato, atteso, sperato e previsto che il più grande avvenimento del Festival di quest'anno sarebbe stato la rappresentazione dell'«Elektra» alla Felsenreitschule, non sono rimasti delusi. Ci si meraviglia che per venti anni questo lavoro non sia apparso nei programmi di Salisburgo, ma tutti sono pienamente d'accordo che la presenza di Dimitri Mitropoulos abbia reso la ripresa di questo lavoro più che giustificata. L'impulso di questo dramma musicale, della durata di un'ora e mezzo, con tutte le emozioni del vero e grande capolavoro (doppiamente, data la perfetta collaborazione di due geni autori, il poeta Hugo von Hofmannsthal ed il compositore) non sarà dimenticato da coloro che hanno avuto la fortuna di essere presenti a questa serata.

La parte maggiore del successo di questa elettrizzante «Elektra» va senza dubbio a Dimitri Mitropoulos, che ha saputo dare all'auditorio rapito, con la bellezza musicale della partitura, la fusione dell'eloquente linguaggio orchestrale col dramma e la passione delle voci umane, riuscendo a far «vivere» in ogni spettatore la meditazione e tormentata passione del dramma greco. L'eccezionale gruppo di cantanti gli ha dato l'appoggio necessario per raggiungere un perfetto equilibrio fra orchestra e scena. Inge Borkh, nella parte di Elektra, è oggi se non vocalmente la migliore, la più perfetta interprete di Elektra sulla scena. Essa fu e rimane, per tutta la durata dello spettacolo così gravoso, figlia di Re, all'altezza di sostenere — sia vocalmente che drammaticamente — tutta la gamma di furia, tenerezza, rabbia ed estasi fino alla scena finale di pazzia e morte. Bella, tenera e giovanile fu Lisa della Casa nella parte di Crisotemis, la cui voce di soprano, chiara, si accordava eccezionalmente bene col timbro più sicuro della voce della Borkh. Jean Madeira, nella parte di Clitennestra, è stata vocalmente molto espressiva, ma la sua caratterizzazione fu lievemente caricata. Kurt Borkh, Oreste, musicalmente vocalmente parlando, forse il più completo, apparve inadatto quale fratello di Elektra: la sua corporatura massiccia sembrava adattata meglio alla parte del padre. Tuttavia egli mostrò una gran dignità virile, dando alla scena del riconoscimento un'impronta di tenerezza commovente. La breve parte di Egisto, affidata a Max Lorenz, ha confermato il fatto che non esistono parti piccole per grandi artisti.

Sono state rilevate alcune manchevolezze nella direzione di scena di Herbert Graf, che ha preso alla lettera la descrizione della «notte», rendendola forse troppo realistica: la profonda oscurità era illuminata soltanto



Salisburgo. Jean Madeira (Clitennestra) Inge Borkh (Elektra) e Lisa Della Casa (Crisotemis) nella «Elektra» di Strauss, diretta dal maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos.

di tanto in tanto da insufficienti sprazzi di luce. Sul palcoscenico, durante le scene corali c'è stato un continuo movimento che distraeva dall'essenza del dramma. Il via vai di gente con torce e di soldati con spade ha disturbato alquanto. Peraltro, parlando del lato strettamente visuale, la rappresentazione è riuscita sommanente espressiva. Con un minimo di apparecchiatura e di scenari la Felsenreitschule fu trasformata nella corte interna del palazzo di Agamemnone ed i costumi, creati da Andreas Nomikos, riuscirono perfetti sia per lo stile che per le stoffe scelte, e appositamente tessute.

TRI BY GOTH

NEW PRODUCTION

Sumptuous 'Onegin' Opens Met Season

By RALPH HENRY LANG

NEW YORK — Monday night's opening of the Metropolitan Opera abounded in glitter, glamour, and elegance; everything and everybody seemed to exude a richness that would have rivaled the old Czarist court.

Monday night's gentry was strictly a champagne crowd; Imperial Russian guards officers in dashing uniforms, landed aristocrats in colorful finery, and ladies in the haughtiest of haute couture—those lovely Empire waistlines—bedecked with jewels that seemed every bit as genuine as the ones espied in the auditorium (and vice versa).

THERE ARE many operas with a ballroom scene, but "Eugene Onegin," Tchaikovsky's opening night, offers two, and Rolf Gerard the stage designer, obliged with some really stunning interiors and costumes that doubled the glamour prevailing on and off the stage.

The exterior splendor was fully matched by a cast such as only the court opera of yore could muster. Lucine Amara sang Tatyana, the sweet maiden who does not know that written invitations to love are hazardous because the recipient has too much time to weigh the pros and cons. She is one of the prides of the Met and her ample and beautiful soprano pleased everyone. The other ladies, Mesdames Rosa-

lind Elias and Martha Lipton, are both from the top drawer.

RICHARD TUCKER (Lenski) is a tenor who although an American celebrity, even in Naples is ranked only by San Gennaro. His luminous singing was cheered to the rafters. The well-earned tributes were shared by George London (Onegin), who at the lower vocal altitudes is as supreme as Mr. Tucker is in the stratosphere. Giorgio Tozzi (Cremmin) joined the two principals as their equal, even though he had only one song to offer. The supporting cast was every bit as good, Maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos—shaking with enthusiasm, conducted with fire and devotion, and Peter Brook directed with a fine perception for the Russian equivalent of Victorian gentility, though the populous scenes were just as well handled.

The opera itself is too pretty to be a good one. There are melodies galore and some really fine ones, but the industrious sparkling of Tchaikovsky's music, notably the elaborate details in the orchestra, and the eclectic and unbalanced optimism of his musical thought ruffle any listener alive to the graver graces and sterner elements of music drama. For want of a stronger grasp of theatrical realities, despite all its fine sense of beauty, "Eugene Onegin" misses a well-meant aim.

From NOV 2 1957
Christian Science Monitor
Boston, Mass.

Lucerne Festival Echoes

By Willi Reich

Lucerne

classically clear line and rhythmic verve.

Viennese Merits

The special merits of the Vienna Philharmonic, so rich in tradition—its nth degree musicality, its warmth and radiance of string tone, its colloquial, and at the same time accomplished, ease of ensemble, were evident in this their first appearance in Lucerne, as the sixth symphony concert unfolded under the baton of Dimitri Mitropoulos; and particularly in two pieces from the "Medea" ballet of the American, Samuel Barber. The ballet music was framed by a rendition of Schumann's First Symphony and Beethoven's Piano Concerto in E-flat major, the solo part of which was interpreted by the French pianist, Robert Casadesu, with cool but

From NOV 9 1957
HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

Gari Substitute for Tucker In Tchaikovsky's 'Onegin'

There was a major change of cast in last night's Metropolitan Opera production of Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin" as Giulio Gari sang the role of Lenski in substitution for Richard Tucker, who withdrew from the performance because of a death in his immediate family. The remaining cast members—all of them featured on the Met's opening night presentation on Oct. 28th—included George London as Onegin, Lucine Amara as Tatyana, Rosalind Elias as Olga, Martha Lipton as Madame Larina, Belen Amparan as Filippovna, Giorgio Tozzi as Prince Gremin and Louis Sgarro, George Cehanovsky and Alessio de Paolis. Dimitri Mitropoulos was again the conductor.

One of the debatable advantages of being suddenly thrust into a leading part rests with the fact that you do not have several weeks of preparation in which to grow, day by day, increasingly nervous. At any rate, Mr. Gari seemed not in the least shaken for undertaking a pivotal role on short notice. He was ever calm, ever in control of his technical resources.

These resources, however, are not known for their blinding brilliance, and on the present occasion the tenor's stock rose rather more on the basis of his making the most of a difficult position than on the inherent quality of his singing. As a result, Lenski emerged as a figure of little depth, personality or profile. He was a hot-blooded poet in action only, his voice conveying no genuine urgency or passion. Still, under the circumstance, Mr. Gari proved himself a trouper. Being hurtled

From NOV 4 - 1957
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.
The Kabalevsky Fourth.
Unable to attend last Thursday's premiere, I caught yesterday's magnificent performance of Kabalevsky's Fourth Symphony by Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic. This is music of immediate appeal and impact, masterly in makeup and build-up.

LOUIS BIANCOLLI.

Russian Works Presented At Philharmonic Concert

By Jay S. Harrison

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

CARNEGIE HALL, New York, N. Y.

Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos. The program: Excerpts from "Romeo and Juliet" Prokofiev

Symphony No. 4 (first performance in the U. S.) Kabalevsky

Dmitri Kabalevsky stands as a model for the glib composer. He never misgauges, miscalculates or makes errors. He hears what he writes, writes with facility, and tools every note and effect with a born craftsman's ear. His slickness is built-in, second nature; his technical grasp is firm and a thing of wonder.

This leaves the bulk of his compositional pursuits, naturally, to his native instincts, which are, on the one hand, exceedingly healthy and on the other excessively banal. Certainly, his Fourth Symphony, which received its first performance outside of Russia last night at the New York Philharmonic concert under Dimitri Mitropoulos' direction, is all of these things. It is precision-made, calculated to withstand wear and tear, and its expressivity wanders between formidable heights and bottomless pits.

Indeed, all of the symphony's joint strengths and weaknesses are implied right at the start, from the instant its first movement begins. A solo oboe enters on a plaintive cry and after some toying with it a swash-buckling main motive, all agitated and wild-eyed, sweeps gloom away, presumably for good. But Kabalevsky has other plans, other ideas. A sombre clarinet theme halts the action, allows for some additional moping as a respite before a final onslaught of rushing sonorities. And there you have it. A movement that grows hoarse from shouting, the whispers, and,

with its voice rested, shouts again. The tension of the entire episode, as a result, goes slack and it is possible for the mind to wander precisely as the composer's seems to have done. But the basic Kabalevsky issue remains the same; the success of his tumult or quietude is in direct proportion to the viability of his tunes. All of them are accessible, for Kabalevsky is not only a Russian composer but one who takes pleasure in pleasing the masses ability to respond without any great effort on its part. And some of his melodic fancies, for all their obviousness, are, in fact, quite infectious and suitable for development. Some—not all, the remainder being rather in the nature of padding rather than genuine symphonic grist.

The second movement of the Fourth, whose predecessor was set down more than twenty years ago, is also a study in mood, this time of a predominantly dark and sorrowful character. And the third is a meringue-like Scherzo that gives off a sweet if rather sickly odor. But again both of them are put together with so sure a hand that it is possible to overlook their thematic shortcomings for being bedazzled at the skill with which they are executed. In all, the work is of a kind that causes no surprise to a listener familiar with the composer's usual manner of composition. It says—to my receptivity, at any rate—not a great deal, though the language of the symphony is sufficiently adroit and clever to conceal its paucity of deep or affecting thought.

In a sense, too, the stature of new work was diminished by being placed alongside nine numbers from Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet" ballet. For "Romeo" is quite a fantastic piece in which disparate elements—stinging, grinding dissonances and gossamer threads of theme—are alternated, juxtaposed and yet make any sense at every turn. Furthermore, though the numbers chosen by Mr. Mitropoulos are very much of our time, they clearly mirror the century past and the great ballets produced in it.

It would be dishonest to say that in this performance one did not miss the spectacle of arched bodies and flying feet, for the music was palpably composed with the stage in mind. For all that, however, the piece is so graphic and its orchestral texture so remarkable—especially in the quieter sections—that a listener must work with stethoscopic ears to pull out all the delicate details that whirr by. "Romeo," in sum, is a grand, almost a great piece. Authentic poignancy it lacks, I find, but it is never very far from being exciting or invigorating. Performed as it was on this occasion, the suite made a royal splash of sound.

From NOV 11 1957
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

Music: Rewards at 'Y'

New York Chamber Ensemble Presents Program to Delight All Tastes

CHAMBER music lovers, whether of conservative or modern bent, could hardly have spent a more rewarding evening than at the opening concert of the New York Chamber Ensemble last night at the Ninety-second Street Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association.

The New York première of two expert and inviting American works were presented under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos. They were a "Petite Suite Bretonne" for nine instruments of two expert and inviting Rorem's "Sinfonia for Fifteen Wind Instruments."

The Suite, in seven movements, is almost laconic in style, with strongly profiled themes, and a sharp sense of color. Yet despite its economy of means and concentration, it manages to sound easy and relaxed. A conservative ear would find little to wound it here.

Mr. Rorem's Sinfonia, a four-movement score finished only this year, is no less engaging. Aside from the amusing

prank of its "Scherzando" finale, it is also the most substantial work by Mr. Rorem this reporter has heard.

A "Lento appassionato" movement speaks, in a brief space of time, with real passion in an idiom of sustained lyricism and sharp harmonic dissonance. The opening movement, marked "Like a motor," has character and drive, and does not sound as mechanical as the label might suggest.

The program opened with Mozart's D major Quartet for flute, violin, viola and cello, with John Wummer as the solo flutist. The performance was superb all around, and Mr. Wummer's artistry, in particular, was memorable.

Brahms' A minor Trio, Op. 114, followed, with Stanley Drucker producing tones of magical beauty on his clarinet and Heinrich Joachim, cellist, and Renata Joachim, pianist, joining in an ensemble of such sensitivity and warmth as is rarely heard, even at these fine concerts.

E. D.

From NOV 9 1957
Christian Science Monitor
Boston, Mass.

New Opera Ways in Vienna

By Rudolf Klein

Vienna

Immediately after the end of the Salzburg Festival the opera season begins in Vienna. It runs from Sept. 1 to the end of June, and thus includes 10 full months. Though the house is regularly sold out this, financially speaking, hardly justifies the cost. Only the propaganda value of the Vienna Staatsoper and its attraction for tourists compensate for the deficit which has been met without a murmur for many years by the State, that is, by the people collectively.

This form of financing makes every Austrian feel a vital interest in the fortunes of the house. With relief, too, it is bruited about from Vienna to Bregenz that latterly the institution has received a fresh impetus.

One remembers that after the Opera Festival two years ago at the opening of the rebuilt Opera House, when too much was attempted, we had a slump. This culminated in the resignation of the director at that time; and even when Herbert von Karajan took over the following year, tangible results were not at once apparent. But the present season, if it can continue as it now promises, should see the slump at last overcome.

This upswing could scarcely

take place without changes in the inner working of the house. It would be too much to say that Karajan has been wholly responsible for the improvement. At the same time he realized that the system previously prevailing was no longer workable and had to be replaced. The custom formerly was to maintain a standing ensemble, the members of which had to be in Vienna at least four months of the year. It was certainly an ideal arrangement, but an ideal which is unattainable in these days of airplanes and fabulous fees.

As a result, there has been a gradual but inevitable acceptance of the star system. What is called top talent is engaged, sometimes for weeks, often only for days. Up to now, the organizer has been able to cope successfully with the dangers of this method, which amounts to the internationalization of the Vienna Staatsoper.

Guest Artists

Many guest artists have come and gone. Not all were of the high standard one might wish. One singer, however, wholly fulfilled expectations—Inge Borkh. While not outstanding in every role, in the title part of Richard Strauss' "Elektra" she was an overwhelming experience through the glorious luminosity of her voice, and perhaps even more through the intensity of her acting. As a former actress she was able to put such expression into her gestures and movements that her performance was unanimously hailed.

Mme Borkh might not have achieved such a performance except under a conductor like Mitropoulos, whose popularity is constantly on the increase here. He is taking in his impulsive way the place once held by Furtwängler; and he proves the right complement to Karajan's brilliant, but dispassionate and somewhat intellectual style. The premiere of "Madama Butterfly" under Mitropoulos confirmed this anew.

Concerts Delayed

As for Karajan, though successful as an organizer, he is less fortunate artistically in the field of opera. In "Carmen" he achieved a very desirable bribe; but Verdi's "Falstaff," for which he brought settings and cast from Milan's La Scala to Salzburg, and later to Vienna, was below the mark, despite glorious voices and great precision. The orchestra was too prominent, the color being laid on with a palette knife.

From NOV 11 1957
World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

BIANCOLLI

A powerful sense of drama and suspense hung over the season's first "Tosca" at the Met Saturday afternoon, thanks to that master of the twin arts of theatre and music, Dimitri Mitropoulos.

The maestro had excellent cooperation from Antonietta Stella, whose "Vissi d'Arte" was her strongest singing to date at the Met; from Leonard Warren, a gripping study in sonorous villainy as Scarpia; and from Jan Peerce as Cavaradossi.

From NOV 10 1957
TIMES
TOSCA AT MET
IS SEASON'S FIRST

Antonietta Stella in Title Role and Leonard Warren as Scarpia Impressive

The season's first "Tosca" at the Metropolitan Opera yesterday afternoon had moments of unusually fine singing and moments of unusually powerful dramatic impact as well.

One listener could not remember a better performance, both vocally and dramatically, of the scene between Scarpia and Tosca at the end of Act II. The fine performers were Antonietta Stella and Leonard Warren.

Miss Stella, an outstanding vocalist, is an extremely effective actress also, and understands what the scene is all about. Her conception is that "Vissi d'arte" should be sung in a flat, lifeless tone, as if Tosca were stunned by the swift succession of events, as well Tosca might be.

In doing so the artist forgoes a tactical display at that point to make the stage situation more convincing. Can improvement on stepping out of character to sing one's big aria, then stepping back in again.

Fascinating, too, was the pantomime of the dagger; one could almost see the idea of stabbing Scarpia enter Tosca's mind. The entire finale of Act II was acted with a degree of skill not often found in operatic performance.

Scarpia is one of Mr. Warren's best roles. He brings to its varied demands the needed wide variety of dynamics and tone-colors. To realize the sly, insinuating manner of Scarpia when he is suavely menacing is at bottom a vocal problem. It demands absolute mastery of mezzo-voice, and in this branch of vocalism Mr. Warren is an expert. His Scarpia all through is an interesting and well-sung performance.

The dependable Jan Peerce sang a creditable Cavaradossi, and Ezio Flagello made a promising debut as the jailer. Others in the cast were Clifford Harvuot, Gerhard Pechner, Paul Franke, Calvin Marsh and George Keith. Dimitri Mitropoulos' conducting helped to make the performance good theatre.

J. B.

From NOV 10 1957
HERALD-TRIBUNE
Season's First
Met 'Tosca'

By Francis D. Perkins

Puccini's "Tosca" had its first performance of the season at the Metropolitan Opera House yesterday afternoon with three principals already known here in their roles: Antonietta Stella as Tosca, Jan Peerce as Mario Cavaradossi and Leonard Warren as Scarpia.

There was also a debut, that of Ezio Flagello, the New York bass who had won first place in last season's Auditions of the Air; he fared very commendably as the jailer, but that part is too transitory to give a definite idea of a young artist's talent.

The familiar operatic melodrama had a respectable but not particularly memorable presentation. Miss Stella's singing was generally appealing in color and clarity of tone; measures hinting at vocal effort were few, and "Vissi d'arte" did not lose expressiveness as she sang it with taste and discretion. But, as in her first Tosca here last season, her interpretation has not yet acquired the necessary positive personality; it was often discerning, but did not seem fully assured and integrated.

Mr. Peerce was generally in good voice; if slightly impassive in the first act, his Cavaradossi had no lack of passion in the second, and the pathos of "Elicevan le stelle" was convincingly realized. Mr. Warren's well sung Scarpia has gained in subtlety during his long acquaintance with the character; it is now a well thought-out impersonation which reveals its nefarious traits gradually and persuasively without unnecessary vociferation.

The orchestral playing was lucid and aware of fine dynamic distinctions under Dimitri Mitropoulos' leadership; voices and instruments were well balanced.

From NOV 12 1957
Journal of Commerce
New York, N. Y.

Stella, Peerce Score In 'Tosca' at Met

With conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos in full command, the Metropolitan Opera's first presentation of "Tosca" for the season was Puccini at his best—a perfect blending of vocal brilliance and orchestral perfection.

In the title role of Floria Tosca, Antonietta Stella exhibited remarkable power and projection, eliciting frequent cheers from an appreciative audience. Jan Peerce was equally well received, while Leonard Warren, as is usually the case in any of his performances, again proved that he is not only one of the finest baritones on the "Met" roster but is also one of its most convincing actors.



EYES UP: The miracle of tall buildings still holds sway.

PHOTOS BY MANNY FUCHS



HERALD SQUARE: Waiting for Minerva and her bell-ringers to toll the hour as matinee time approaches.

Middletown To The Met: A Dream Come True

By JULIE STEWART
Record Society Editor

When the great gold curtains at the Metropolitan Opera House parted Saturday afternoon to show the interior of a famous church in Rome, 33 Middletown youngsters were in the audience which filled the huge theater to overflowing.

Dressed in their frilliest party dresses or suits with white shirts and ties, as befitted the occasion, the children sat absorbed as the colorful scenes of "Tosca" came to life. Interpreted by some of the world's finest singers and instrumentalists. The graceful and dramatic music filled their ears, as the stage settings filled their eyes. These were music students, and this was music at its best.

They were hearing the wondrous voice of Jan Peerce as Mario and the bell-like soprano of Met newcomer Antonietta Stella in the leading role, fresh from La Scala. The great hall thundered to the rolling tones of Leonard Warren as he played Scarpia.

HIGH OVERHEAD, the great chandelier tinkled in response to the swelling music and even the frescoed angels on the ceiling smiled in approval.

The young people, from the smallest, aged six, to the tallest, aged 15, knew this was a day long to be remembered. It is not every year that you can take a bus trip to New York on a sunny fall day, getting there in time for lunch at the Automat, with a chance to wander down to Herald Square to view Minerva and her bell ringers (but not, unfortunately, at the moment to see them strike the big bronze bell which chimes the hours) before the opera starts.

And then, the opera house itself! It doesn't look so very large from the outside, as New York buildings go -- only five stories or so. But as we go in, the lobby is crowded with people, and a line stretches outside down the sidewalk and around the corner. What are these people waiting for? Why, a chance to stand up and see the opera. There are no more seats? Not in that entire house, and it seats close to 4,000 persons.

IN WE GO, past the ticket-takers, up the wide red carpeted stair cases until we get to our seats. Above the orchestra level is the Parterre, where the "Diamond Horseshoe" encloses the best seats in the house in a magic circle of boxes, each enclosed with its own small sitting room.

Winding up the stairs we come next to the Grand Tier, where the boxes are open and other seats are ranged behind them; then the Dress Circle, which has no boxes; and the Balcony, where we find our seats at last. Above us is the Family Circle, which is the topmost gallery. Are we too high to hear well? Not in the Metropolitan, where the acoustics are so fine it doesn't matter where you sit. You see well, too.

We lose no time in putting down our coats so we may go to the front of our aisle and look down on the rest of the theater from our dizzy height. How awfully far it is to the orchestra! Hold on tight to the brass bar, or you'll fall! "Mommie, what would happen if I fall?" No need to worry about the possible repercussions of this blood-and-thunder opera on the young mind -- this is life, but the young are not afraid of it!

Back to our seats, we are ready as the orchestra members file in, the conductor arrives (to much applause -- he is world-famous Dimitri Mitropoulos) and the house lights go dim as the gold curtains part. The music bursts forth and we are back in Italy 150 years ago, in a church where an artist is painting a picture of Mary Magdalene near a scaffolding, and a statue of the Virgin stands ready to be decorated with flowers as worshippers sign themselves with holy water at her feet.

BEFORE THE ACT is over we have seen the heroine, Tosca, in brilliant blue-green velvet train and black plumed bonnet; Mario, her lover, the painter; her brother, an escaped prisoner; and Scarpia, the wicked Chief of Police. We have seen also, incidentally, a church procession with the cardinal in his gorgeous red robes, the bishop, many choristers and acolytes, also in red; and passersby all attending a service in another part of the church.

METROPOLITAN OPERA

SATURDAY AFTERNOON NOVEMBER 9 - AT 2 P.M.

SUBSCRIPTION PERFORMANCE

FIRST TIME THIS SEASON

GIACOMO PUCCINI

TOSCA

CONDUCTOR: DIMITRI MITROPOULOS

PRODUCTION BY DINO YANNOPOULOS

PRODUCTION DESIGNED BY FREDERICK FOX

STAGE DIRECTOR: NATHANIEL MERRILL



THE MET: Show bills announce the magic moment after months of waiting.

BUFFALO NEWS
Wednesday, November 20, 1957



LEONARD BERNSTEIN
Succeeds Mitropoulos

Bernstein Is Named Musical Director of N. Y. Philharmonic

BUFFALO EVENING NEWS BUREAU
NEW YORK, Nov. 20.—Leonard Bernstein was named Tuesday as musical director of the New York Philharmonic, the first American-born, American-trained conductor to hold that post.

He will succeed Dimitri Mitropoulos, who resigned effective at the end of the present season to concentrate on conducting at the Metropolitan Opera.

The announcement was made at a luncheon given by David M. Keiser, president of the Philharmonic.

Mr. Mitropoulos, who became conductor of the Philharmonic in 1950, and its musical director the following year, said that the "intrusion" in his career "of that very tempting mistress, the Metropolitan Opera," had led him to the realization he could not successfully carry on his work there and at the Philharmonic as well.

Started Conducting in 1939

His appearances at the Metropolitan began in 1954, but in recent years have so increased that there have been weeks when between the Metropolitan and the Philharmonic, Mr. Mitropoulos has conducted as many as six major performances in seven days.

Mr. Bernstein was Mr. Mitropoulos' choice to succeed him, Mr. Keiser said. Mr. Bernstein, 39, is the youngest to become sole musical director of the Philharmonic, except for John Barbirolli, who was a few months younger when he became in 1937 the Philharmonic's regular conductor, a post he held three years.

Mr. Bernstein said Tuesday he turned to conducting for the first time in 1939 at Mr. Mitropoulos' suggestion. He had met the conductor two years earlier at a musical tea at Harvard where Mr. Bernstein was a student.

OSWEGO PALLADIUM TIMES
Wednesday, November 20, 1957

First American Conductor For Philharmonic

NEW YORK (AP)—The New York Philharmonic will have its first American-born, American-trained conductor next season.

Dimitri Mitropoulos turned over the role yesterday to Leonard Bernstein, who credits the Greek musician with first interesting him in conducting 21 years ago.

The 39-year-old Bernstein was then a sophomore at Harvard College.

"To hear him abdicate is at once heartbreaking for me and at the same time it fills me with a sense of responsibility," Bernstein said yesterday.

He becomes the second youngest to hold the post in the Philharmonic's 116-year-old history. John Barbirolli was 38 when he took over from Arturo Toscanini at the end of the 1936-37 season.

Mitropoulos and Bernstein were co-conductors this season. Mitropoulos said he is resigning to concentrate on conducting at the Metropolitan Opera.

PRESS
Jamaica, N. Y.

Local Boy Makes Good

For the first time in American music history, a major eastern orchestra has chosen an American-born, American-trained conductor.

The 116-year-old New York Philharmonic said yesterday Leonard Bernstein is getting a three-year contract, effective next fall, as music director.

"I would not have been so happy if it had been anyone else," said Dimitri Mitropoulos, resigning his New York post after a nine-year tenure. Greek-born Mitropoulos will spend most of his time in the future with the Metropolitan Opera.

"The first person with talent whom I discovered when I came to this country in 1936," said Mitropoulos, "was Lenny Bernstein."

From NOV 20 1957
TIMES

Leonard Bernstein Heads Philharmonic

By ROSS PARMENTER

Leonard Bernstein has been named the musical director of the New York Philharmonic for the next three years.

He will be the first American-born conductor and the second youngest to hold the post, which has been held by such men as Walter Damrosch, Willem Mengelberg, Arturo Toscanini, Arturo Rodzinski and Dimitri Mitropoulos.

It was Mr. Mitropoulos who announced his successor yesterday. He said he was not resigning, but "abdicated with joy." He said that the 39-year-old Mr. Bernstein, who is his co-conductor this season, was his choice as the man to take over the full responsibility of the orchestra's musical direction.

The announcement was made in the art gallery of the Century Association, 7 West Forty-third Street. Members of the musical press were invited there to hear it by David M. Keiser, president of the Philharmonic.

Mr. Mitropoulos, who has received his share of criticism as well as praise, took advantage of the occasion to suggest that critics should give more support to the Philharmonic.

"It is all right to write what you believe," he said. "But sometimes you should also think that when you write something disagreeable it doesn't only hurt the conductor; it also hurts the Philharmonic."

"The Philharmonic needs more support and less criticism. If too many critical things are printed, the public loses faith."

In introducing Mr. Bernstein, Mr. Mitropoulos said that his successor's appointment was a sign that America was now so grown up musically that it could offer such an important post to an American-born and American-trained musician.

Mr. Mitropoulos is 61. He has been a major figure at the Philharmonic since the 1949-50 season when he was named co-conductor with Leopold Stokowski. He served as full musical director from the fall of 1950 until last spring.

"I almost surpassed the limits of the assignment," he said. "The Philharmonic can't have a permanent conductor for life. I believe it should get the juice of every talented man for a certain time. And I will always be at its service as a guest conductor."

Mr. Mitropoulos began conducting at the Metropolitan Opera in December, 1954. He cited the opera as "the intrusion of a very tempting mistress" that had brought a new joy into his life. And he said one reason that he was abdicating was because, with so much activity at the opera house, he could not fill the responsibilities of a full-time director of the Philharmonic.

Barbirolli Was Younger

Mr. Bernstein will be the second youngest man in the Philharmonic's 116-year-old history to hold the post of director. The man who was younger was John Barbirolli, who was only 38 when he took over the post left empty by Toscanini at the end of the 1936-37 season.

In his speech of acceptance, Mr. Bernstein spoke of two cycles: the fourteen-year one of his association with the Philharmonic and the twenty-one-year cycle of his friendship with Mr. Mitropoulos.

He first sought out the Greek conductor in 1937, when Mr. Mitropoulos was guest-conducting the Boston Symphony and Mr. Bernstein was a sophomore at Harvard College. Mr. Mitropoulos, he said, was the first one who ever said to him "you ought to be a conductor." This, he said, was long before he studied conducting under Fritz Reiner at the Curtis Institute and under the late Serge Koussevitzky at Tanglewood.

Mr. Bernstein's association with the Philharmonic began in the fall of 1943 when he obtained the post of associate conductor. And it was on Nov. 15 of that year that he came to fame when he took over a concert on short notice because of the illness of Bruno Walter. Since that time his fame has been increasing in various fields -- as a serious composer, as a composer of successful musical comedies, as a conductor and as a television personality.

Mr. Bernstein also is a pianist, and in his first appearance with the Philharmonic this season on Jan. 2 he will be heard as pianist-conductor in the United States premiere of Dmitri Shostakovich's Second Piano Concerto. He has done this dual role before, and he generally leads the orchestra by bobbing his head.

When he is on the podium, he seldom uses a baton. He is noted for the way his gestures shake with intensity as he exhorts the orchestra to the excitement he wants to create.

Mr. Bernstein's salary as musical director was not disclosed.

From NOV 23 1957
Christian Science Monitor
Boston, Mass.

Kabelevsky's Fourth Symphony became the first Philharmonic premiere of the season. Introduced by Dimitri Mitropoulos it sounded thoroughly professional, quite Russian, and somewhat out-of-date in its appeal to the crowd. This was its first hearing outside the Soviet.

Bernstein Takes Baton Of N. Y. Philharmonic

NEW YORK (AP)—The New York Philharmonic will have its first American-born, American-trained conductor next season.

"Abdicating with joy," sixty-one-year-old Dimitri Mitropoulos turned over the role yesterday to Leonard Bernstein, who credits the Greek musician with first interesting him in conducting 21 years ago.

The thirty-nine-year-old Bernstein was then a sophomore at Harvard College. He becomes the second youngest to hold the post in the Philharmonic's 116-year-old history.

From NOV 20 1957

NEWS

Washington, D. C.

LEAVING WITH JOY

Mr. Mitropoulos, 61, announced Mr. Bernstein's choice as his successor and said he was "abdicated with joy." The Greek-born conductor, who has headed the Philharmonic since 1950, said he was no longer able to direct the orchestra and meet the demands of "a very tempting mistress," the Metropolitan Opera, where he has been conducting also for the last three years.

NOV 24 1957
TIMES



Leonard Bernstein, left, with Dimitri Mitropoulos, whom he succeeds as conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, after press conference yesterday.

Philharmonic Names Bernstein

By Paul V. Beckley
Leonard Bernstein was named yesterday as musical director of the New York Philharmonic, the first American-born, American-trained conductor to hold that post. He will succeed Dimitri Mitropoulos, who resigned effective at the end of the present season to concentrate on conducting at the Metropolitan Opera.

From EVENING NEWS
Newark, N. J.
NOV 22 1957

Fine Choice

MUSIC lovers will undoubtedly approve the New York Philharmonic's enterprise in appointing Leonard Bernstein as its new musical director. The 39-year-old conductor has been considered one of America's most talented and popular musicians during the last decade, with a powerful appeal to the public that in all likelihood will bolster the orchestra's financial position.

It has become obvious that there can be no complaint against Dimitri Mitropoulos, the orchestra's retiring musical director. Mr. Mitropoulos' success as an opera conductor at the Metropolitan has been marked and it was inevitable that, when the choice was made, the glamour of opera should prove stronger.

In Mr. Bernstein, the Philharmonic has a director who never has been overly fond of tradition. Into his relatively few years he has packed success in at least four careers. He is a success as a composer in the Broadway-jazz idiom, as in the current "West Side Story." His ballet scores long have been favored. As a composer of serious music, he has merited the respect of critics. His conductorial skill has become renowned on three continents. That he is also a pianist of solo caliber and a popular television lecturer seems almost too much.

With a new musical director firmly ensconced, perhaps the Philharmonic now can turn to the burning problem of a new home for itself, something that will have to be achieved by the end of next season.

The 'New' Philharmonic

Ever since Arturo Toscanini left the helm of the New York Philharmonic in 1936, America's oldest symphony orchestra has drifted in the uneasy ways of indecision. Too numerous to mention are the permanent and guest conductors, both strong and weak, who have tried to guide its bumpy course. Meantime, the other two members of the U.S. "Big Three"—the Boston Symphony and the Philadelphia Orchestra—sailed along confidently under boards and managements which were unified behind one man (Serge Koussevitzky and then Charles Munch in Boston, and Eugene Ormandy in Philadelphia).

At the end of the 1955-56 season, two of New York's most influential music critics, Howard Taubman of The New York Times and Paul Henry Lang of The New York Herald Tribune, finally rose in a rage at this sad state of music. Castigating the Philharmonic's board and management for its vacillation and lack of policy, both men also assailed Dimitri Mitropoulos, the orchestra's permanent conductor since 1950, for various sins. They alleged that he was weak in the classic repertoire, poor as a drillmaster, and even as a beater of time. Taubman wrote: "It follows that Mr. Mitropoulos may not be the wisest choice for musical director."

Whether by coincidence or design, the Philharmonic announced last season that the responsibility for the 1957-58 concerts would be divided between Mitropoulos and Leonard Bernstein, the boy-wonder conductor, pianist, composer, and television personality. Bernstein had begun his spectacular career with the orchestra in 1943 when, as assistant conductor, he filled in at the last minute for Artur Rodzinski, then the symphony's permanent conductor.

'Lonesome for Beethoven': This week in New York, the inevitable was finally announced. As of next season, 39-year-old Leonard Bernstein will be music director of the New York Philharmonic for the next three years. The 61-year-old Mitropoulos, who has been enjoying great success at the Metropolitan Opera and in concert and opera overseas, has said of late that he is no longer in his "first youth." Thus, he feels the time has come "to decrease the sheer quantity" of his responsibilities.

The new appointment also offers Bernstein an opportunity to limit and concentrate all his activity. "I am not in my 20s any more," he said recently. "As one gets older, one discovers more depths, and wishes to explore those depths. I want time to think deep thoughts about music. I get lonesome for Beethoven, and that means living with Beethoven, not just listening to him."

Newsweek, November 25, 1957

BROOKLYN BROADWAY NEWS
Friday, November 29, 1957

'Eugene Onegin' Greatly Performed

by Lyn Newcomb

Monday night the Metropolitan Opera again gave its production of "Eugene Onegin." Lucine Amara as Tatiana, George London as Eugene Onegin and Richard Tucker as Lenski all gave adequate performances. The cast also included Martha Lipton, Rosalind Elias, Giorgio Tozzi, Belen Ampanar, Louis Sgarro, George Cehanovsky and Alessio De Paolis.

Dimitri Mitropoulos' masterful interpretation of Tchaikovsky's work received well-deserved applause from the audience. The choreographer Zachary Solov, played magnificent tribute to this opera whose libretto was taken from the work of the Russian poet, Pushkin. The costumes, designed by Rolf Gerard, added much splendor to the ballroom scenes. Although not one of the most popular operas, the performance was an exceptional piece of entertainment.

The Vision of America

Back in 1939, Dmitri Mitropoulos, world famed conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, attended the graduating exercises at Harvard University. He spoke to one of the young men who was graduating from the School of Music.

"Young man," said the great conductor of one of the world's greatest musical organizations, "take my advice and study to become a conductor. I think you'll be right up on top before very long."

The name of the young music graduate was Leonard Bernstein. It was just announced that Leonard Bernstein is to succeed Dmitri Mitropoulos as conductor of the N. Y. Philharmonic.

It may sound a bit gauche to editorialize on a musical event at a time when sputniks, ICBM's, and trips to the moon are the news of the day. And yet, in a sense, it is timely, too. For it emphasizes once again the legend of America which daily becomes a living reality in our land. It is the true myth of the rise of anyone who has the desire and the perseverance to go after, and attain, his heart's desire in our country.

For Leonard Bernstein is the Horatio Alger story retold for modern tastes. It is a story of achievement in the cultural field and, when the final war is fought and the nations start to rebuild for world peace, shall it not be the cultural fulfillment of men that will be the goal of the newer and brighter world?

So we salute the young Mr. Bernstein, not yet forty years of age, son of a father who was a salesman of beauty supplies, member of a "minority" group, a student who had to work and struggle to maintain himself through the college of his choice. His was not the royal road to ease and plenty. But he spent his formative years preparing himself for the opportunity which he felt certain his country would one day make available to him. And when opportunity called, back in 1943, when the young Leonard stepped in to take the place of the ailing Bruno Walter, the young man was ready and willing.

In a broader sense, therefore, Leonard Bernstein is the epitome of America's youth — imaginative, industrious and possessed of a vision — the vision of a bountiful America.

QUEENS OBSERVER

Thursday, November 28, 1957

Mitropoulos Resigns Philharmonic Post; Leonard Bernstein Is Named Musical Director for Three Years

Dimitri Mitropoulos, one of the two Principal Conductors of the New York Philharmonic during the current season and its Musical Director from 1951-52 through 1956-57, has announced his resignation from regular Philharmonic activities, to become effective at the close of the 1957-58 season.

Leonard Bernstein, who is sharing the Principal Conductorship of the present season with Mr. Mitropoulos, has been appointed Musical Director for a three-year period beginning with the 1958-59 season.

The announcements were made Tuesday, November 19, at a luncheon given for members of the press by David M. Keiser, President of the New York Philharmonic, at the Century Club, 7 West 43rd Street.

In announcing his resignation, Mr. Mitropoulos stated that he was no longer "in first youth" and that the time has come for him to decrease the sheer quantity of his responsibilities. His activities increased heavily in 1954 when his association with the Metropolitan Opera Association began, and which has since resulted in as many as six major public performances a week between the two organizations. Though giving up his musical direction of the Philharmonic, Mr. Mitropoulos indicated that his services will always be at the Society's disposal.

The appointment of Mr. Bernstein followed Mr. Mitropoulos' strong recommendation to the Board of Directors of the Society that the post be placed in the hands of the American-born conductor.

Leonard Bernstein, the first American-born and trained conductor to be given the full musical direction of the New York Philharmonic, began his connection with the Philharmonic in 1943 when he was engaged as Assistant Conductor for that season by Artur Rodzinski. In November of that year, he made his brilliant and now historic debut conducting at the last moment for the indisposed Bruno Walter. He appeared as guest in 1944-45, 1949-1950, 1950-51 and 1956-1957. For the current season he is, with Mr. Mitropoulos, Principal Conductor of the orchestra.

Both Mr. Keiser and Bruno Zitrato, the orchestra's Managing Director, expressed to Mr. Mitropoulos the appreciation of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society for his great and extensive service and his unselfish devotion to the Society.

Mr. Keiser stated that the appointment of Mr. Bernstein thru the 1958-59 season is expected to insure continuity of leadership into the Philharmonic's new sphere of activity as the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.

Dimitri Mitropoulos has been associated with the New York

Philharmonic since the season of 1940-1941, when he first appeared as guest conductor. In the years which followed, regular visits to the orchestra increased his musical reputation and personal following. In 1950, he was Conductor of the Philharmonic, and was Musical Director from 1951-1952 through 1956-1957. He has conducted the leading orchestras of the world and before joining the Philharmonic on a permanent basis, was Musical Director of the Minneapolis Symphony from 1937 through the spring of 1949.

Oroville, Calif.
Mercury Register
(Cir. 4,835)

NOV 26 1957



UNDER NEW DIRECTION — Leonard Bernstein, 39, looks happy over being appointed new musical director of the New York Philharmonic for the next three years. Beside him is Ne York is Dimitri Mitropoulos, retiring director who recommended him. Mitropoulos will devote his full time to the Metropolitan Opera. Bernstein is the Philharmonic's first American-born conductor and second youngest to hold the post. (International)

NEW CONDUCTOR WILL FLY TO N.O.

Mitropoulos Accepts Invitation for Guest Spot

Dimitri Mitropoulos, until this week music director of the New York Philharmonic and one of the foremost conductors of the world, Wednesday accepted an invitation to act as guest conductor of the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra for the concert on Tuesday, Dec. 10.

He will replace Alexander Hilsberg, music director of the orchestra who is in Touro infirmary recovering from a heart attack.

Announcement of Mitropoulos' acceptance was made by Dr. Joseph C. Morris, president of the symphony society, after Jack F. Dailey, symphony manager, informed him in a telephone conversation from New York city that the contract with Mitropoulos had been signed.

Mitropoulos is scheduled for a regular performance at the Metropolitan Opera house in New York Dec. 7 and in a telephone call to his New Orleans friends, Mr. and Mrs. William G. Helis Jr., he agreed to take a midnight plane following the opera performance to reach New Orleans in time to hold rehearsals of the orchestra on Sunday, Dec. 8.

Originally scheduled as an all-Brahms program by Maestro Hilsberg, the concert program has been changed and will include a performance (second in the United States) of Kabalevsky's Symphony No. 4. Soloists in the Double Concerto of Brahms will be Norman Carol, orchestra concertmaster, and Barton Frank, principal cellist.

Mitropoulos resigned as music director of the New York Philharmonic this past week to devote more of his time to his conducting at the Metropolitan Opera. He was succeeded by Leonard Bernstein.

WORDS and MUSIC

By Harriett Johnson

Bernstein Named Philharmonic Head

Dimitri Mitropoulos announced his own resignation as musical director of the N. Y. Philharmonic yesterday at a meeting held in the art gallery of the conservative Century Club, 7 West 43d St.

Naming 39-year-old Leonard Bernstein as his successor, he remarked, "For private and professional reasons, I abdicate with joy." Bernstein has been appointed for a three-year period beginning with the 1958-59 season. He becomes the first American-born and American-trained musician to be given the full directorship of the orchestra, and the second youngest in its history. John Barbirolli, who followed Toscanini in 1937, was 38.

Philharmonic President David M. Keiser remarked in confirming the appointment, "Lennie, after a lot of thought, decided he would be willing to give up his other activities in order to devote himself to the orchestra."

Reservations regarding Bernstein as Mitropoulos' successor have stemmed primarily from the fact of his many talents. The fear has been that pressure to

conducting at the Metropolitan Opera.

The announcement was made yesterday at a luncheon given by David M. Keiser, president of the Philharmonic, at the Century Club, 7 W. 43d St.

Mr. Mitropoulos, who became conductor of the Philharmonic in 1950 and its musical director the following year, said that the "intrusion" in his career "of that very tempting mistress the Metropolitan Opera," had led him to the realization he could not successfully carry on his work there and at the Philharmonic as well.

His appearances at the Metropolitan began in 1954, but in recent years have so increased that there have been weeks when between the Metropolitan and the Philharmonic, Mr. Mitropoulos has conducted as many as six major performances in seven days.

It was due to this increase in his work load that he resigned as musical director at the beginning of this season, electing to share the podium with Mr. Bernstein.

Mr. Bernstein was Mr. Mitropoulos' choice to succeed him, Mr. Keiser said. Mr. Bernstein, thirty-nine, is the youngest to become sole musical director of the Philharmonic, except for John Barbirolli, who was a few months younger when he became in 1937 the Philharmonic's regular conductor, a post he held three years.

Advised by Mitropoulos

Mr. Bernstein said yesterday he turned to conducting for the first time in 1939 at Mr. Mitropoulos' suggestion. He had met the conductor two years earlier at a musical tea at Harvard where Mr. Bernstein was a student. "Twenty-one years later," he said, "to hear him abdicate is at once heart-breaking for me and at the same time it fills me with a sense of responsibility."

From NOV 27 1957
TIMES
ORCHESTRA UNIT MEETS

Friends of Philharmonic Hold Annual Luncheon

The annual luncheon of the Friends of the Philharmonic took place at the Waldorf-Astoria yesterday, with 1,200 friends of the orchestra present.

The principal speaker was G. Wallace Harrison, architect for the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.

He reported on progress in planning for the center, which is to include a new auditorium for concerts of the Philharmonic.

David M. Keiser, president of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society of New York, paid tribute to Dimitri Mitropoulos, who retires this season as musical director of the orchestra, and to his successor, Leonard Bernstein.

Six songs were performed by Julie Andrews, star of "My Fair Lady."

Possibly stemming from the considerable criticism which has been leveled at management, conductor and ensemble during recent seasons, he spoke candidly to members of the press present. "Be truthful to yourselves and to your work. Remember that every time you write something disagreeable it hurts not only the conductor but the Philharmonic."

In speaking of Mitropoulos' achievements during his tenure, Keiser mentioned particularly his unforgettable, incandescent concert performances of Strauss' "Elektra" and Alban Berg's opera, "Wozzeck."

Critic's Corner

A celebrity on short order has been delivered to the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony to help fill the breach during the convalescence of Maestro Alexander Hilsberg.

As announced earlier, Dimitri Mitropoulos will be on the podium for the sixth subscription concert Dec. 10.

This will be Mitropoulos' first appearance with the resident orchestra. On previous occasions, he has headed his own ensemble here in tour engagements.

ALWAYS subject to wide attention, Mitropoulos, recently

took headlines when he announced his withdrawal as music director of the New York Philharmonic at the end of the current season.

Previously in exclusive charge of the orchestra, he shared direction and titular honors with Leonard Bernstein this year. Bernstein has been named the new music director for 1958-59, but it is understood that Mitropoulos will return to the Philharmonic for a generous share of concerts.

Mitropoulos' resignation leaves him free to devote more time to an increasing activity in opera. He has been on the Metropolitan Opera roster for

Mitropoulos: Forceful Music Personality

with Desmet.

He was repetiteur at the Berlin Opera until 1925, thereafter starting his symphonic career in Athens. He was appointed conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony in 1935, and went to the New York Philharmonic as co-conductor with Stokowski in 1949.

He was appointed music director of the Philharmonic the following season.

Like any forceful music personality, Mitropoulos has aroused controversy on occasion. It is generally agreed, however, that he has few peers in probing a work, especially a modern one, for

emotional content.

"The theater is in his blood," Olin Downes once remarked of Mitropoulos.

In New Orleans, Mitropoulos will adopt Hilsberg's all-Brahms program with one exception. Dimitri Kabalevsky's Fourth Symphony will replace the Brahms Third.

The program will retain Brahms' "Academic Festival" Overture and the Double Concerto, with concertmaster Norman Carol and Barton Frank, principal cellist, as soloists.

Frank Gagnard

From DEC 1 1957

MUSICAL LEADER
CHICAGO, ILL.

With the Orchestras

New York Philharmonic

At a luncheon for members of the press on Nov. 19, it was announced that Leonard Bernstein will be Musical Director of the New York Philharmonic for a three-year period beginning with the 1958-59 season. Dimitri Mitropoulos has resigned as of the close of the current season. When Mr. Mitropoulos asked that Mr. Bernstein share the Principal Conductorship with him for the 1957-58 season, it seemed clear that he intended him to be the heir-apparent. Since 1954, when he made his first appearance at the Metropolitan Opera, Mitropoulos has had an unusually heavy schedule. With his flair for the dramatic, he has been reluctant to curtail his activities at the opera. This appointment is a tremendous challenge. Not only is Leonard Bernstein almost the youngest man to attain this post, he is also the first American-born and trained conductor to be given full musical direction of the New York Philharmonic. The Philharmonic has the musicians who can execute first-rate performances. They need the undeviating devotion of a musical director whose interest first and foremost is the development of the orchestra toward a goal of high ideals.

On Oct. 31, Mr. Mitropoulos led the Philharmonic in a program devoted to two Soviet composers. Featured was the first performance in the Western Hemisphere of Kabalevsky's Fourth Symphony. The work is pleasant enough, but it offers nothing, except in instrumentation, to mark it as a 20th century offering. It follows in the Tchaikovsky tradition, and should offend no one. The program opened with excerpts from Prokofiev's wonderful ballet, "Romeo and Juliet." Highest praise should be given to Mr. Mitropoulos and the orchestra. The performances were brilliant. Rarely have we heard the Philharmonic play with more precision and style.

From DEC 1 - 1957

STAR LEDGER

NEWARK, N. J.



Leonard Bernstein and Dimitri Mitropoulos
The Philharmonic stays: we come and go

From DEC 2 1957

BILLBOARD

Cincinnati, Ohio

DUKAS: SORCERER'S APPRENTICE; WEINBERGER: SCHWANDA; LISZT: LES PRELUDES; STRAUSS: SALOME; DANCE OF THE SEVEN VEILS (1-12")

New Philharmonic Ork (Mitropoulos)—Columbia ML 5198—Mitropoulos generates excitement in these interpretations of selections he has always found congenial. There are few conductors who can so galvanize a performance and the fine engineering on this disk heightens the interest even more.

From

DEC 10 1957

ITEM New Orleans, La.

BY LAURRAINE GOREAU

Venerable Dimitri Mitropoulos, whose inspired baton leads the Symphony tonight, used to be an enthusiastic mountain climber. . . . He sighs that now, the highest he gets is his hotel penthouse in New York.

From DEC 6 1957

STATES

New Orleans, La.

PIE DUFOUR'S

A La Mode

Mitropoulos Has Busy Rehearsal Schedule for N. O. Symphony

A bundle of dynamic nerves named Dimitri Mitropoulos will rush into town this week end and immediately jump neck deep into the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra.

Mitropoulos, who recently resigned as musical director of the New York Philharmonic Symphony to devote himself to more operatic performances at the Metropolitan, is the first of four guest-conductors to substitute for Alexander Hilsberg, presently mending from a mild heart attack.

Mitropoulos is no stranger to older New Orleans music-lovers for he conducted the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra here in the days before World War II.

He will be recalled as a wiry, energetic conductor and he will have ample opportunity here to expend some of his energy, for he has set a back-breaking schedule for himself, and the musicians, for the preparation of Tuesday night's concert.

A Sunday afternoon rehearsal starts off Mitropoulos' activities, to be followed by two rehearsals, morning and afternoon, on Monday and a final rehearsal in the Auditorium on Tuesday morning. And then, Tuesday night, comes the concert.

Mitropoulos is a great one for rehearsals, even if it costs him money out of his own pocket. Some years ago, when he wished to honor one of his teachers, Busoni, by conducting a whole program of his music, he could not fit the rehearsals into the regular practice schedule of the New York Philharmonic Symphony, he called a special rehearsal session and paid the musicians himself.

Another story told about Mitropoulos' indifference to money is that once, when with the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, he was offered an increased salary, he requested that money be split up among the lowest paid members of the orchestra.

Mitropoulos' appearance here has aroused considerable interest and the box office sale has been steady and brisk for the past few days and one of the season's largest crowds is expected to be on hand on Tuesday night.

Maestro Hilsberg has built a

grand orchestra here and the distinguished visiting conductors will find it a magnificent instrument with which to reveal their particular talents.

The wonderful way in which young Jacques Brouman took over for Mr. Hilsberg was a tribute to both his musicianship and his gumption. But he was fortunate to have what I think is a truly great orchestra with him to work.

And that is what Messrs. Mitropoulos, Vladimir Golschmann, Eric Leinsdorf and Carlos Chavez will discover in due time.

From DEC 7 1957

STATES

New Orleans, La.

Symphony Leader Is Mitropoulos

Dimitri Mitropoulos, internationally renowned conductor, will conduct the New Orleans Philharmonic Symphony Tuesday at Municipal Auditorium.

Maestro Mitropoulos will arrive tomorrow at 1:30 p. m. on an Eastern Air Lines flight from New York where he has been conducting the Metropolitan Opera's production of "Eugene Onegin."

He now devotes most of his musical time to conducting the Met. Last week he resigned as director of the New York Philharmonic, a post he had held since 1951.

Maestro Mitropoulos, a native of Athens, Greece, became a United States citizen in 1946.



DIMITRI MITROPOULOS

From DEC 8 - 1957

TIMES PICAYUNE

Russian Symphony Scheduled

Dimitri Mitropoulos, music director until the end of the season for the New York Philharmonic, guest director at the Metropolitan Opera, and Greek-born musician of world fame, will be the special guest soloist at the sixth concert of the season of the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra.

The concert will be presented at 8:30 p. m. Tuesday in Municipal Auditorium.

As a result of Mitropoulos' visit, the program will contain the second performance in this country of the relatively new Dimitri Kabalevsky Symphony No. 4.

Also on the program will be Brahms' Academic Festival Overture and Brahms' Double Concerto for Violin, Cello and Orchestra.

Soloists for the latter will be Norman Carol, the orchestra's concertmaster, and Barton Frank, the principal cellist, both new to the symphony this season.

Mitropoulos was born and educated in Athens, member of a family of priests and monks. He intended to become a priest himself until he discovered he would be unable to continue his musical studies, whereupon he entered Athens Conservatory. In 1921, he was appointed director of the conservatory and an assistant conductor of the Berlin Opera. In 1930, he was invited to make his debut with the Berlin Philharmonic, a debut which became a double one—as conductor and pianist—when pianist Egon Petri became ill before the concert and Mitropoulos substituted for him.

The late Serge Koussevitzky, then master of the Boston Symphony, invited Mitropoulos to conduct in Boston in 1936, and soon thereafter he went to Minneapolis as guest conductor and ended up as permanent conductor. He became director of the New York Philharmonic in 1951, and later was named musical director, a post he will relinquish at the end of the current season. Henceforth, he will devote more of his time to the



DIMITRI MITROPOULOS

Metropolitan Opera where he has been a regular conductor for several seasons.

Mitropoulos agreed to come to New Orleans for the single concert when contacted by symphony officials after Alexander Hilsberg, music director, became ill. He is expected to arrive here Sunday afternoon and immediately will meet the orchestra for rehearsals.

Tickets for the Tuesday concert are on sale at Werlein's and will be sold at the auditorium box office prior to the performance.

From DEC 8 - 1957

ITEM New Orleans, La.

Mitropoulos Leads Symphony Tuesday

Dimitri Mitropoulos, an outstanding figure on the American musical scene since his debut with the Boston Symphony in 1936, will guest-conduct the New Orleans Philharmonic

Symphony at 8:30 p. m. Tuesday in Municipal Auditorium.

Born in the capital of Greece, Mitropoulos began his musical studies at the Athens Conservatory.

HE HAS SERVED as permanent conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony and the New York Philharmonic—a post he held until his recent resignation.

Mitropoulos became a U. S. citizen in 1946. He has conducted orchestras throughout the world and now devotes most of his time to conducting at the Metropolitan Opera House.

Norman Carol, concertmaster, and Barton Frank, principal cellist, will be heard in the "Double Concerto" by Brahms. Included on the program will be Brahms' "Academic Festival Overture" and Kabalevsky's "Symphony No. 4."

Mitropoulos will be substituting for music director Alexander Hilsberg who is recuperating from a mild heart attack.

DIMITRI MITROPOULOS

guest conductor

U.S. cultural music reaches maturity in naming of Bernstein

By IRVING KOLODIN

Twenty-one years ago a young Harvard student attended a tea of the Helicon Society for the express purpose of meeting a conductor whose performance the evening before in Symphony Hall with the Boston Symphony Orchestra had appealed to him vastly. This was the first encounter of Leonard Bernstein, recently appointed music director of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, and Dimitri Mitropoulos, whose position he now takes.

There was much talk of this kind of "destiny" during the Press conference at which the announcement was made last week. Metaphorically Mitropoulos handed over his baton—it is only in his last seasons with the Philharmonic that he has used one—to the young American who has had such a spectacular rise since he first conducted the orchestra, in an emergency, 14 years ago. But apparently the stars in their courses were wheeling overhead more than once on subsequent occasions.

FOR, SAID BERNSTEIN, it was Mitropoulos who first gave him the idea of conducting as a career. Moreover, when he had finished his course at Harvard and came to New York in search of musical work, it was a chance meeting with Mitropoulos which led to a scholarship with Fritz Reiner at the Curtis Institute and the first real start on his eventual occupation. In train came Tanglewood and the contacts with Serge Koussevitzky, which furthered his ambitions to the point where he was qualified to be considered by the Philharmonic as an assistant, in 1943.

Oddly enough, the chain of circumstances also required that Dimitri Mitropoulos become head of the Philharmonic eight years ago (he had previously shared a season with Leopold Stokowski) and have his opportunity to lead the oldest orchestra in the country while Bernstein was acquiring experience, here and abroad. For Mitropoulos, in a kind of valedictory statement, made it clear that he endorsed the choice of Bernstein, the first American to have charge of this orchestra, as a way of showing Europe that our cultural development has attained maturity, that we no longer have to "import" our pace setters and standard bearers.

THIS APPOINTMENT should stand as a personal satisfaction to me, for as long ago as September of 1946 I wrote that it would be a "civic calamity" if the "most adventurous, stimulating and, withal, talented conductor to come our way in 15 years were allowed to slip away for want of work or appreciation of it." I further suggested that Bernstein be entered for the "Philharmonic sweepstakes" in what then seemed the remote year of 1949.

Thus there is no possible question of his talent.

FOR MITROPOULOS, relief from the heavy schedule of work he has recently undertaken in commitments both to the Metropolitan and the Philharmonic means that he will have more time to spread over the six operas he expects to be doing next year. He will also have a four-week period at the Philharmonic. He seemed, on the whole, to regard the change of directorship philosophically, stating that he was no longer "in first youth," that the Philharmonic gets the "juice of every permanent conductor, and if he stays too long it 'detriotes.'" Finally, he philosophized, "The Philharmonic stays: we come and go."

MILANOV IS TOSCA IN BENEFIT AT 'MET'

Zinka Milanov sang the title role of Puccini's "Tosca" for the first time this season last night at the Metropolitan Opera House. The performance was a benefit for the Bagby Music Lovers Foundation.

Miss Milanov had taken on this performance at short notice in addition to her already full schedule at the Metropolitan to replace Renata Tebaldi. Miss Tebaldi has canceled her remaining appearances here this season because of the death of her mother last week.

It was understandable that Mme. Milanov was not in her top form. She did some beautiful mezza voce singing, especially in her second act "Vissi

d'arte," which won her hearty cheers. But during much of the evening her top notes tended to shrillness or a pronounced spread.

Carlo Bergonzi, who made his Metropolitan debut last fall, sang his first Cavaradossi here. As in other roles, he showed a cultivated voice of attractive timbre, which he happily refused to force. He was not an exciting actor, but this was not an evening of fine acting on any hand.

The best singing of the evening was contributed by Leonard Warren in his familiar role of Scarpia. Especially fine was his second-act approach to Tosca, "Gia mi dicon venal." Dimitri Mitropoulos at the conductor's desk did his best to infuse excitement into an often lukewarm performance. E. D.

DEC 11 1957

ITEM New Orleans, La.

CRITIC'S CORNER

Mitropoulos Comes To Call

BY FRANK GAGNARD

The New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony's open house for conductors, arranged during Alexander Hilsberg's enforced absence, received its first guest last night.

He was Dimitri Mitropoulos,

who himself heads a Philharmonic-Symphony but has announced his resignation from the New York post at the end of the season.

Mitropoulos was engaged for the New Orleans orchestra's sixth subscription concert, originally planned as an all-Brahms affair. It was Brahms until after intermission, when Mitropoulos conducted the second American performance of Dimitri Kabalevsky's Symphony No. 4.

The U. S. premiere of the recent Russian work took place only a few weeks earlier in New York. Mitropoulos conducting. Its repetition here brought many members of the large Municipal Auditorium audience to their feet in standing ovation, probably more out of appreciation for Mitropoulos than Kabalevsky.

ALLOWED to remain on the program were the Brahms Double Concerto in A Minor for Violin and Cello, with the orchestra's concertmaster, Norman Carol, and principal cellist, Barton Frank, as soloists, and Brahms' "Academic Festival" Overture. The latter was a rousing but stately and polished opener.

Cellist Frank made his solo debut last night in the Brahms Double Concerto, although he will have a Haydn concerto to himself later in the season. Frank and Concertmaster

Carol were compatible partners, well matched in technical capacity, sweetness and purity of tone and seemingly in Brahmsian outlook.

Theirs was not a big, bravura approach, but was soundly based in the service of the music. This would have been commendable, if not exciting, had it not been contrasted with the larger, more intense scale of reference from Mitropoulos and the orchestra. There was serene accord in the slow movement, and finely balanced periods at other scattered times. Some vagueness in the solo line appeared briefly in the last movement.

THE KABALEVSKY symphony, completed in July of 1956, allowed Mitropoulos free rein in mounting musical excitement, blending exotic orchestral colors and providing a three ring aural display.

The Symphony No. 4 is a big work in four movements, perhaps over-extended for its relatively shallow and showy purposes. It was performed resoundingly and virtuosically. Mitropoulos being alert to the tensions, pleasanties and clanging climaxes provided by the nationalistic Kabalevsky.

It left no doubt as to the conductor's success with the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony, and emphasized his mastery with dramatic musical expression.

Famed Director Arrives to Conduct Symphony



GOING OVER A SCORE shortly after his arrival here Sunday, Dimitri Mitropoulos (center), confers with Barton Frank (left), principal cellist of the New Orleans Symphony, and Norman Carol, concert master. Mitropoulos will be guest conductor at the symphony concert Tuesday at 8:30 p. m. in Municipal Auditorium. He went immediately to rehearsals after arriving at Moisant International Airport. Later Sunday night he visited with symphony director Alexander Hilsberg at Touro Infirmary. Hilsberg is in the hospital recovering from a heart attack.



DIMITRI MITROPOULOS relaxes in New Orleans in casual attire with baton in hand.

Jazz Is Art, Not Just Popular, Says Conductor

By CLARE LEWIS

Jazz, movies and mountain climbing—these plus a solid booking of concerts through the summer of 1960 have kept world-famed conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos going at a steady pace.

"In everything there is a time and an age and when I was younger and less in demand, I climbed mountains," said the 51-year-old maestro this morning in his suite at the Roosevelt hotel.

"Now I am more in demand. I climb platforms and I find greater satisfaction in this sport than in climbing mountains."

"Mountain climbing is a more selfish pleasure—beautiful, but selfish just the same," he said.

To Conduct Symphony
Mitropoulos, who now divides most of his time between conducting concerts with the New York Philharmonic Symphony and operas at the Met, is in New Orleans to conduct the New Orleans symphony in concert tomorrow at 8:30 p. m. at Municipal Auditorium.

Commenting on his love for jazz, he said, "I don't include jazz in the popular music field. Jazz is an art in itself while what we call popular music is the nonserious side of musical art. And I don't like the so-called musical of the movies and Broadway. They are also rather inferior serious music."

"When someone asks me if I like musicals, I feel it is like asking a priest about a burlesque show," he added.

Lists Jazz Favorites

The maestro lists Lionel Hampton, Duke Ellington and Dizzy Gillespie among his favorite jazz musicians and said he will conduct a concert this year with Hampton as guest artist. "I did two jazz performances last year with Gillespie as guest artist," he commented.

On movies, he made this comment:

"Movies are my only means of relaxation. I work late many nights, and the movies are the only places to go as late as 11 o'clock. Their pleasure to me is simply the way of life I have no time to lead. I go to see life in a canned form just as people who have not time to cook used canned foods. I get a look at outdoor life, good-looking people and lots of action."

New York, N. Y.

... No one at the Metropolitan Opera House remembers when the old conductor's music stand was built into the orchestra pit there—could have been almost seventy-five years ago when the place first opened. In recent years the lighting on the stand has bothered performers on stage and some of the musicians, too. Maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos, impulsive in some things, had a brand new one delivered the other day with funds from his own purse. Fellow artists were quietly amused by the gesture. Mr. Mitropoulos, they tell you, rarely ever looks at the score on the stand when he's conducting; just knows the stuff by heart.

On movies, he made this comment:

"Movies are my only means of relaxation. I work late many nights, and the movies are the only places to go as late as 11 o'clock. Their pleasure to me is simply the way of life I have no time to lead. I go to see life in a canned form just as people who have not time to cook used canned foods. I get a look at outdoor life, good-looking people and lots of action."

DEC 15 1957
ITEM New Orleans, La.
SYMPHONY BEAT: Yes, the Kabalevsky Fourth Symphony which Dimitri Mitropoulos provided the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony last week has been recorded. It's a Monitor release, numbered MON 2007, the composer conducting the Leningrad Philharmonic.

TRIBUTE IS PAID N. O. SYMPHONY

Trained, Responsive,
Says Famed Musician

By FRITZ HARSDDORFF

It could hardly have come from a higher quarter, the tribute paid Sunday night to the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra.

"Wonderfully trained and responsive," said Dimitri Mitropoulos, world-famed musician, director of the New York Philharmonic and guest director at the Metropolitan Opera.

"To see an orchestra so first class was a wonderful surprise to me because I remember the days when this city was struggling so to get an orchestra going."

Mitropoulos flew in from New York Sunday afternoon and went directly to Municipal Auditorium to begin rehearsals with the orchestra, which he will guest conduct in a concert at 8:30 p. m. Tuesday in the auditorium.

"A few days ago," he said, "I rehearsed a score with the orchestra in New York. Today we played the same music and believe it or not it was just as good."

"Believe me, I am not boasting for your orchestra. I have conducted so many in my life and lately I have been traveling around the nation and to Europe, conducting the best orchestras in the world."

"Today in the rehearsal I could feel the enthusiasm of all those young people. I could close my eyes and feel that I was in front of a great musical center."

Then he directed a few remarks toward orchestral financing, a problem which has plagued the New Orleans organization.

"I sometimes wonder how to attract people to concerts. It is as if we must give them a burlesque show to get them to church. Unfortunately they do not understand how important it is to a city to have a concert orchestra. Very high spiritual entertainment has small attendance but those who come are the best of the city. The majority of the population, the so-called masses, get their benefit indirectly."

A city without a museum or an orchestra, Mitropoulos said, is uncivilized.

"So an orchestra," the director continued, "is something to be kept with struggling and with tears."

MITROPOULOS EARNS BRAVOS

Orchestra Nears Sphere
of Greatness

By SIM MYERS

On Monday, Dimitri Mitropoulos, the world-famed conductor, said the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra was on a par with the New York Philharmonic, lately his own orchestra; on Tuesday, he brought forth the evidence to back his statement.

Tuesday night was the occasion of the sixth subscription concert by the orchestra. Mitropoulos was the guest conductor, hurriedly called in as the first major replacement for the ailing Alexander Hilsberg. The scene was Municipal Auditorium and the audience was the largest symphony audience of the season, virtually filling the hall.

Before, the orchestra was a good one; Tuesday night it neared the sphere of greatness. To its roundness of tone, Mitropoulos added a crispness and vitality, asking for and getting from the players a musicianship that generated an excitement that spread through the audience almost from the outset of the program.

The Brahms Academic Festival Overture opened the concert. In it, one heard the New Orleans strings sing for the first time, one perceived a dynamic sharpness of detail, and followed a finely drawn line through the phases of the music.

The Brahms Double Concerto for Violin, Cello and orchestra brought forth the talents of Barton Frank, principal cellist, and Norman Carol, concertmaster of the orchestra, in a reading that contained artistic authority, intense regard for the Brahmsian emotions and again a tone made immaculate by Mitropoulos' regard for the interworkings of the sections of the orchestra.

Frank is a cellist of no little proficiency, has an adroit touch and rich intonations. He was complemented admirably by Carol, who further proclaimed an ability noted earlier in the season when he was soloist with the orchestra.

The Dmitri Kabalevsky Symphony No. 4 was presented for the first time in New Orleans as the concluding half of the program. This, incidentally was its second U. S. performance, and the symphony was finished by the Russian only in 1956.

It is a work that proves to be more conventional in form than one would imagine. Correctly identified with the key of C although this is not a part of its nomenclature, it is a work that explodes many regions of sound but stays pretty well within the confinements of symphonic structure as developed by Brahms, Bruckner, Tchaikovsky and Dvorak.

It is at once filled with many flashes of beauty as well as many instances when it fights a losing battle with musical triteness. It has gimmicks; it leans occasionally on ideas that are not Kabalevsky's own, but it achieves its purpose of finally being something both important and overall original.

Out of the conflicts of dissonance it creates consonance, even exploring new vistas of consonance; there are moments when it seeks a compromise between music and noise, constantly probing the outer reaches of orchestral expression. It has oriental flavors but is predominantly music for the western mind. If it tells a story at all, it must be a story of great struggle, of victory over great odds. Its composer says it has no story, but it conveys the idea of being a "War and Peace" of music.

In exacting the orchestra to meet the demands of this music, Mitropoulos scored a triumph such as is rarely seen in a music hall. At the conclusion, there were the usual bravos and feet stamping. But there was something more; most of the music lovers in the hall stood in respect for the visiting conductor who proved his right to be called a giant of music.

N.O. Orchestra Proves Worthy of Mitropoulos

By CHARLES L. DUFOUR

Famed Dimitri Mitropoulos found the wonderful orchestra Alexander Hilsberg assembled, trained and developed worthy of his musical magic last night and the audience at the sixth subscription concert of the New Orleans Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra was treated to a rare experience.

Conductors, like pianists and violinists, all differ in one way or another, as to personality, interpretation, technique, etc., and as a consequence produce different effects with the same instruments.

But where musicianship is at a recognized high level to begin with, the different effects are, generally speaking, the result of these individual differences, and not the result of differences in the calibre of musicianship. Francescatti could make a dime-store violin sound better than Jack Benny could a Strad. But Francescatti would hardly play a five-and-ten fiddle in competition with Heifetz and a great instrument. Put both Francescatti and Heifetz on the platform, sharing the same violin and the same piece, the results would be different, but who could say which is better? It becomes a matter of personal taste and preference.

Dazzling Effect

Dimitri Mitropoulos last night made the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra sound as if Mitropoulos was conducting it and the effect was a dazzling one.

After his first rehearsal with the orchestra on Sunday, Mitropoulos was high in praise of the music it produced and the musicians responded nobly to his praise. Listening to the concert in his room at Touro, Mr. Hilsberg must have felt proud at the marvelous way his orchestra performed under Mitropoulos' inspiring baton.

Mitropoulos is a dynamic leader. He seems a bundle of nerves, and yet there is nothing restless about his podium manner. He has his nerves, his "dynamo," under perfect control at all times. Often barely a gesture—but doubtless facial expressions unseen by the audience—achieved a desired effect; at other times he shivered and shook to build up a climax or finish a phrase with a flourish.

Orchestra Relaxed

The orchestra, completely relaxed before the famed conductor, certainly had one of its finest nights as Mitropoulos swept it along, extracting a superb tone and smoothly blending the strings and winds. Meticulous in placing accents, incisive in phrasing, Mr. Mitropoulos' reading of Brahms' "Academic Festival" and "Double Concerto in A Minor" were brilliant, but it remained for his playing of Kabalevsky's "Symphony No. 4"

18 NEW ORLEANS ITEM Mon., Dec. 9, 1957

Rehearsal Held By Mitropoulos

BY FRANK GAGNARD

"I'm sorry I'm late," Dimitri Mitropoulos apologized after his delayed flight from New York landed at Moisant Airport.

This courtesy surprised and pleased waiting New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony officials, whose concern had been over the noted conductor's comfort and his tight schedule yesterday.

Pausing only long enough to collect luggage, Mitropoulos was hustled to the old St. Charles Theater for a first rehearsal of the Philharmonic program he will guest-conduct tomorrow night at Municipal Auditorium.

THE MUSICIANS had been assembled for an hour. They passed the time by chatting, practicing and adjourning for coffee.

Then Mitropoulos entered and was introduced by Symphony Manager Jack Dailey. He acknowledged the applause of the orchestra and shook hands with Concertmaster Norman Carol and Assistant Concertmaster Raymond Sird.

The rehearsal began. Yesterday's session was devoted to Dmitri Kabalevsky's Symphony No. 4. Mitropoulos conducted without a score, but could instantly refer to sections he wanted repeated by number.

"Please, start at No. 7," or "Three bars before 11, please." On one of the rare occasions when he miscalculated by a few bars, he said, to the amusement of the players, "I am still on the plane."

Sacre Bleu!

DID YOU KNOW the success of Dimitri Mitropoulos' masterful conduction of the N. O. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Tuesday night, depended more or less on a certain brand of French cigarettes? Well, it did.

Seems the maestro ran out of the cigarettes, Gauloises Bleu by name, during Tuesday's rehearsal session, and asked, oh so casually, where he might buy a pack in New Orleans because it was his very special favorite brand. Whereupon Marilyn Barnett, the Symphony's "Girl Friday," immediately volunteered to run down the quarry. (She shouldn't have been so eager.)

A dash to all the tobacco shops, plus a trip to Solari's, netted nothing. She called Capt. Bob Estachy of the French SS Line to find out if there were any French shops in port. There weren't. She called Peter Low at the Greek SS Line; why, I'm not exactly clear. Then she called the French Consulate and got hold of Mercalin Rousseau, Jr., who promised to look Tommy Griffin around. He did—and came up with one pack. But when Miss Barnett retrieved it, the pack had a green wrapper, whereas the maestro's had a blue one, which meant a different blend, and put our heroine back in her dilemma.

She is, however, not a girl easily discouraged. She began calling French friends. This led to Jacqueline de la Gueronniere who told her to try her husband, Longer, at his office. Mr. de la Gueronniere wasn't in, but his associate, Jimmy Godfrey, spied one pack, with a blue wrapper, on his desk. Marilyn dashed over, and Mr. Godfrey, by rummaging around, found two more packs, each with blue wrappers.

The maestro's nerves were soothed. The show went on. The audience "Bravo'd!" (That's the way the music scores!)

STATES
New Orleans, La.

Orchestra Accolade

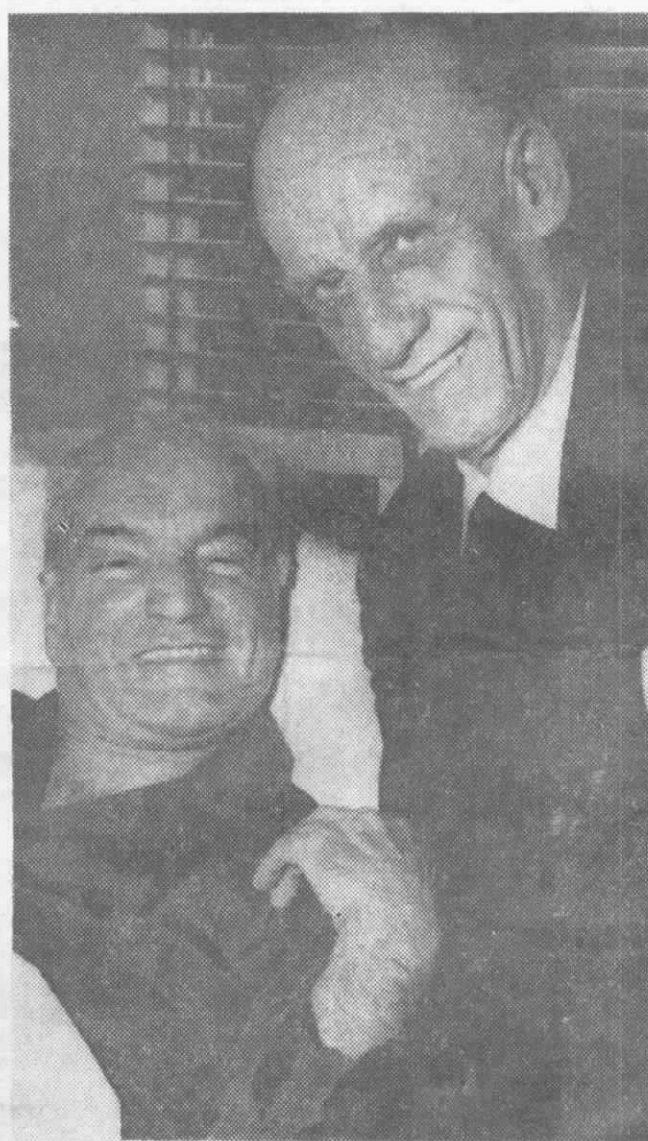
Coming from Dimitri Mitropoulos, world-famed musician and director of the New York Philharmonic, praise for the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra is particularly palatable.

Mitropoulos, who conducted a concert by the local orchestra, found the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony "wonderfully trained and responsive" during a rehearsal Sunday afternoon.

Said the conductor, "To see an orchestra so first-class was a wonderful surprise to me because I remember the days when this city was struggling so to get an orchestra going."

In New Orleans' cultural renaissance, its Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, in Mitropoulos' opinion, has achieved a lofty status. And the recognition he so bestows bears repetition:

"I could close my eyes and feel that I was in front of a great musical center."



NEW ORLEANS SYMPHONY conductor Alexander Hilsberg, recovering at Touro Infirmary from a mild heart attack, smiles with pleasure as famed guest conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos praises the orchestra's training during a visit at the hospital. Mitropoulos will conduct the symphony at its performance tomorrow night.



LONG A "STAR" in New York's Carnegie Hall, the author here conducts a recording session for Columbia.

I'll always remember...

St. Francis and the wolf

by DIMITRI MITROPOULOS
Conductor of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony

With the Christmas season once more upon us, my thoughts return to a saint who lived centuries ago in Italy. To me his humble, selfless life expresses more than any other man's the very spirit of Christmas. And while he is not a saint of my religion, yet he decided my way of life.

I was 15 when I discovered him. I was in Rome, studying music, away from my native Greece for the first time. One day in a church I saw a painting of St. Francis which greatly attracted me. I became so interested I decided to make a pilgrimage to his town of Assisi. There, in the middle of the most beautiful green pastures in Italy, I made my real discovery of St. Francis, my chief spiritual influence.

I learned that he believed that if you want to criticize something or somebody, say nothing. Instead, give an example in your own action of what you think should be done. St. Francis went into the square in Assisi, threw away all his possessions and became a beggar. This was his criticism of poverty.

In Assisi I read a beautiful story which I shall never forget. It is called *The Wolf of Gubbio*. St. Francis loved all living things—human beings, animals, birds. Once in his travels he met a group of armed men. "Where are you going?" he asked. They told him they were going to kill a wolf which had been attacking their cattle. "No," St. Francis said. "The wolf is a creature of God and he is hungry. Give him food and he will not harm your cattle."

A painting shows the wolf offering his paw to St. Francis, making an agreement that if the people of the village gave him food, he would not harm their cattle. The wolf became a friend of the villagers and lived quietly among them for many years. When the wolf died, the whole village mourned.

I reread this story often. It inspires me and gives me courage. It reminds me of St. Francis' belief that when you see something wrong, you can correct it only by understanding the wrongdoer, then doing what is right. That is the best criticism.

At the Metropolitan

By Walter F. Loeb

Last month we reported the opening of the 1957-58 season. "Eugene Onegin" was a lavish and beautiful production. On the heels of this performance came a performance that can only be described as perfect—Mozart's "Don Giovanni." The Met had assembled a dream cast, combined stage and scenic staffs to reach the pinnacle of success. Herbert Graf staged the work on sets designed by Eugene Berman, Cesare Siepi was the superb, flamboyant, amorous, subtle, sneering, dominating, scheming Don. Eleanor Steber as Donna Anna, Lisa Della Casa as Donna Elvira, Cesare Valletti as Don Ottavio were excellent in voice and acting. Zerlina was sung by Roberta Peters, who after a year's absence showed greater vocal flexibility, and Masetto by Theodor Uppman gave the role due comic poignancy. Leporello was superbly sung by Fernando Corena and Giorgio Tozzi sang the Commendatore, who for the first time in our recollection was dismounted and stood in a crypt. Carl Boehm, making his debut, deserved

much of the credit for keeping the action working so smoothly. Every member of the cast contributed to make this "The Perfect Don."

Nicolai Gedda made his debut as "Faust." On Nov. 7, we heard this young tenor who has a nice lyric voice, and considerable stage presence. Hilde Gueden sang Marguerite with considerable restraint. Jerome Hines, who has made Mephistopheles his very own part, continues to improve his acting and vocal resources. Others in the cast were Frank Guarrera, Mildred Miller, Thelma Votipka and Calvin Marsh. Jean Morel maintained a lively pace in the pit.

Dimitri Mitropoulos was the star of the "Tosca" we heard on Nov. 12. Antonietta Stella sang a subtle Tosca, Jan Peerce a suave Cavaradossi and Leonard Warren the most sinister Scarpia we have ever seen. Vocally the evening was rewarding, even though it took Stella almost an act to truly reach the limit of her vocal range. But, like we said, Mitropoulos, who kept the orchestra bellowing at a fierce pitch, was the hero once again. Conducting without score, his attention to every nuance swept the whole drama to greater dramatic intensity. Recent announcements herald the maestro's greater concentration at the Met, a development we welcome and anticipate eagerly.

DECEMBER, 1957

PIE DUFOUR'S A La Mode

Renewal of Hilsberg's Contract Assures Orchestra's Growth

The signing of Alexander Hilsberg to a new three-year contract as musical director and conductor of the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra calls for a replaying of Brahms' "Academic Festival."

Specifically that part near the end which is based on the old German drinking song, "Gaudemus Igitur," which, as you know, means "Let us therefore rejoice."

Indeed, let us rejoice that Mr. Hilsberg is mending rapidly from his heart attack and plans to return to the podium for the March 4 program.

Let us rejoice that his physician is confident Mr. Hilsberg's distinguished career as a conductor has not been jeopardized by his illness.

Let us rejoice that during the next three years Mr. Hilsberg will have the opportunity to continue the year-to-year improvement in his orchestra.

And let us rejoice, too, that today, through the efforts of Mr. Hilsberg in selecting and drilling his musicians, the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra is one of the really great orchestras of the country.

There is a tendency among some people in every age and clime, to think that something to be good has to come from somewhere else. W. S. Gilbert cited the chap "who praised every country but his own," and that's a case in point. There are, unfortunately, in New Orleans some who haven't grasped the fact that some of the things we have right here at home are as good as you can find anywhere. In the field of music, there are some who have looked down their noses at our operatic productions and some who have failed to recognize the true worth of our symphony orchestra.

Mr. Hilsberg's regrettable illness has pointed up the real merit of the orchestra which he has built up during the past five years.

That it could perform so brilliantly on short notice under the baton of assistant conductor Jacques Brouman was evidence enough, if any were needed, that Mr. Hilsberg had built well.

And the two dazzling concerts under Dimitri Mitropoulos and Vladimir Golschmann enabled the

orchestra to show to even a greater degree that now it is a virtuoso organization.

Both Mitropoulos and Golschmann were high in their praises of the orchestra and they conveyed their impressions not only to the musicians but to Mr. Hilsberg and Dr. Joseph Morris, symphony president, as well.

When interviewed after the first rehearsal he had with the orchestra, Mitropoulos, referring to the Kabelevsky "Symphony No. 4," which he premiered with the New York Philharmonic and which he played here, said: "A few days ago I rehearsed a score with the orchestra in New York. Today we played the same music and believe it or not it was just as good. Believe me, I am not boasting for your orchestra... I could feel the enthusiasm of all these young people. I could close my eyes and feel that I was in front of a great musical center."

And Dr. Morris told me that Mitropoulos, after the second rehearsal, said that if he were interviewed again he would have doubled everything he said.



Dufour

NEW YORK VILLAGER
Thursday, December 19, 1957

Maestro Mystifies New School Crowd

"The greatest reward a man can have—a bust of himself? A statue?—No! But to have someone come out of nowhere and destroy everything he has done!"

An audience of nearly 200 gaped, broke into startled laughter and finally applauded, but were left as much in the dark about contemporary music by such composers as Schonberg, Barbour and Berg as ever.

Dimitri Mitropoulos, the missionary of modern music, was true to form in his lecture at the New School Monday night, "Inflicting rather than easing" (in his own words) the mysteries of contemporary music upon his audience. Leaning cooly against a wall or sitting hunched on the lectern like a coach addressing his football team, the spry 61 year old Director of the New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra stunned his audience with one paradox after another.

"Music is an abstract art, not human," he said. "Contemporary music is a reaction to the abuse of it, the attempt to make music everything it should not be, realistic and romantic." He stated that before music could again become a totally abstract art, first realism and romanticism had to be destroyed. The weapon of the modern composer is "ugliness," he said. "Music today, Berg and Schonberg, glorify total ugliness. I love ugliness. I would die for it."

When asked to "shed some light on Schonberg," the maestro replied "After you leave sunny California, they put you in a dark room. You can't see a thing... Darkness... But if you stay and stay in that dark room, you will begin to discover things. You have got to get familiarized to see in the dark."

He then confessed that when hearing one of his own Schonberg recordings two years after making it, he did not recognize the piece and thought it was "horrifying." "You can't live in the dark all the time," he said.

As the lecture concluded, Dimitri Mitropoulos was again enthusiastically applauded by an audience apparently excited, but still unable to see in the dark.

From NOV 24 1957
POST
Houston, Texas

DUKAS: "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," orchestral scherzo; also Weinberger's "Schwanda" Polka and Fugue and Richard Strauss' "Dance of the Seven Veils" from "Salome," played by the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra under Dimitri Mitropoulos (Columbia).

The Dukas piece, such a favorite of the "pop" literature 20 years or so back, is enjoying quite a revival these days, this being the second recording I have listed in a few weeks.

Mitropoulos and company give it a graphic and sympathetic performance, with just plenty of water where it ought to be, which is not in the veins of the players.

The renditions of the "Schwanda" and Strauss items are correspondingly bright, and make this a "pop" to enjoy.

Never Look a Passing Year in the Mouth: A 1957 Theatre Survey

By HUBERT ROUSSEL

ONE of the more epidemic and gratuitous forms of journalism peculiar to this period of the year is the departmental retrospective survey with the prefabricated conclusion. As the year ends, there is naturally a place in every newspaper for the summarization of its major happenings which affected or promise to affect the general lot of the populace. That place will be occupied, no worry. As whether there is a correspondingly urgent reason (or any other beyond that of convenience to the authors) for dredging up a great mass of minute and insignificant data on the passing year and its follies—by occupational categories—I am somewhat less firmly convinced.

Of course I am far from wishing to contest the right of any operator to look statistically backward around New Year.

Roussel If it is true that hat styles or the rate of participation in ping-pong changed more during 1957 than in 1956—or 1901—by as much as a certain percent, or that the birdseed business, both locally and nationally, was up over the 1956 level by anywhere from five to 20 seed per bird, I suppose somebody should tell somebody about it. There are doubtless people who are waiting to know—or just waiting, and rather grateful to have a little change in the dinner talk.

HOWEVER, it may be that we overdo this annual benefaction a bit—as when everybody is seized with the urge on the same day, so that practically every department of a metropolitan journal begins with the previous January 1 and thereafter resembles nothing so much as a thoughtfully made-up laundry list.

The general conclusion of any such concentration of statistical zeal, as a certain experience has demonstrated, is that while things were not entirely as satisfactory as they might have been during the year, on the other hand they were not as bad as they were at some time in the past, or as they might have become if conditions had not been as they were.

You certainly can't argue with the spirit of that type of analysis. And I don't know what else you can do with it.

However, after it has been applied to the tomato crop, hair such a confectioner of cold visuals is writing chiefly for his own edification. The audience has forgotten nine-tenths of the shows, concerts or other spectacles which he summons up from the files or his own memory (in most cases a supreme piece of good judgment on the audience's part), and is enthusiastically willing to forget them all over again, without hemization.

As for the few signal events any year brings in the playhouse, the concert halls or the

AMONG a lot of fine musical entertainment in Houston during the year, one occasion impressed your reviewer as having a certain significance in the historical connotation. That was the Tosca sung by Renata Tebaldi in the Metropolitan Opera Company production of Puccini's opera at the Music Hall on May 14.

This version of the music drama had other notable qualities, including the very finely sung and characterized Scarpia of George London and one of Dimitri Mitropoulos' more inspired evenings as an operatic conductor. Its distinction for this day, however, was imparted by the artistry and personality of its prima donna, Renata Tebaldi.

having given before that fortunate audience altogether the most impressive and beautiful demonstration of operatic style in the Italian romantic tradition that any female singer has shown the Houston public in close to a generation.

There was a certain touch of historic importance, too, I would say, in the visit of England's Royal Ballet to the same hall in November—or that evening of the visit which offered the full-length "Swan Lake" with Margot Fonteyn as the ballerina. She is a superb artist, for this day the incomparable mistress of the Tchaikowsky-Petipa vehicle—and it is apparently by no means certain that she will be seen here again in the part, her early retirement being indicated.

In one of its best years, the Houston Symphony Orchestra has had a procession of perfectly fine concerts. The Houston Grand Opera Association has made notable gains; the dramatic theatres have sustained interest with very able productions of a list of plays which lacked items of any large distinction, though several scripts have been reliable writing jobs.

It is now time to get on with another year—which is always any amount better than hashing over the not quite wonderful things that are past.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1957

The Making of an Opera

World-Telegram & Sun

High Drama Prevails as Met Readies 'Vanessa'

By JOHN FERRIS,
World-Telegram Staff Writer

Shortly after 10 o'clock on the morning of Monday, Dec. 23, 1957, a small group of people assembled on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House for the first piano rehearsal of "Vanessa," a four-act opera composed by the American Samuel Barber to a libretto by Gian-Carlo Menotti, who would also direct the new work.

An air of happy expectancy overlay the old theater, Christmas was only two days away, and the artists, arriving through a day that was sunny, windy and cold, the kind of shining, pleasantly wintry day when New York is at its finest.

The mood was clearly one of joy. "Vanessa," Mr. Barber's first opera, was coming to life in the mellow atmosphere of the house where he had heard his first performance 41 years ago. At the age of 6 he had sat in a box with his elders to witness the local and visual splendors of "Aida." The composition of an opera had briefly engaged his boyish talents—as the nephew of Louise Homer he may have felt some compulsion in that direction—but the desire had quickly faded, and as a student at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia he had even made a pact with another student never to write an opera.

Menotti Is Director. The other student, of course, had happily betrayed the pact later to compose such operas as "The Old Maid and the Thief," "Amelia Goes to the Ball," and "The Island God," all of which had been produced on this same Met stage. Now this same old friend, Gian-Carlo Menotti, was directing the Barber work.

Obviously the pact had been worthless—a piece of youthful bounce—and the operatic urge had never forsaken Mr. Barber. For in the summer of 1954, having been promised a libretto by Mr. Menotti, he began composing. Mr. Menotti, however, was busy with many other things. Eventually he had applied himself to the job and the work had been finished.

Rudolf Bing, general manager of the Met, had heard about "Vanessa." "Such things get around," Mr. Bing said the other day—and had

ti, was directing the Barber work.

Obviously the pact had been worthless—a piece of youthful bounce—and the operatic urge had never forsaken Mr. Barber. For in the summer of 1954, having been promised a libretto by Mr. Menotti, he began composing. Mr. Menotti, however, was busy with many other things. Eventually he had applied himself to the job and the work had been finished.



SAMUEL BARBER.

His first opera.

listened to Mr. Barber play the score on the piano. He had jumped to the chance of doing a new opera by an American composer and had picked Dimitri Mitropoulos to conduct. Cecil Beaton had designed sets and costumes. The world premiere was set for Jan. 15, 1958.

The Relentless Clock. Of these things Mr. Barber was too busy to talk that morning of Dec. 23. Like everybody else in the Met, from Mr. Bing down to the youngest girl in the Ballet School, he was under the

stern domination of the clock—the clock which regulates the professional lives of the Met's 36 sopranos, 12 mezzo-sopranos and contraltos, 23 tenors, 19 baritones, 14 basses, and Cyril Ritchard, who once described himself to this writer as "a low baritone—a genuine buffo."

So the piano rehearsal began. Weeks of long preparation lay behind; no serious hitch had developed and none was likely to. The daily rehearsal sheets, prepared by Max Rudolph, the Met's artistic director, and Frank Paola, musical secretary, indicated the reasons all too clearly: hard work and a strict observance of the clock.

One Absentee.

The sheet for Dec. 23, with the premiere only 23 days off, called for the first stage rehearsal with piano of Acts 1 and 2 (the orchestra was going through a reading on the 39th St. roof stage). In attendance on stage were Mr. Menotti, Mr. Barber, and three assistant conductors, Ignace Strasfogel, Julius Burger and Walter Taussig, and four of the principal singers, Nicolai Gedda, tenor; Rosalind Elias, mezzo-soprano; Regina Resnik, contralto, and Giorgio Tozzi, bass.

In the auditorium were William Lewis, tenor; Margaret Roggero, mezzo-soprano; Belen Ampanan and Martha Lipton, contraltos, and Clifford Harvuot, baritone, who could serve as replacements in the future should any or all of the principals selected for the premiere be unable to appear.

Arduous Schedule.

One singer was absent that morning: Eleanor Steber, who would sing the title role. In its announcements of the

cast last spring, the Met had named Sena Jurinac for the part of Vanessa, but illness had prevented the Yugoslavian soprano from coming to America and Miss Steber had consented, early in December, to take the role.

The others had had the music for months. (Mr. Barber recalled that he had met Miss Elias in Rome last summer and she had sung for him there) and with the coming of fall they had begun the long, arduous process of individual rehearsals with an assistant Met conductor at the piano.

Success Assured.

Day by day, singing and acting were perfected in rehearsals of individuals, pairs, groups.

Mr. Beaton's sketches for the sets and costumes had been examined and approved. In Paris, Herman Krawitz, administrator of stage departments, had conferred with the designer in Paris in July. On Nov. 1, construction was begun in the Met's 40th St. shop which employs 15 carpenters, six prop men, seven painters. Working five days a week, they completed the sets in six weeks. On Dec. 20, the scenery was hauled to the Met and stagehands rehearsed their handling of it.

Thus, on Dec. 23, when the little group assembled for the first piano rehearsal on stage, the sets were ready, the singers able to familiarize themselves with furniture, exits, etc.

There was much still to be done—hours and hours of rehearsing with piano, then with the orchestra. But, with other operas the Met produces, success was already in sight.

From JAN 12 1958
HERALD-TRIBUNE



Eleanor Steber (left) as "Vanessa" and Rosalind Elias (poser) and Gian-Carlo Menotti (librettist), to have its premiere Wednesday evening at the Metropolitan.

Met's First U. S. Opera in Decade

By JAY S. HARRISON

Among serious American composers no one has had greater audience success than Samuel Barber. For some twenty years now, both here and abroad, his name has appeared on every list purporting to select the most frequently played and most cordially received American member of the contemporary composer's clan; and his position on these lists has never dropped below fourth place. Specifically, however, thus far Mr. Barber's fame has been based solely on his orchestral works and chamber music, since the field of opera has not engaged his professional attention.

Now, all that is changed. On Wednesday, the Metropolitan will give the world premiere of "Vanessa," set to a libretto by Gian-Carlo Menotti and representing both the first American opera to be presented during Rudolf Bing's eight-year regime and the first American work that the house has produced since 1947.

Star-Studded

In the nature of things festive, the entire enterprise is lined with a formidable array of star-studded names. Apart from providing the text, the first he has ever done for an opera not of his own composing, Mr. Menotti will supervise the stage direction, and Cecil Beaton has designed the sets and costumes. Moreover, Dimitri Mitropoulos will conduct a cast of luminaries including

Eleanor Steber in the title role, Nicolai Gedda as Anatol, Rosalind Elias as Erika, Regina Resnik as the Old Baroness and Giorgio Tozzi as the Old Doctor. Clearly, the Metropolitan management has gone out of its way to see that everywhere the work is in the proper hands.

As for Mr. Barber, the theater virus has struck him with more than ordinary force, though, it turns out, he is not quite the newcomer to lyric drama the world imagines. "On the contrary," he explained last week, "Vanessa" is my second opera. I wrote my first when I was nine. It was called "The

Rose Tree," and the libretto was by our family cook. She was a wonderful woman with a wonderful name—Annie Brosius Noble Sullivan. She had a flair, she did. Her favored dessert was something she called 'A Bird's Eye View of Death'; I was quick to pounce on her literary talent.

Echoes of Sullivan

"I still have the score," Mr. Barber said as he walked to the piano to play and sing some excerpts from it. Even allowing its echoes of Sir Arthur Sullivan, it was a firmly respectable work, hardly to be equated with the talents of a lad of

nine. "The opera dealt," he continued, "with a band of gypsies I was born. A Metropolitan Opera tenor on vacation has arrived in their midst and has promptly fallen in love with a girl with the good old Chester County name of Juanita Alvarado. What happened then I really can't say, as our cook died."

Mr. Barber's early brush with opera, however, was not his only one. As the nephew of Louise Homer, the celebrated contralto, he was a frequent visitor to the Metropolitan.

Continued on page 6, column 3

From JAN 13 1958
HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

68 AT 'MET' DECRY U.S. ROLE AT FAIR

Letter to President Urges Bigger Artistic Showing at Brussels Exposition

Sixty-eight members of the Metropolitan Opera Company have signed an open letter to President Eisenhower asking for an enlargement of United States participation in the Brussels World's Fair of 1958. "If there is no more extensive program on our part than the one now contemplated," the letter observes, "the United States may take another beating as humiliating in the arts as with the sputnik in the sciences."

The signers include Dimitri Mitropoulos, four stage directors—Hans Busch, Désiré Deffère, Herbert Graf and Dino Annopoulous—and a member of the most famous singers, including Margaret Harshaw, Dorothy Kirsten, George London, Robert Merrill, Patrice Munsel, Jan Peerce, Lily Pons, Eleanor Steber, Risé Stevens and Leonard Warren.

The Belgian fair opens on April 17 and will run for seven months. American artistic participation is scheduled to open on July 1 and include appearances by the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Ballet Theatre, the Juilliard Orchestra and a number of recitals by such American artists as Yehudi Menuhin, Byron Janis and Isaac Stern.

"Our Government," says the letter, "originally proposed to appropriate \$15,000,000 for this project, and subsequently whittled it down to \$11,800,000. Out of this sum more than \$10,500,000 went toward buildings for the fair, leaving eventually only \$500,000 toward what is to go into these buildings."

Soviet Budget Cited

"While the Soviet Union, with a budget of more than \$60,000,000, has announced an array of outstanding solo artists, symphonic and choral organizations—the Bolshoi Ballet, the Moscow Circus and the Moscow Art Theatre—we have come up with only several major attractions. To be sure they are excellent, but they hardly add up to more than a few enticing dishes in what should be a full-course repast."

"Western Germany alone is sending its five major opera companies. The United States has not even invited the Metropolitan Opera. Where are the plays of O'Neill, the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre, the best of our Yiddish Theatre, our jazz, and the Negro attractions like 'The Green Pastures' and 'Cabin in the

MIRROR
New York, N. Y.
JAN 16 1958

ROBERT COLEMAN'S THEATRE

'Vanessa' a New Milestone

The Metropolitan Opera Company offered the 20th premiere of an American work—the first during Rudolf Bing's regime—on Wednesday evening: "Vanessa," with score by Samuel Barber to a libretto by Gian-Carlo Menotti. It drew enthusiastic applause from the first-nighters.

If we are to develop a truly American opera, then the works of our composers must be given in our opera houses. From what we know of contemporary music, "Vanessa" was by all odds the best candidate for the honor this time. After all, Barber is rated by many as our ranking man of music. In several forms.

IT SEEMS STRANGE to hear an opera with which the versatile Menotti is connected without music by him. But Barber and Menotti were fellow students some years ago, and decided then that some day they would collaborate. "Vanessa" is the result. They have apparently worked in rapport.

Menotti's libretti are usually dramatic, and sometimes fraught with a passion that borders on the violent. In this instance, his script might be described as neurotic verismo. It has to do with an aging baroness, averse to mirrors, who waits in her castle in "a northern country," circa 1905, for her lover to return.

Instead, it is his son who comes

to her. After seducing the baroness's niece, he weds the now radiant Vanessa and takes her away with him, leaving the girl to become a recluse as was her aunt. The intimation is that the young man is an unscrupulous cad, and that Vanessa's happiness will be short-lived.

Barber's disciples have likened him to Bach and Mozart. We're afraid that their affection for the master has clouded their judgment a bit. Granted that Barber is about the best we have nowadays, we think his stature is yet to be determined. In our book, he's far from being a B, or an M.

HE HAS BEEN called a neoclassicist. In "Vanessa," he is partly that, but other things, too. The first act reminded us more than a little of the Alban Berg of "Wozzeck" in its atonality. The second, of the Igor Stravinsky who could go from dissonance into charming folk melody. There is a particularly dancelike delight, called "Under the Willow Tree."

And the third act has some walizes that are calculated to set your feet moving in rhythm. Perhaps Barber may not consider this a compliment, but we suspect that "Under the Willow Tree" is destined to become a Hit Parade and juke box favorite. Genius, no. Popular, yes.

The Barber score is a tartar for singers, but impresario Bing has found the right ones to do it justice. Eleanor Steber met the taxing demands of the title role brilliantly. Nicolai Gedda was excellent as the young bon vivant without a conscience. Rosalind Elias sang the tortured, betrayed niece with deeply moving effect. Regina Resnik was an impressive grand dame. Giorgio Tozzi had wonderful moments as a lively and likable family doctor.

Menotti, who tended to the staging himself, has gotten admirable acting performances from the entire cast. The vital Dimitri Mitropoulos, on the podium, emphasized all the virtues of the Barber music. And Cecil Beaton has designed stunning decor.

"VANESSA" CHANGES styles like a chameleon. Unity of method it lacks. Inspiration it has in spurts. But, all things considered, it spells a new milestone toward American opera. It's not going to knock any of the masterworks out of the repertoire, but it merits a place in the sun—even if temporarily.

Sky?" Broadway musicals, like "My Fair Lady" and "The King and I," can hold their own with any theatrical form on earth. We can also be proud of our achievements in television and motion pictures."

Besides asking the President's intervention, the letter proposes that unions help their members to perform, that television networks and motion picture producers organize units to represent their arts and that producers of Broadway shows give the rights and lend the physical properties of their productions. It also is suggested that air lines and shipping companies cooperate in getting personnel and material to Brussels at cost and that the press support the artists.

The letter was sent to President Eisenhower last night. The management of the Metropolitan Opera knew of the singers' action, but it made the point that it was not officially involved.

Daily MAGAZINE

SECTION II

From JAN 16 1958
HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.New American Opera
Is Hailed at the Met

'VANESSA'—Star, composer and librettist at the Metropolitan last night; left to right, Eleanor Steber as Vanessa, Samuel Barber and Gian-Carlo Menotti.

By Paul Henry Lang

The festive gathering at the Metropolitan Opera House witnessed, last night, the resounding success of Samuel Barber's opera, "Vanessa," book by Gian-Carlo Menotti. This was the world premiere of the first American opera produced at the famous old theater since Jan. 11, 1947, when Bernard Rogers' "The Warrior" received its baptism. This was also the first opera by a native composer presented during Rudolf Bing's administration.

An excellent cast, headed by Eleanor Steber, a brilliant conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos, in the pit, and Gian-Carlo Menotti as his own stage director, insured a gala performance.

Before anything else is said, it is our duty, as well as pleasure, to compliment the Metro-

politan Opera on the manner in which this work has been produced. This was no gesture of appeasement toward the American composer but a presentation every bit as carefully and lavishly planned and executed as any of the old favorites.

I imagine they simply sized up "Vanessa," and finding it to be a viable, altogether professional work wholly within the traditions of grand opera, more than favorably comparing with what is now being done in Europe, they went ahead with "Vanessa" just as they did with "Arabella." Mr. Barber amply justified the "risk."

"Vanessa," set in a northern country about the year 1905, is a major contribution to the international operatic repertoire. See "VANESSA"—Pg. 12, Col. 3

(Continued from page one)

The Cast

METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE
Opera in four acts, music by Samuel Barber, libretto by Gian-Carlo Menotti.
The cast:
Vanessa.....Eleanor Steber
Erika.....Rosina Resnik
The Old Baroness.....Nicola Gedda
Anatol.....Giorgio Tozzi
The Old Doctor.....George Cohanovsky
Major-Domo.....Robert Nagy
A Footman.....Robert Nagy
Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; staged by Mr. Menotti; sets and costumes by Cecil Beaton; choreography by Zachary Solov.

Mr. Barber's mastery of the operatic language is remarkable and second to none now active on the Salzburg-Milan axis. This will be an eye-opener for Europeans reared on a diet of "School for Wives" or "The Moon." His vocal writing is impeccable and his handling of the orchestra virtuoso to a Straussian degree. While the music is at times a little eclectic, it is always interesting, well made, beautifully polished, and effective, and there are some very good tunes.

Cecil Beaton's sets are handsome and attentive to detail. The costumes, notably those of Miss Steber, are less satisfactory. Mr. Menotti's staging is imaginative, though his well-known touch of the theater deserted him when he permitted things to happen in an alcove. This of course means that part of the audience cannot see what is going on.

But Mr. Mitropoulos, in great good form, compensated for all this. He kept the work going with a genuine sympathy for its qualities, and carried out the composer's scheme of ever mounting interest and intensive with insight.

Miss Steber in the title role was a bit variable. Some parts she sang well, others were not entirely convincing, and her enunciation was less clear than it could be. I have a feeling that this distinguished artist has not yet fully identified herself with the role; she will undoubtedly grow into it.

Rosina Resnik promoted herself with the role of Erika to the rank of prima donna. Her voice is fresh and secure, with many nice shades; she acts with ease, and her diction is excellent. Regina Resnik as the wise and gruff grandmother was both vocally and histrionically very good.

Nicola Gedda's cool, clear voice was particularly appropriate for Anatol, the young lover who is not really deeply involved with either of the women. The Swedish tenor rates special praise for his unfailingly distinct English diction.

In every one of his new roles Giorgio Tozzi demonstrates exceptional capabilities. As the garrulous old doctor in "Vanessa," he once more proved that the Met has in him a versatile artist with a most engaging voice.

"Vanessa" proved to be a triumph, and so it seemed to me, the public felt that this is a work destined for a healthy career.

Barber owes Menotti, who also

A NIGHT AT THE OPERA

Eleanor Steber (r), who sang title role in "Vanessa," new American opera at Met, shows part of the \$1,500,000 jewelry collection she wore. Admiring it are (l to r) Rosalind Elias, composer Samuel Barber and Regina Resnik. All the critics praised the Barber-Menotti work, reviewed by Harriett Johnson on Page 28.

Cover Photo by Pomerantz

WORDS and MUSIC

By Harriett Johnson

Impressive 'Vanessa' Premieres

Whatever the relative merits of Samuel Barber's new opera, "Vanessa," given its world premiere last night at the Metropolitan Opera, the event was of historic importance.

Set to a melancholy but persuasive libretto by Gian-Carlo Menotti, "Vanessa" is the first full-length opera by a native-born American to be presented at the Met since Howard Hanson's "Merry Mount" was produced there in 1934. It is the first opera of any size by an American to sound before the Golden Horseshoe in 10 years. Bernard Rogers' one-act, "The Warrior," had two performances in 1947.

The sold-out house rivalled opening night in glamor and surpassed it in distinction. The audience exuded personalities from Katharine Cornell and Zorina to Artur Schnabel and Fritz Reiner.

It became progressively enthusiastic as the evening continued, finally giving vent to militant approbation. There were ear-splitting bravos and cheers at the conclusion, forcing countless curtain calls for composer, librettist and every other participant.

In itself, the production of "Vanessa" is a triumph for the American musical-theater. The celebrated house, after its extended disregard of our native talent, has honored Barber by mounting his opera with a superb mise en scene.

Dimitri Mitropoulos on the podium was the dominating musical genius of the performance projecting alternating dynamic tension or tender emotion with the utmost effect. He received a prolonged personal ovation before the final act.

What then of the work itself? Was it, looking with cool objectivity at "Vanessa's" intrinsic merits apart from the event's significance, worth the trouble? The answer is emphatically "yes," notwithstanding aspects of Barber's music which can be qualified.

Whatever his shortcomings in setting Menotti's stunning libretto, to oppressive with the ironic overtones of Strindberg and Ibsen, the composer has succeeded in producing a work which comes alive expressively. The story builds to one of the most poignant climaxes in opera, and the music builds with it.

"Vanessa," ambiguously, has its setting "in a northern country," which might conceivably be either Denmark or Germany, or a combination of both. The time is about 1905. Cecil Beaton's sets and costumes, with their dominating purple suffusing with the somber grey of an early Gothic castle, Vanessa's home, reflect the mood of the story's subtly tragic plot.

Vanessa, who has waited countless years for her lover to return, discovers, to her torture, that it is his son who has "come back," not the father, who meanwhile had died. But soon the volatile Vanessa cannot resist the charms of opportunist Anatol who, in the old Baroness' wise words, "will choose what is easier." It is Vanessa's young niece, Erika, who with in-

stinctive wisdom foresees the multiple tragedies of what is transpiring, and who closes the

served as his perceptive stage director, a profound vote of thanks. He, with his immense chameleon-like gifts, dramatic, literary and musical, is a major talent of our time. This is possibly his finest libretto, a more mature piece of writing than those he has provided for his own operas.

May the two foster artistically, together and singly, in the future. Their gifts, in our time, are rare indeed.

doors of the castle at the opera's conclusion with the final prophetic words, "Now it is my turn to wait."

If depth and significance of character are the criterion, the Barber opera should be named Erika.

Rosalind Elias, who plays the part, attains the triumph of her short career by a characterization which is magnificent in its anguished poignancy. In the title role, Eleanor Steber accomplished a remarkable tour de force by learning the difficult part in six weeks. Not ideally cast, she achieves wonders in making the

role believable.

As the family doctor, Giorgio Tozzi provides some delightful humor in a mildly drunken jovial bit, and in general adds his perceptive artistry and beautiful bass voice to the whole. Regina Resnik's characterization of the silent, rebellious mother of Vanessa, who speaks to no one but Erika and finally even rejects her for Trappist quiet, is the most convincing martinet I remember in opera. Resnik as a mezzo is showing immense histrionic gifts she never even approached in her former soprano parts.

Probably the biggest surprise of the evening, however, was Swedish tenor Nicolai Gedda. As Anatol, handsome and Nordic, he sang with a lovely lyric ecstasy and in exemplary English. He acted with appropriate ardor. It was no wonder that both Vanessa and Erika yearned for him.

Musically, the first and third acts are less strong than the second and fourth. Details of why, because of space limitations, must wait for another day.

Barber owes Menotti, who also



Eleanor Steber, who sang title role of "Vanessa," is congratulated by the opera's composer, Samuel Barber, after world premiere at the Met last night. Libretto for the opera was written by Gian-Carlo Menotti.

Music

Opera 'Vanessa' Debuts at Met

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI.

For the first time in 24 years, a new full-length opera by an American-born composer was produced at the Metropolitan last night.

The opera was "Vanessa," the music by Samuel Barber, the libretto by Gian-Carlo Menotti, who also produced the work and who had previously never written a libretto for anybody's opera but his own. For all those interested in the welfare of native American opera, the event was impressive and significant. While "Vanessa" was the 20th American work to be heard at the Met, it was the first of Rudolf Bing's regime.

Excitement Felt.

The atmosphere on both sides of the footlights was tense with the sort of excitement that usually goes with the opening night of the season. There was eager talk about the opera, and eager, genuine applause all through the performance.

And frankly there was plenty of cause for jubilation in both the opera and the production. No previous American opera can have received such sumptuous attention from a manager and his company.

Since "Vanessa" is the very first opera of a composer mostly associated with the concert hall, weaknesses were expected and found. Largely, it is a work of strength and abundance—and even greater promise.

Mr. Menotti's story—placed in "a northern country about the year 1905"—has to do with three women and a man—a father, morose baroness, her daughter Vanessa, her grandchild Erika, and Anatol, the son of Vanessa's long-departed lover.

Tale of Waiting.

Vanessa has awaited her lover's return for 20 years. Anatol is dead, and it is second Anatol who turns up, the love of both women, marries Vanessa, and leaves Erika to start a new cycle of waiting.

It is an opera brooding with nostalgia and frustration and tonic outbreaks of festive melody, sometimes slow and adious, sometimes needlessly arsh, but generally vital and sincere and often arresting in dramatic impact.

It is also a handsomely clad opera, with its Edwardian interiors and elegant wardrobes, and in the case of Eleanor

Opera: World Premiere

Barber's 'Vanessa' Is Introduced at 'Met'

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

AFTER eleven long years at the Metropolitan Opera, America's principal lyric theatre, has produced a new American opera again. As if this were not enough to make a citizen giddy with pride, the new work, "Vanessa," which had its premiere last night, turns out to be the best American opera ever presented at the stately theatre on Broadway and Thirty-ninth Street.

It need not be claimed that "Vanessa" is a masterpiece. Operatic masterpieces are in shorter supply these days than man-made satellites, and the nineteen other American works ventured by the Met in the last half-century were not exactly for the ages. But the new piece is a collaboration of two gifted men—Samuel Barber, who wrote the music, and his close friend, Gian-Carlo Menotti, who provided the libretto. It is professional; it has atmosphere; it builds to a moving climax.

If you do not grow impatient, "Vanessa" will reward you. It starts disappointingly. The first act has little or no musical profile. Mr. Barber, one of our ablest composers, edges into his first attempt at opera cautiously and self-consciously as if he were an explorer whose name is made and who is setting out on a dangerously publicized voyage into unfamiliar territory.

The composer's confidence grows as he finds that he is not only breathing in the strange world but actually absorbed by it. He responds to the adventure with expanding assurance. He unbends and allows himself a waltz, a country-dance, a hymn, a genial aria or two. In the final scene he writes a grand quintet, a full-blown set-piece that packs an emotional charge and that would be a credit to any composer anywhere today.

It is wonderful to behold: By the time he has reached the last act Mr. Barber has learned to write for the lyric theatre with perception and impact. For a man of 47 whose work has been largely in absolute music this is an impressive achievement.

Mr. Menotti's story has a distant and wintry melancholy as if a tired Victorian opulence had been grafted onto a grim Scandinavian landscape. Though the period is 1905, it seems remote in time and spirit. The two women in the triangle, Vanessa and her niece, Erika, are more foolish than tragic, if you examine their behavior objectively, and the man, Anatol, is not much more than a cipher.

But Mr. Menotti is an expert hand at the operatic game. His concise libretto evokes a lost, other-worldly mood. It is also theatrical with more than a touch of corn in the third-act curtain. Librettos, however, are only the skeleton, as Mr. Menotti, himself a composer of parts, would be the first to concede. The burden rests on the composer.

Mr. Barber's musical style began years ago with a commitment to romanticism but has shifted under the impact

The Cast

VANESSA. A new opera in three acts and five scenes by Samuel Barber. Text by Gian-Carlo Menotti. Staged by Mr. Menotti. Sets and costumes by Cecil Beaton. Conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. At the Metropolitan Opera.

Vanessa.....Eleanor Steber
Erika.....Rosalind Elias
The Old Baroness.....Regina Resnik
Anatol.....Nicolai Gedda
The Old Doctor.....Giorgio Tozzi
The Major-Domo.....George Cohanovsky
The Footman.....Robert Nagy

of contemporary trends. In "Vanessa" there is considerable eclecticism. Diverse influences from Wagner to Puccini to Strauss are reflected, but the music takes on firmer individuality as it proceeds until at least it generates a touching and brooding power.

Since he is always a high-minded composer, Mr. Barber's score is nowhere less than serious and professional. Though in the past he has written attractively for voice, he does not let himself go freely until he is well under way. As a symphonist he is more confident, and his orchestra, an effective contributor from the start, becomes an increasingly vital dramatic ally.

The Met's production is handsome, and the performance is persuasive even when the words become a bit sticky and the music taxing and unyielding. Dimitri Mitropoulos, who can work wonders with a new score when his enthusiasm is engaged, conducts with luminous sympathy. The singers are accomplished. Mr. Menotti's staging, save for a few places of old-fashioned exaggeration, is unobtrusively resourceful. Cecil Beaton's lavish sets and costumes are tasteful except for Vanessa's darkly flaming first-act gown. Vanessa, by the way, gets to wear as many striking creations as a film queen.

Eleanor Steber, who gallantly assumed the title role on short notice when Sena Jurinac had to cancel her American debut because of illness, proves once again that she is a remarkable trouper. Vanessa's character is elusive and her music difficult, but Miss Steber rises to the challenge of both.

Rosalind Elias, American mezzo, has the chance of her young career and handles it brilliantly. Erika is the most fully realized and most affecting figure in the story, and Miss Elias sings with vocal richness and musical understanding and acts with honesty.

Nicolai Gedda, tall and slim, looks credible as the young Anatol, and he sings intelligently. Though he is a Swede, the only non-American in the cast, his English is the most comprehensible. Giorgio Tozzi, one of the finest young performers at the Met, plays and sings the Doctor with suavity and humor. Regina Resnik brings crusty dignity to the enigmatic old Baroness. As the Major-domo George Cohanovsky adds another to his manifold and neatly managed character bits.

The gala audience behaved as if it found "Vanessa" not only an event but a pleasure. Whatever the fate of the opera may be in the long run, a new American work at the Met was long overdue. It should not require eleven years to bring forward another.



IN OPERA COMPOSED BY AN AMERICAN: Eleanor Steber, seated; Rosalind Elias, Giorgio Tozzi and Nicolai Gedda, right, in a scene from "Vanessa." Work, by Samuel Barber, had its premiere last night at the Metropolitan.

Operatic Newcomer Samuel Barber

COMPOSER Samuel Barber likes to tell the story of the Chinese corporal who wrote to him after his Second Symphony, commissioned by and dedicated to the Army Air Forces, had its premiere in 1944.

"Dear Corporal," the letter read, "I came to hear your symphony. I thought it was terrible, but I applauded vociferously, because I think all corporals should be encouraged." Mr. Barber began the work shortly after his induction into the Army in 1943. His three years in service, among other things, delayed work on an opera commissioned by the Koussevitzky Music Foundation in 1942. In 1947 the composer reported that he still had not found the right libretto.

Eventually Mr. Barber turned for a libretto to his colleague and friend of long standing, Gian-Carlo Menotti. The result was "Vanessa," which had its first performance at the Metropolitan Opera last night.

Although "Vanessa" is the composer's first opera, he has written prolifically in other forms. In 1933 he won the \$1,200 Bearn's Prize of Columbia University with his "School for Scandal" Overture. He won the Prix de Rome, entitling him to study at the American Academy in Rome, in 1935, and won the Pulitzer Prize in music in 1935 and 1936. Mr. Barber was the first composer to be a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner.

First at Salzburg

His "Symphony in One Movement" was the first work by an American composer to be performed at the Salzburg Festival. The performance took place in the summer of 1937. In the following year, his "Adagio for Strings" and "Essay for Orchestra" received first performances by the N. B. C. Symphony Orchestra under Arturo Toscanini.

Mr. Barber's Army service was reflected in such works as "A Stopwatch and an Ordnance Map," for men's voices and tympani. He has also written violin and cello concertos, ballet music and numerous songs.

He was born on March 9, 1910, in West Chester, Pa. His father was a physician, Dr. Samuel LeRoy Barber. His mother, Marguerite Beatty, was the sister of the Metropolitan contralto Louise Homer.

Showing early and unmistakable signs of musical talent, he began composing at the age of 7. About this time he was taken to the Metropolitan to hear his Aunt Louise sing Amneris with Caruso in "Aida."

At thirteen, he was accepted as a student at the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied piano with Isabella Vengerova, singing with Emilio de Gogorza and conducting with Fritz Reiner.

His composition teacher was Rosario Scalero, a strict



Began composing at the age of 7.

master who was also a conscious repository of the Great Tradition.

Although Mr. Barber's music has come a long way from the Scalero influence, and is unmistakably contemporary in idiom, its formal structure and its tendency toward lyricism show the influence of his early training.

Among Mr. Barber's fellow-students in Scalero's class was a gifted youngster from Milan named Gian-Carlo Menotti. The two became fast friends, and now share a rambling Scandinavian-style house at Mount Kisco, N. Y. The house has two wings, at the ends of which each has a studio, out of earshot of the other.

Mr. Barber as a young man, the photographs show, was almost unbelievably handsome, and he remains one of the most photogenic of today's composers. He is of medium stature, with deep brown eyes and brown hair. He talks rapidly in a low voice. He is fond of travel and is facile in all the operatic languages—French, German and Italian.

From JAN 16 1958
NEWS
New York, N. Y.

A Fine, Festive Audience New American Opera

By JOHN CHAPMAN

Last evening at the Metropolitan Opera House was both festive and impressive. A really distinguished audience had gathered to witness the premiere of an American opera, "Vanessa," with music by Samuel Barber and libretto by Gian-Carlo Menotti.

This is the first native work of full length the Met has presented since 1934, when it offered Howard Hanson's "Merry Mount" for six performances. My guess is that "Vanessa" will earn many more than six performances in this and ensuing seasons, for it is a work of considerable vitality, both musically and dramatically. Barber's score will take more than one hearing before this listener can put it into final perspective. On first hearing, as it

who won't talk to anybody but Erika.

Vanessa has withdrawn from the world and from herself; she has even had the mirrors covered so she cannot see herself. But, as the opera opens, she expects a visit from a long-lost lover, Anatol. But another Anatol arrives—the son of the lover now dead. After a fast dalliance with the young niece he keeps his eye on the main chance—the wealthy Vanessa.

At the end, Anatol takes his bride away. Erika has survived her fight into the snow, but her child has miscarried. Now she is alone with the old lady—and it is her turn to cover the mirrors so that she will not see herself. This ending has the same theatrical impact that the final moments of the play, "The Heiress," had some seasons ago.

The Met has given "Vanessa" all the rich opportunities it can bestow. Eleanor Steber is magnificent and lovely in the title role, but Rosalind Elias comes close to stealing the show from her as Erika. Nicolai Gedda is admirable as Anatol, and Giorgio Tozzi achieves some excellent comedy as the family doctor. In her long stillness as the old lady, Regina Resnik is dramatically effective—and she is just as effective in the moments she sings. As I have said, Menotti is a showman.

After the final act there was a prolonged ovation for the cast, the conductor, the composer, the librettist and manager Rudolph Bing. It was indeed a festive evening, and the great compliments of the audience were honestly bestowed.



Eleanor Steber
Splendid in title role

was conducted last evening by Dimitri Mitropoulos, it is intelligent and often fascinating; but, not being in the lyric vein, it may not fully illustrate the dramatic power of Menotti's story.

Menotti, who up to now has written his own music for his own libretti, has an instinct for the theatre quite apart from his musical skill. He is a showman, and the story of "Vanessa" is a solid and holding operatic structure. Being a showman, he has directed the opera for dramatic and pictorial effect, and the finale of the third of four acts is a gripping one.

Dramatic Scene

In this end-of-an-act scene, celebrants have come to a great baronial hall to hear the announcement of Vanessa's engagement to a man much younger than she named Anatol. On the big stairway of this house Vanessa's young niece, Erika, hears the announcement and collapses. The partygoers don't give her so much as a glance—for how would they know that Erika is carrying Anatol's child? Revived, she vows that this child must not be born, and goes out into the snow on suicide bent.

The music is modern—not too modern, but unusual enough so that the first audience was never sure when an aria or duet had ended, an insecurity which led to premature applause. The story, however, is a simple operatic structure.

It's Erika's Turn

The time is about 1 and the locale is "a northern country." As Cecil Beaton has designed and costumed it, very effectively, it might be a Scandinavian country. Here lives Vanessa with her niece and her mother, a crusty old lady

ναυτική μπαγκέτα του τον καλύτερο έαυτο τους. Πορ' όλο που από πρόγραμμα είχε γραφεί για πρώτη φορά ότι το νέο δεν έπρεπε να χειροκροτηθεί και να διοικήσει την συνοχή της μουσικής, έντονη και διακριτική προαν πολλές και οι εκδηλώσεις προς τον αρχιμουσικό και τους τραγουδιστές συνεχίζονται. Στην όλη της τρίτης και τεταρτής πράξεως όταν έφταναν εις το ποιντον ο Μητροπούλος, λος το κοινό του έπαυόταν ένα θερμότατο χειροκρότημα τέτοιος διαρκείας που πέρασαν τουλάχιστον πέντε λεπτά για να υποστή για να συνεχιστεί το έργο.

Αληθινά ή συμβολικά ή ήταν μεγάλη και η κριτική έτιναι την ελαφρότητα και την παιχνιδιάρικη κομω, το γούστο αλλά και τις δραματικές στιγμές του έργου τις οποίους υπεργουμάσε με απορρομμένη μεσέτρία. Την σκηνοθεσία το έργο ανέλαβε ο διακεκριμένος Κεράλο μπερ, που ήρθε να Μεννόνι και επε, συνθέτουμε από ηλικίας 7 ετών.

Την επόμενη ο Μητροπούλος θα παρουσιάσει έπειτα στο Θεατρίδι του Σάλτσμπουργκ και τον βασικό ρόλο θα τραγουδήσει η Γιούριαν. Ο Έλλην άρ. χυμοσμός θα διαδύσει έρετες μαζί με την ταινία που έτοιμάζει η Μετροπούλιν τον περί τις 70 παραστάσεις έως τα μέσα Μαίου. Περ το τέλος Μαίου και δώδεκας τον Ιούλιο θα είναι επί κεφαλής της Φιλαρμονικής της Νέας Υόρκης για την μεγάλη περίοδο στην Νότιο Αμερική, περιόδεσι την οποίαν οργανώσει και χρηματοδοτήσει το Στέιτ Ντι. παρμεν το όποιον ήλπιζε να διασκεύσει μαζί ως πρώτος μάστρας ο Μητροπούλος. Τον Ιούλιο θα μεταβεί στο Ισπανά για σειρά συναυλιών και μετά στο Σάλτσμπουργκ για το Θεατρίδι.

Υστερα, και αυτό είναι που ενδιαφέρει κυρίως το Έλληνικό κοινό, θα έλθω στην Αθήνα με την θαυμασία Φιλαρμονική Ορχήστρα της Βιέννης για τέσσερις συναυλίες. Το θέμα των συναυλιών αυτών είχε συζητηθεί από πέραι και είχε ληφθεί γράση ότι θα ήρχετο μαζί και ο φον Καρανίου για να διευθετη τις άσες συναυλίες. Το έτος έλθω η Μετροπούλιν, μαζί με τον άσκητικό δάσκαλο Διονύση Καρανίου δέκα τέσσερις συναυλίες κατω πόσον θα τον έλπιζόν ότι, έσχεκ, θα έλθω.

Ο Α. Μητροπούλος

ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΝΕΑΝ ΥΟΡΚΗΝ

ΕΝΑΣ ΝΕΟΣ ΘΡΙΑΜΒΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΔΗΜ. ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ

= Διεύθυνε την όπερα = «Βανέσσα» του Μπάρμπερ

ΑΛΗΘΙΝΗ ΑΠΟΘΕΩΣΙΣ

ΝΕΑ ΥΟΡΚΗ, 14 Ιανουαρίου. — Η πρώτη της καινούριας όπερας του Σαμουήλ Μπάρμπερ «Βανέσσα» που παιζόταν στην Μετροπούλιν υπήρξε το μεγαλύτερο μουσικό και κοσμικό γεγονός της Νέας Υόρκης από την ήμερα που άρχισε η έκτακτη σειρά της όπερας. Το έτος για πρώτη φορά από το 1947 η Αμερικανική Όπερα ανέβασε έργο Αμερικανικού συνθέτου έκκεντριστος περισσότερο το ενδιαφέρον του μουσικού κοινού και της κριτικής ιδιαιτέρως. Επί κεφαλής της Ορχήστρας ήταν ο Δημήτρης Μητροπούλος πράγμα που προαίρεται, σε στην όλη παρουσία ενός ανώτερου στοιχείου έρ. μουσικής και έκαναν τους τραγουδιστές να δώσουν κατά από την έρ. πνευματική και δύ.



Ο Α. Μητροπούλος

American Opera a Triumph

By MILES KASTENDIECK

SAMUEL BARBER'S "Vanessa" gave the Metropolitan Opera one of the most distinguished evenings in its history last night.

As ovation followed ovation at the end of the world premiere, it was obvious that this American opera had won its most critical audience. No other American work has scored so heavily in over a quarter century.

As Barber's first opera, this is a thoroughly professional job, giving promise of great things ahead. How good it is can be determined only on further acquaintance, but right now it qualifies as worthy of a high place in the Metropolitan repertoire.

Since it is in the line of traditional opera, even to the point of being possibly a big old-fashioned one, operagoers need not shy away because it is both new and American.

Between Barber and his librettist Gian-Carlo Menotti, "Vanessa" emerges a human document. The music complements the story to make it so. Ironic contrasts make it good theatre. A permeating sadness, irretrievably bound up in youthful tragedy, gives it emotional intensity.

Knowing well how to match words and music, Barber has written understandingly for the singers—perhaps too exactly for the title role. From Erika's song in the first act to the quintet at the end of the opera, there abounds some expert musical prosody.

Musically the highest point in the score is this final quintet, a vocal fugue of masterful craftsmanship and a singularly moving piece of music. This alone adds a note of distinction that colors the whole work in retrospect.

Fine Score

Barber's well-known command of orchestral writing gives the score both substance and character. The orchestra is an integral part of the whole, not only underlining emotional stress, but carrying it independently in the middle of scenes.

In this sense, "Vanessa" is solidly in the tradition of symphonic opera. How fortunate that its first interpreter should be Dimitri Mitropoulos. The ovation he received at the beginning of the fourth act indicated how fully appreciated he was and how much he and the orchestra had contributed to the performance.

That the Metropolitan gave "Vanessa" a handsome production almost goes without saying in the Bing regime. A quality cast, some lavish sets and

MILK FUND OPERA

Maria Callas stars in the Free Milk Fund for Babies benefit, "La Traviata," with Daniele Barioni and Mario Zanasi in leading tenor and baritone roles. Tickets at Tyson's, CI. 5-3000, and Committee Headquarters, CO. 5-7460. Date: Feb. 6. Time: 8:00 p. m. Don't wait! Get yours today!

costumes by Cecil Beaton, and some expert stage direction by Menotti made this possible.

It is somewhat ironic that Eleanor Steber in the title role did not quite equal the performances of other members of the cast. Her enunciation obscured too much of the text and her stagey manner made her too much of a prima donna.

Undertaking the role on fairly short notice might be the reason. At times when her voice focused clearly and her words came across audibly, she appeared ideally cast, but this impression was a fleeting one.

After last night Rosalind Elias must be considered one of the leading singing-actresses at the Met. Her portrayal of Erika was a dramatic triumph. She "lived" her hapless role vividly; in fact, she stole the show. Her performance made Erika much more the heroine than Vanessa.

Tozzi Superb

Giorgio Tozzi stopped the show for a moment in Act 1 and might have in Act 3 had the audience had its way. His portrayal of the old doctor was superb.

Nicolai Gedda as the hero Anatol distinguished himself for an understanding performance. Well sung and conspicuously enunciated along with Tozzi.

Called upon to act more than sing, Regina Resnik as the old baroness brought distinction to her part.

To pick flaws in the opera would not be difficult. It has some anti-climatic moments and too loosely knit a third act. It begins slowly and perhaps absurdly. The ballet is dragged in unnecessarily. Menotti has not always been incisive enough in his libretto. Barber is not always justified in his florid vocalism.

The opera may be too European in atmosphere

(especially because of its stage direction). Why set it in Europe when it could just as well have taken place in New England—and been more American in the process!

The story has an O'Neill quality. But these "weaknesses" yield to the inherent sense of theatre and the strength of the music.

"Vanessa" is something of which the Met may be proud not only because it has mounted it so well but also because the work itself is solid.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, 1958.

MUSIC



"SALOME" ON STAGE—Richard Strauss' opera, which has not been heard here since the 1954-55 season, returns to the Metropolitan Friday

night. In the rehearsal scene above are Inge Borkh, who will make her debut in the title role, and Ramon Vinay, who will sing Herod.



"GIANNI SCHICCHI" ON ROOF STAGE—Puccini's one-acter, last heard during the season 1951-52, will share Friday night's bill with

"Salome." Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor of both operas, is at left. At the extreme right is Fernando Corena, who will sing Gianni.

From JAN 22 1958
TIMES PICAYUNE
New Orleans, La.

ON THE SQUARE

'Vanessa'

By SIM MYERS

NEW YORK—The occasion of the second performance of the Samuel Barber opera, "Vanessa," was almost as gala as its world premiere a week before at the Metropolitan Opera House.

This is the opera with music by Barber and a libretto by Gian-Carlo Menotti. Dimitri Mitropoulos, as for the premier, was conductor; Eleanor Steber, soprano who'll sing "Manon Lescaut" in New Orleans during the last half of the winter season there, sang the title role. Others in the cast were Rosalind Elias as Erika, Regina Resnick as the baroness, Nicolai Gedda as Anatol and Giorgio Tozzi as the doctor.

Roughly, this is the story of a woman who has waited 20 years for her lover to return, then falls in love with his son when that man makes an appearance at her home. The catch is that the woman's niece also falls for the man and he seduces the niece, all the while playing up to the aunt.

Its setting could just as easily have been used for "La Traviata," being of traditional model. Its time period is the long-gone past also and these two qualities added to its form made the opera old-fashioned in scope.

This was set to modern music that was never very strong and often was frightfully weak. The orchestration never did exploit a very wide orchestra and there were only scattered moments when there was much of melodic content.

Gian-Carlo Menotti's libretto is the most tragic thing about the whole work. In it, he seems to have no real feeling for the English language, as a result of which much of that which is sung on stage is not understood and the

rest not worth understanding. It is harsh, unmusical sound.

With just about every other word incomprehensible and vocally ugly, this work casts a strong shadow on opera in English and is a sharp contrast to the English "La Perichole" of last season.

Maestro Renato Cellini, general director of the New Orleans Opera House Association, found several reasons for leaving at the end of the second act after having declared that the work was as bad as anything he had heard in a long time.

MIRROR
New York, N. Y.
JAN 25 1958

ROBERT COLEMAN'S THEATRE:

Borkh's 'Salome' Thrilling

The Metropolitan Opera House was packed Friday evening for the debut of Inge Borkh in the title role of "Salome." The lucky ticket-holders were rewarded with about as striking a portrayal of this lust-sick temptress as could be imagined. It pulled out all the stops of sensuality.

Mme. Borkh is a handsome figure of a woman. She's tall and lithe. She has curves that would make any Broadway musical-comedy impresario seek to sign her to a contract. In a costume of pink, green and royal purple that was plenty revealing, she made a lot of eyes pop in last night's audience.

HER INTERPRETATION of the role caught all the depravity of this sultry siren. She was a veritable tiger woman. A madwoman, if you please, who let nothing stand in the way of her desire. The high spot of the opera, of course, is the famous "Dance of the Seven Veils," and here is an artist who really makes it something to see.

Fortunately, Mme. Borkh has a voice to match her looks. Salome is a part to tax any singer, and she met the vocal challenge beautifully. If she was less than perfect in the lower register once in a while, her top notes were exciting. All things considered, we think Mme. Borkh's Salome as thrilling, pictorially and emotionally, as any we've ever caught. It's downright sensational.

With the Met's ranks racked by flu, Norman Kelley replaced Ramon Vinay as Herod, who sacrifices Jochanaan to Salome, only to be revolted by his own weakness. Kelley, who has become an invaluable member of

the company, contributed an admirable characterization, as usual.

Jon Crain, who jumped from the City Center to the Met this season, was excellent as the distraught Narraboth, while Blanche Thebom did justice to Herodias. Mack Harrell sang Jochanaan with fine feeling, though there were moments when the power of the Strauss music muffled him a bit.

Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted the rich score as it was meant to be. He made few concessions to the singers. As one who urged Rudolf Bing to sign Kelley and Crain, we were gratified that both met their tests with flying colors. Crain's vibrant tenor is going to be quite useful at the big house.

THE DOUBLE BILL opened with Puccini's ever-delightful "Gianni Schicchi." This fable of a Florentine slicker who outwits his equally larcenous neighbors has music that is both humorous and melodious. It represents Maestro Puccini in a larkish mood, a wonderfully larkish mood.

Fernando Corena appeared to be having as much fun impersonating the rascally Gianni as we out front did watching him. Nadine Conner, subbing for the indisposed Emilia Cundari, was charming as the crafty schemer's daughter, while Gabor Carelli

was eminently right as her sweetheart.

Mildred Allen replaced Madeleine Chambers, on short notice, in the role of Nella, and acquitted herself with credit. Mitropoulos, also on the podium for "Gianni Schicchi," was a tower of strength. The Philharmonic Symphony's loss has been the Metropolitan's gain, though the dynamic Dimitri will baton here now and then at Carnegie Hall.

Rudolf Bing, during his regime at the Met, has worked wonders. He has found the funds with which to freshen up old productions, and add new ones. He has strengthened the august company's roster of artists, so much so that even when flu strikes, the subscribers get their money's worth. And they certainly got it last night.

From

VARIETY
New York, N. Y.

JAN 22 1958

Met Opera With 'Vanessa' Makes It Big Except In Diction Department

By ROBERT J. LANDRY

Sputnik fired by Russian raspberries recently made Americans look like nudniks but the latest question is this: can the Russians get it up operatically? Can they launch a new opera as good as Samuel Barber's "Vanessa?"

The first American opera in 11 years, only the 20th in 73 years, "Vanessa" world-premiered last Wed. (15) at the Metropolitan Opera House to a move-over-Puccini ovation. It not only massaged current inferiority feelings into a patriotic glow but it was downright entertaining.

Much of the style, pleasure and impact lies in Barber's colleague, Gian-Carlo Menotti, a man of the theatre as well as a librettist. Doubling as stager, he contrived to put the drama into lyric drama and also to make Giorgio Tozzi, one of the Met's standby baritones, suddenly seem, in a dance bit, more amusing than Cyril Ritchard in "La Perichole."

"Vanessa" opens in the drawing room of a Scandinavian castle, year 1905, with the chateleine ordering dinner (in French) from the liveried staff. This is a musically impossible but narratively intriguing start for an opera and signals ahead something of the mood of the story. If the first act is meagre in the singing department, it establishes the characters and what there is of plot. Menotti infuses surprising "humanity" in the story considering that the Old Baroness (Regina Resnik) is mostly mute and the cad-hero (Nicolai Gedda) is of vague-to-trite motivation.

As a completely new work, with the audience not always sure when to applaud, but eager to, it is obvious that time and performance have yet to fully shape this opera. On the ecstatic daily reviews alone, and a long build-up of curiosity, "Vanessa" is certain to be given plenty of performances this season and next. Meantime correctable lapses of diction is a first item of attention. One of the oddities of the opening was the crystal-clear English of Gedda, a Swede, opposite Eleanor Steber, a West Virginian, whose lyrics were occasionally woolly.

No New Haven Even so the whole performance was remarkably tight and sure, on nothing more than a single private dress rehearsal. There isn't a Broadway theatre producer who would, under such circumstances, dare "Vanessa" as did Rudolf Bing. Nor would any Equity lady jump such a role as did Miss Steber on a few weeks notice.

A sense of everybody's sheer artistic daring and achievement against these hazards undoubtedly was present in the rising clamor of insistent appreciation for conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos before Act III and even stronger before Act IV. The great Greek may have suffered some heartburn of recent times on 57th Street, but he is truly a hero on 39th Street. He should have a recording of those two ovations for his old age.

Barber's symphonic musicianship is apparent in the score, his maiden opera at age 47, and ap-

preciation of his vocal writing grows act by act. The musical climax comes in the final act, a superbly beautiful, emotionally moving and indeed quite glorious five-voiced fugue. Seldom indeed does an opera scene "build and play" and create inter-personal feeling as does this "farewell." It lines up the heartbroken niece, who remains behind in the castle, her whilom lover, Aunt Vanessa, now his bride, the aging and sentimental family doctor and finally the taciturn and embittered old baroness, mother of the departing (for Paris) Vanessa.

Director Menotti has perhaps topped himself as dramatist. Some of his elements are more hinted than developed, yet the very cunning of "Vanessa" may lurk just here. He puts his would-be suicide's convalescent couch partly off-stage but, in all reality, having had a miscarriage, she surely would be partly out of sight. In any event, Menotti's insights and knowing hand are not to be discounted.

Production values include the air of bygone elegance and country peerage. Here the sets and costumes of Cecil Beaton are of the utmost contribution. Important, too, is the choreography of Zachary Solov (Nordic peasantry and high-style gentry) at the engagement party. It is to be presumed that in this particular case what is called "musical preparation" (by Ignace Strassefogel) has been notably valuable.

Eleanor Steber is ideally Vanessa. No complaints that some of the lyrics got lost cancel her stunning vocal performance and appearance. Festooned in the 1905 dressmaking, and corseted to match, she was "got up" on the grande dame side. She should make this role uniquely her own, a career high point. Her tones were rich and powerful when called forth.

Gedda, a newcomer to the Met this season, was splendid as the Anatol of these north country affairs while Tozzi, as earlier mentioned, enchanted the clientele.

The niece is a more acting and reacting role than the aunt and to that extent Rosalind Elias often seems the heroine. This is perhaps Miss Elias' finest hour on the operatic stage and her realization of the character along with the vocal effort produced a richly deserved personal triumph.

Significantly the final curtain rewards to the principals, rose louder and louder. An unusually well pleased non-subscription audience stayed until the last quaff of the evening's wine.



The eighth of seventeen curtain calls after the world premiere of Samuel Barber's "Vanessa" at Metropolitan Opera House Wednesday brings to stage (from left) Giorgio Tozzi, Regina Resnik, Dimitri Mitropoulos, Rosalind Elias, Gian-Carlo Menotti, Samuel Barber, Eleanor Steber, Nicalai Gedda.

Barber Crashes Operatic Sound Barrier

By ROBERT G. BREEN

NEW YORK. IN 1928 a boy of 17, an Italian immigrant from Milan, registered as a student at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. He soon formed a friendship with a classmate his own age from West Chester, Pa., who was studying voice, aspiring some day to be an opera singer.

The little Italian friend said he would have nothing to do with opera however, he had had enough of that at La Scala, and besides, he was more interested in chamber music and the purer forms.

The two boys formed a lasting friendship, and now share a large, European-like house in Westchester county, where they follow their musical careers with a fervent concentration unusual in any field.

Unexpected Byways

But neither career has turned out as they had originally planned.

The Milanese has come to be regarded as the foremost American operatic composer and librettist, past or present. Gian-Carlo Menotti is the name.

The boy from West Chester abandoned hope of an operatic career and went on to become one of the most prolific of composers, being the first composer to be a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner, Samuel Barber.

Now the two have fused their talents to produce a full-length opera, "Vanessa," which was premiered at the Metropolitan Opera House on Wednesday night.

Mr. Barber has written the music for this, his first opera. Menotti has written the libretto and directed the production.

In every respect the evening was a memorable one for those present, containing every element to make it a perfect one for the hordes of chronic, hard-

ened opera-goers who turned up for the event.

The audience itself was a dazzling one, a truly distinguished gathering of leaders in all the arts assembled to pay rather tense and nervous homage to two of their most renowned confreres.

There was ample precedent for a bit of reasonable apprehension. After all, in the 25 years and 19 tries that the Metropolitan has been trying to stage the great American opera, it has turned up more miserable misses than near hits.

The apprehension on the part of the audience began to dissipate itself after the first act.

The opera at least had the two basic requirements needed to satisfy the inveterate opera-goer—it was loud and it promised to be long. (The curtain finally fell at 11:20 P.M.).

Added to that was the sumptuous set and the costumes of Cecil Beaton, English that could be understood as it was being sung, and a story that had all the earmarks of pure theater.

As it turned out, the opera grows in dramatic intensity from act to act, until the climax is reached with a quintet that simply stuns the audience with the impact of its poignant magnificence. Whatever the defects in the work, they were disregarded now as the listener was plunged into the spell that only the true magic of opera can evoke.

It was a remarkable thing to behold, as if the audience, aware immediately of the presence of greatness, was awed into a state of hushed immobility. Not a program rustled, not a cough came, as the voices soared, almost floated, with luminous grandeur through the old house.

This was grand opera indeed, in the grandest of traditions!

The only comparable operatic instance, that comes to mind, when the audience is invariably transfixed by such magic, is during the last act trio of Der Rosenkavalier, and during the great quintet of Die Meistersinger.

As the curtain fell, the audience

thundered its rapturous approbation.

After all, there were quite a few things to howl about.

For one thing, the opera itself, if audience reaction is any judge, was a wild success, a *succes fou*. Even the critics became slightly giddy.

The New York Times, usually rather solemn and reserved about its pronouncements, couldn't wait to finish the first paragraph of its review before declaring "Vanessa" the "best American opera ever presented at the stately theatre on Broadway and Thirty-ninth street."

There was the superb conducting of Dimitri Mitropoulos.

Excellence Of Performance

There was the uniformly excellent, inspired singing of the entire cast. Eleanor Steber, the *Vanessa*, encompassed some of the murderous intervals and more strident passages of the score with polished assurance and credibility.

The young American singer, Rosalind Elias, was hailed unreservedly as one of the greatest of "singing-actresses."

The Swedish tenor Nicalai Gedda was lauded for the excellence of his English diction which appeared to be vastly more important to some of the critics than the purity of his lyric tenor voice.

During the curtain calls, the applause and cheering really got going to a full blast with the appearance of the conductor, who kissed Mme. Steber's hand.

At the next curtain call, Menotti appeared which brought further tumult. Then came Barber, who literally had to be pushed on the stage.

His appearance brought on deafening

delirium from the audience. At that point, Steber, apparently heartened by Mitropoulos's gallant gesture and transported with joy, did what is simply not done at the Metropolitan, she impulsively did as she dared, turned and embraced Barber, then kissed Menotti and Mitropoulos. Not to be out done, Elias did likewise. The audience simply howled.

The joy on the part of the audience, was unquestionably an expression of pride that an American had in full blown fashion, at long last penetrated the operatic sound barrier. But there was a stronger motive. The new opera had proved that the operatic idiom in music, if not exactly thriving these days, is at least alive, and breathing. "Vanessa," if not a masterpiece, is at least a glorious lobe of things to come.

An Anxiety Relieved

It was simply a grand gesture of relieved anxiety on the audience's part. What might have been a wake, turned out to be quite the opposite. It was an operatic reincarnation in contemporary vein.

The audience itself deserves a round of applause. To begin, it was the most truly spectacular (fashion-wise), and distinguished assembly gathered there in many a long year (not to be confused with the grubby glittering mob that nowadays is prone to turn out for opening nights).

Wedged in between the diamond tiaras and full length chinchilla coats, were such personalities as Arthur Rubinstein, Fritz Reiner, Lucrezia Bori, Licia Albanese, Elsa Maxwell, Zorina, Katharine Cornell, and Lucia Chase.

PAUL HENRY LANG 'Gianni Schicchi' and 'Salome'

In last night's revival of Puccini's "Gianni Schicchi" at the Metropolitan Opera the old master once more extracted tears, but these were tears of laughter. The composer of thrillers and romantic dramas turned, at the end of his career, to opera buffa, which always slumbers in every Italian composer's bosom.

The buffa requires an approach and treatment quite different from the serious opera. Tone, pace, melody, orchestration, everything is lighter and faster, but above all, there are the ensembles, those romping and scintillating pieces which are the acme of operatic virtuosity and enjoyment. That is, if they are properly executed.

When Gianni Schicchi reveals his plan to the assembled Florentine "mourners" there ensues one of these animated ensembles that are a wonder of minutely organized chaos. The

large cast of the opera consisted of very able singers, still, the ensembles were not nimble enough and more than once succumbed to the superior force of the orchestra.

I am afraid that Mr. Mitropoulos approaches this light comedy a little bit in the spirit of "Tosca"; it was not transparent enough. With the exception of the arias and duets, the singers are supposed to use a conversational tone, and their diction must be clear. This was only intermittently the case, though on the whole the performance was still quite enjoyable.

Fernando Corena was a superb scoundrel; self-possessed and always master of his voice, a very good voice. Gabor Carelli as the one male lyric character in the cast, sang with a very agreeable voice that managed to climb above Mr. Mitropoulos' orchestra. His lyric counterpart, Nadine Conner (Lauretta) kept him very congenial company. Of the rest of the large cast I must single out Belen Ampanan (The Old One). This comely young lady with a fine voice convincingly impersonated an old witch—and the voice remained fine.

After the intermission, the curtain was scarcely up before we were plunged into an atmosphere of gloom in which insanity, lust, crime, remorse and fanatical ascetic integrity unite in an indescribably exhaustive mood. A considerable portion of Strauss' "Salome"—notably the subjects and themes—is commonplace, even hackneyed, yet the composer contrives characters that are tremendously and violently self-expressive. They are not men and women of like passions with ourselves but personifications of evil. Such depravity is presented with enormous theatrical and musical skill; no wonder that after the first performance in New York the brave old Met had to run for cover.

What was a drawback in "Gianni Schicchi"—too much energy emanating from the pit—turned out to be an advantage in "Salome." Here Mr. Mitropoulos is in his glory and has few equals for the chief protagonist is the orchestra. Well, not quite; we had a distinguished guest artist in Inge Borkh.

Miss Borkh's Salome is not just a role; the demented princess appears in her impersonation as an almost understandable figure. The German soprano is awesome and scorching, her face and her hands always expressive. Her voice is a good, though not a great voice. At times it rings true, with a beautiful clear quality, at others it is a little colorless and just a shade fluid as to pitch. But the general effect is an impressive one.

Norman Kelley was an excellent Herod. He always acts well and has a cultivated voice, but last night he proved that he can summon volume too. His German diction is exemplary.

Mack Harrell, always a distinguished artist, with a good voice, very musically phrasing and diction, was at a disadvantage. He has to sing practically off stage and against a raging orchestra, but he made the most of it.

Blanche Thebom and Jon Crain completed the excellent cast. The opera ended in the usual frenzy and the audience left exhilarated but a little limp. Perhaps such an evening should begin with "Gianni Schicchi"; it would spare us nightmares.

From JAN 25 1958

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

Opera: Borkh as Salome



Norman Kelley and Inge Borkh in scene from "Salome"

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

RICHARD STRAUSS' "Salome" remains a theatrical and moral shocker even today though we have been spared little in the exploration of the depths of sick passion. A great composer, like a possessed poet or novelist, can draw beauty from what he perceives in the dark places of the soul.

In "Salome," which returned to the Metropolitan last night after a six-year absence, Strauss created a figure whose ecstatic frenzy cannot leave you cold no matter how revolting you find her behavior.

There are few things in opera more demanding than the title role. A 16-year-old princess with the voice of Isolda was what Strauss imagined. No such creature exists. It is, therefore, a tribute to the bravery of any soprano willing to undertake the part. Inge Borkh, German soprano was brave enough not only to sing it but also to stake her Met debut on it.

Miss Borkh gave a fine performance. It had stamina, power and concentration. She is a serious, intelligent artist, and she knows the role and its pitfalls. A tall, well-appointed woman, she moves with suppleness. She did her own meaningful, tortured Dance of the Seven Veils. Though dancing is not her business, she built this long scene with force and logic out of movement within her scope.

This is a strong, admirable Salome, if not an unforgettable one like Ljuba Welitch's, which was compounded of flame and fury. It is rare indeed that a singer is so consumed and consuming in a role as was Miss Welitch, and she never again came close to doing anything so penetrating. It would be unfair to expect Miss Borkh to duplicate that searing achievement, even if we cannot forget it.

Miss Borkh's voice has size and range, and she has the musician's sense of Strauss' burning music. The quality of her soprano tends to be a bit bland; it is not forward and pointed enough to create the effect of overwhelming tension. She immerses herself in Salome, but the character's devouring intensity is not quite there. It is as if Miss Borkh's native wholesomeness stands in the way of utter conviction.

Fortunately, the obligation to convey the mood of sultry, ominous evil does not fall entirely on Salome. Strauss turned a large measure of this task over to the orchestra. With Dimitri Mitropoulos in command, the orchestra charged atmosphere of "Salome" flamed from the orchestra. For Mr. Mitropoulos is a highly emotional conductor with a special aptitude for this opera.

The Cast

GIANNI SCHICCHI, opera in one act by Giacomo Puccini. Libretto by G. Forzano, sets by Joseph Novak, stage direction by Hans Busch; conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos.

Gianni Schicchi.....Fernando Corena
La Vecchia.....Nadine Conner
Gherardo.....Gabor Carelli
Rinuccio.....Mack Harrell
Nella.....Alejo De Paulis
Gherardino.....Andrew Strafoel
Betto.....George Cahanovsky
Simone.....Nicola Moscona
Marco.....Clifford Harvort
La Cieca.....Thelma Vittoria
Spinellocchio.....Gerhard Pechner
Ser Amantio Di Niro.....Elio Pignolo
Pinellino.....Ole Hawkins
Guccio.....Louis Sgarro

SALOME, opera in one act by Richard Strauss, text from Oscar Wilde's play of the same name translated into German by Hedwig Lachmann; sets by Donald Oenslager, stage direction by Hans Busch; conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. Both at the Metropolitan Opera.

Herod.....Norman Kelley
Herodias.....Blanche Thebom
Salome.....Inge Borkh (debut)
Jochanaan.....Mack Harrell
Narraboth.....Jon Crain
Pate of Herodias.....Mildred Miller
First Nazarene.....William Wilderman
Second Nazarene.....Calvin Marsh
Third Jew.....Charles Anthony
Fourth Jew.....Robert Nagy
Fifth Jew.....Alejo De Paulis
First Soldier.....Norman Scott
Second Soldier.....Lawrence Davidson
A Cappodocian.....Ole Hawkins
A Slave.....Mildred Allen

The Met has assembled a strong cast. Even the small roles in this work are treacherous. The five Jews sing in different keys, and no one save Jochanaan and the two Nazarenes have a conventionally appealing vocal line. But the Met is rich in accomplished personnel, and it is on display in "Salome."

Norman Kelley gives the weak and febrile Herod immense credibility in song and action. Blanche Thebom is a vividly malign Herodias. Mack Harrell sings the role of Jochanaan with style and dignity. Jon Crain is a touching and full-voiced Narraboth. William Wilderman's rich bass voice is particularly impressive as the First Nazarene. Read the full dramatis personae; all the performers deserve credit.

Donald Oenslager's old set retains its sense of illusion. Hans Busch's staging is resourceful and it is particularly imaginative during the dance when he sees to it that Miss Borkh's great effort is framed and enhanced by the background spacing and movement.

The curtain-raiser was "Gianni Schicchi," in which Puccini not only laughed at human greed but also sang a tribute to enchanted Florence. Mr. Mitropoulos conducted affectionately, and the big, experienced cast headed by Fernando Corena as Gianni Schicchi, Nadine Conner as Lauretta, and Gabor Carelli played and sang cheerfully.

A little more finesse in some places would have been welcome. And how much more sensible it would be to present a little comic piece like this in English. The Met could easily supply a cast to sing in English, and the audience could have twice as much fun. Great roars of laughter would sound fine at the Met.

'Salome' Is Sung At Metropolitan

Two minor changes of cast accounted for the sole novelty at last night's repeat performance of "Salome" at the Metropolitan. Giulio Gari sang his first Narraboth with the company and Charles Anthony appeared for the first time at the house in the role of Rinuccio in Puccini's comedy.

The remaining performers, under Dimitri Mitropoulos' direction, included Inge Borkh as Salome, Norman Kelley as Herod, Blanche Thebom as Herodias, Mack Harrell as Jochanaan, Fernando Corena as Gianni Schicchi, Nadine Conner as Lauretta, Lorenzo Alvary as Simone and Gerhard Pechner as Spinellocchio.

As Pinuccio has but one aria to sing, and a mighty slim one it is at that. Mr. Anthony had precious little opportunity to make a lasting impression on the audience. However, in his number "Firenze e come un albero fiorito," he sang prettily, with tones that rang and with a clarity and exactness of pitch that reinforced one's fond remembrances of his past performances.

As Narraboth, on the other hand, Mr. Gari sliced so consistently at the air while rendering his few lines that it seemed unlikely he would be able to sing had he broken either of his arms. The role is slight, certainly, but it is noble too, and nobility is hardly served by the excess of gesture that characterized his portrayal.

J. S. H.

NEWS

Birmingham, Ala.

JAN 26 1958

Music for everybody—

'Vanessa' shows difficulty opera has in making English intelligible

BY SIGMUND SPAETH

The world premiere of the new opera, "Vanessa," by Gian Carlo Menotti and Samuel Barber, at the Metropolitan, emphasizes once more the difficulty grand opera singers seem to have in making the English language intelligible from the stage.

This is only partly the fault of the singers themselves, for much depends on the character of the orchestration, the "testitura," or range, in which the voice is working and the vowel sounds occurring on important notes.

Let it be admitted, however, that in general the Broadway singers of musical comedy are far more intelligible than those of grand opera. (They have to be, for otherwise their shows would be failures.)

Curiously enough, the best diction in "Vanessa" is contributed by Giorgio Tozzi and Nicalai Gedda, the latter being the only non-American in the cast.

Rosalind Elias does fairly well with the lines of Erika, actually the most important character in the opera, and Eleanor Steber does what she can with the most difficult assignment of them all. Her title role lies cruelly high, even for a real soprano, and demands coloratura passages as well as a sustained dramatic line.

SAMUEL BARBER writes better for the orchestra than for singers, although his own work at the Curtis Institute was in the vocal department. His instrumental interludes are

gems, worthy of concert performance in the Wagner tradition.

His score is eclectic at times (with occasional echoes of "Die Meistersinger," "Tosca" and "Rosenkavalier"), but it is not too modern in its melodies or harmonies and succeeds in attaining dramatic climaxes even with a book which is a little on the psychological side.

The first act is the weakest, and listeners are warned to read the libretto in advance, for they will understand hardly a word from the stage, it

is only when Mr. Barber stops his orchestra completely that a line really comes across the footlights. The rest of the time Dimitri Mitropoulos conducts as though playing a symphony, and the singers have to do the best they can.

The story itself is not too clear, and it takes some time to establish the backgrounds of the leading characters. The scene is presumably a Russian mansion, and the action is confined within one room at a time. A bit of folk dancing and a lively waltz song are helpful in relieving the static nature of the plot.

IN MANY RESPECTS "Vanessa" must be considered the best American opera yet presented at the Metropolitan. Its creators are both skilled craftsmen, and its interpretation is all that could be asked within reason. (It will be interesting to see how Salzburg does it in German next Summer.) Whether this can be considered an "inspired" production in any sense is an open question. At least it supports the belief that opera in English is a possibility, even when written by Americans.

Saturday Review

JANUARY 25, 1958 / 25c

RECORDINGS



Eleanor Steber, in the title role of the new Barber-Menotti opera, "Vanessa." (See RECORDINGS)

BARBER, MENOTTI, AND "VANESSA"



Samuel Barber and Gian-Carlo Menotti.

By IRVING KOLODIN

PERHAPS the most succinct summary of the Barber-Menotti "Vanessa," which had its first performance anywhere at the Metropolitan Opera House in mid-January, is that it begins too long before it ends. This is not a reflection on its length—which is not excessive—but rather a regret induced by the fact that its final scene is its best, musically and dramatically. Had Barber accomplished as much in the preceding three-and-a-half acts, the report on it would be very good indeed; as it

is, we are left with the feeling that the end of "Vanessa" is but the beginning of Barber's career as a composer for the theatre.

The next happiest fact is that Barber has made the work according to his own esthetic in the musical speech with which we are well acquainted from his songs, orchestral works, chamber music, etc. He has not rejected arias or set pieces because they are "old-fashioned," nor has he reached for the atonal pepper and salt because such seasoning is presently preferred. And, if he has the learning to write a fugue as competently as

the next man, he has not imposed it pointlessly on this problem. But it is also pertinent to observe that the high point of the fourth act, and the score, is the quintet on the words, "To leave, to break, to find, to keep," which, in addition to being the best realized episode I know of in native opera lore, is also a skilful canon. The composer who wrote it should be proud of the accomplishment and heartened to go on from there.

What Menotti provided Barber to work with has, in this view, more than a little effect on the end product. Reading the libretto, familiarizing oneself with the score and, finally, seeing it on stage, all contribute to the end view that the tale of the forty-year-old Vanessa, who has waited decades for her young lover to return, and eventually accepts his son as a substitute, is both contrived and insubstantial. It also confirms one's belief that Menotti is better with situations than he is with people, not bothering at all to tell us why the aged Baroness will not speak to her daughter (Vanessa), though her brooding silence is one of the key conditions of the drama.

BESIDE Vanessa, a vain and foolish woman who keeps the mirrors of her sumptuous "country house" of a northern country in 1905 (more mansion than villa, in Cecil Beaton's evocative decor) covered because she cannot bear to see herself aging, her young niece Erika is a model of consistency and character. True, she succumbs to the charms of Anatol,

the youthful visitor who comes in place of his deceased father, when Vanessa impetuously rejects him. But she will not accept his "gallant" proposal of marriage when their affair of a night results in pregnancy. Rather, she induces a miscarriage, lets Vanessa have him by default, and when they depart for a gay life in Paris, Biarritz, Cannes, etc., settles back to wait for her own "Anatol" to appear.

It is no accident, I think, that Barber's most consistent characterization, musically, is Erika—for she is the one character to arouse sympathy in the listener. And that sympathy is jeopardized, momentarily, when Menotti requires her to say, as she rushes out into the storm at the end of Act III: "His child, his child. It must not be born." Certainly there are, in the whole gamut of the English language, seven better words to express that intent than the ones Menotti has chosen.

Otherwise, the vain Vanessa, the foppish Anatol—who considers his obligation to Erika discharged when she finds his "gesture" insufficient—the toughminded old Baroness, the rather silly country doctor who does not, apparently, know that his young charge is pregnant until after her mishap (and, one is bound to say, there is no clear indication even then) are as empty a collection of stage shadows as opera (a genre rather rich in such figures) can show. On the technical level, Menotti's libretto is resourceful and recurrently marked by singable lines and scenes (such as the last one), but it puts an enormous burden on the composer's ability to involve the listener by the sheer power of his music.

TO HIS credit, Barber accomplishes this—significantly enough—while the action takes place in the finely atmospheric living room Beaton has provided. This accounts for Acts I and II (and the final scene), but it leaves all of Act III and the first scene of Act IV on another plane, physically and musically. In these, concerned with the party at which Vanessa's engagement is announced and the bedroom in which Erika assures us (and her grandmother) that the child "will not be born. Thank God, he will not be born" (sex determination, apparently, flourished at an early time in this "northern country") the level of interest sags perceptibly. One cannot help attributing much of this to the rather conventional party, dances, intoxication scene, etc., which the librettist has provided. (They are, on the whole, better suited to his compositional talent than Barber's.)

Barber's fancy flows freest and to

From JAN 25 1958
Christian Science Monitor
Boston, Mass.

American Opera Presented In Its World Premiere

By Miles Kastendieck

New York

As the first American opera to be mounted at the Metropolitan in more than a decade, Samuel Barber's "Vanessa" proved to be the equal of all the full-length works that had preceded it, if not better than any one of them. According to Metropolitan Opera tabulation, it is the 20th American work to be presented and the first in Rudolf Bing's regime. For a first work it is a distinctive achievement.

Experienced in writing songs and noted for his orchestral works, Mr. Barber was thoroughly qualified to combine these abilities. His proficiency in both explains the professional quality of "Vanessa." That the finest moment in the score should be the quintet in the last act reveals the extent of his creative grasp in vocal writing. The opera abounds in expert musical prosody, conventional and otherwise, and some beautiful music.

"Vanessa" probably qualifies as symphonic opera. The orchestra plays an important role throughout its course not only while underlining emotional moments but also in functioning independently. In this sense it is in the tradition of Richard Strauss.

Indeed, a traditional atmosphere permeates the whole opera. Some of this develops naturally from Mr. Barber's music, some of it from Gian-Carlo Menotti's libretto. The setting "in a northern country about the year 1905" and certain elements about the book contribute to the feeling of grand opera tradition. This may make the work appear even a bit old-fashioned.

European Slant

Certainly half of the first act is definitely handicapped by its European slant. This leads to a perplexing question: Why should this particular story have been given a European locale when it could just as well have taken place somewhere in New England? There is enough O'Neill quality to the story to fit it into that tradition.

As a sure hand in the theater, Mr. Menotti has devised his dramatic situations expertly. His mastery of ironic situation points up the story most effectively. Since in each case Mr. Barber has been equal to the situation,

they have together imparted an understanding that makes the opera a human document.

Somewhat ironically perhaps the story centers less on Vanessa than on her niece Erika whose personal dilemma precipitates the plot. After only one hearing it is difficult to determine how thoroughly worked out the characterization is, especially in the light of an excellent performance.

A handsome production sets off "Vanessa" most favorably. There is a lavish quality about Cecil Beaton's scenery and an extravagance about his costumes, undoubtedly in keeping with the period. Mr. Menotti has staged the work with an eye to good theater though somehow the stage action is not always convincing. A quality cast and outstanding conducting by Dimitri Mitropoulos complete the picture.

Eleanor Steber

At the world premiere Eleanor Steber sang the title role. Since her vocalism is somewhat uneven and her stage action too much that of a prima donna, she did not quite compare with the other members of the cast. There were, however, moments when she appeared most suitable in the role. Perhaps when she has become more closely identified with it, she will give the character more realism. She did, of course, assume the role at short notice when word had been received that Sena Jurinac could not fulfill her contract.

It was Rosalind Elias who emerged from this performance as a leading singing-actress at the Metropolitan. Her portrayal of Erika not only underlined the significance of the role but also imparted the human quality of her misfortune. She sang with distinction and excellent enunciation, and she acted with extraordinary conviction.

Nicolai Gedda appeared perfectly cast as Anatole, the young lover who cared little which girl he married. His English was exemplary and his clear tenor voice quite appropriate. Giorgio Tozzi actually stopped the show with his wonderfully genuine characterization of the old family doctor. Though her singing role was a minor one, Regina Resnik made a major contribution as the old baroness. George

Cehanovsky and Robert Nagy completed the cast.

The performance had its weaknesses, frequently those of staging, but its strength was unmistakable. This is a solid work. As an American opera it may be counted a triumph. It is gratifying to know that public interest showed immediately in the box office for the second performance. It will be given its third on Saturday afternoon, Feb. 1, when it will be broadcast.

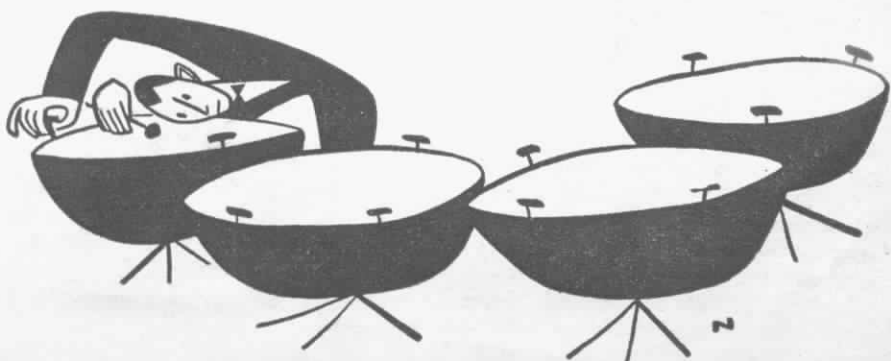
Looking backward, the historically minded will note that the last American opera at the Metropolitan was Bernard Rogers' "The Warrior" in 1947, but the first full-length opera was Walter Damrosch's "The Man Without a Country" in 1937. Actually, the last opera by an American-born composer was Howard Hanson's "Merry Mount" in 1933. The most successful American operas of the past have been Deems Taylor's "The King's Henchman" and "Peter Ibbetson" over a quarter century ago.

her debut in a minor part several years ago. Nicolai Gedda could hardly be surpassed as the vacillating Anatol, singing the English text more clearly than anyone in the cast (despite his Swedish birth); Giorgio Tozzi was quite as good as the pseudo-philosophic doctor; and Regina Resnik made every silence count as much as the little she had to sing as the old Baroness. Clarity, discipline, and a fine sense of atmosphere were equally evident in the devoted direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos.

As Vanessa, Eleanor Steber was obviously handicapped by the need to learn an extended part in the six weeks since Sena Jurinac sent in her regrets. Much of her vocal characterization was of the quality to be expected from Miss Steber, and she has as much of the physical attributes to suggest "a lady of great beauty" (as Vanessa is described in the text) as any contemporary singer. She became Beaton's costumes as much as they adorned her, especially in the skating scene of Act II (cover photo). Doubtless she will pronounce the words more distinctly when the part is more surely in her voice.

CONSIDERING that Menotti served as director for his own text, the enunciation of it left more than a little to be desired, generally. What price "opera in English" when a stranger to the subject could no more get along without a libretto than, say, for "Gloconda"? Much of the staging showed Menotti's expert skills in this field, though neither he nor Miss Steber developed a style of movement for Vanessa which suited her from start to finish.

Taken together, "Vanessa" moves the course of American opera ahead more than a little by showing us a composer with the skill and fantasy to absorb the attention through a full-length work in a frankly romantic tradition. It is no favor, of course, for it to be framed by the huge proscenium of the Metropolitan, which has a leveling effect on the best-founded ambitions. Let us hope that Barber begins his next opera on the peak of quality with which "Vanessa" ends, and goes on to sustain it throughout.



'VANESSA' AT 'MET'

Barber Masters Opera Form in Last Act

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

THE preparation of any new production at the Metropolitan carries an inevitable freight of doubt, tension and even agony. How much greater the burden must be in the case of a new American opera. If it weighs heavily on the company and its performers, what must it be to composer and librettist?

Consider the practical situation. When the Met spends \$100,000 or close to it for a handsome, new "Don Giovanni," it may be acting extravagantly in the light of its means but it is making a long-term investment. Mozart's opera is an acknowledged masterpiece; it will always be in the repertoire; over the years it will justify the expense.

But who can tell how long a new opera will be able to hold the boards? The possibility of a costly mistake is great. The Met is so loath to make it that it has preferred revivals of works like "Ernani" and "Eugene Onegin" which start with the advantage of composers like Verdi and Tchaikovsky, names sanctified by history. When the Met finally gets around to an American opera, it is as if the honor of the nation as well as the health of the box office depended on the men who had the temerity to create the piece.

The Met, of course, is not to blame if native American opera has yet to prove itself. Nor is it responsible for rocketing production costs. But because it had ventured on a new American work only nineteen times between its opening in 1883 and 1947 and because eleven years have gone by since the last effort, the importance of any premiere was bound to be magnified. What a spot for "Vanessa"!

Challenge

For the composer, Samuel Barber, the challenge was even sharper. In the field of absolute music he had won an established place for himself here and abroad, but this was his first opera. For years he had hunted vainly for a libretto that suited him. At last he had one from his friend, Gian-Carlo Menotti, who had proved he knew his way around the lyric theatre. Here he was with the score finished. He would start at the top—with a premiere at the Met.

Mr. Barber has emerged from the ordeal by fire in remarkably good shape. So has "Vanessa." Mr. Menotti's libretto is effective theatre, and by the time the composer has reached the fourth act he has conquered the problems of opera. He has educated himself en route, as it were, and the most significant lesson he has learned is that the surest way to reach the heart of the audience is to be true to his own deepest musical instincts.

The best of "Vanessa" proves that Mr. Barber is essentially a romantic composer. His earliest works show that he could use the conventional idiom of the late nineteenth century naturally and feelingly. The Adagio for Strings, drawn from his String Quartet, remains one of his most eloquent expressions in this vein.

Being a child of his time, Mr. Barber has been exposed to the diverse influences at large in the world and has attempted to integrate some into his music. The results have been variable. A score like the Second Symphony missed fire. The recently redesigned "Dances for the Vengeance of Medea" arrived at a convincing synthesis.

Development

In "Vanessa" Mr. Barber seems to be pulled in several stylistic directions. It is only when he resolves the problem of basic approach that the opera catches fire. Fortunately, he begins to make considerable headway in the second act. After a pallid first act matters improve steadily. The composer's individuality achieves fuller expression with increasing force, and in the end "Vanessa" leaves you with an authentic emotional and artistic experience.

In essence "Vanessa" is a late nineteenth century work. The mood of its story is not unlike that of "Eugene Onegin" in its defeatism and impotent melancholy. Mr. Menotti's libretto provides opportunities for a folk-like waltz, a hymn, a party at which peasants do a country dance—in short, ingredients useful in evoking the color and atmosphere expected of opera. Even these interludes are basically part of an old-fashioned design.

Music

Met Gets a Fiery Salome

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Although the real news of the Metropolitan's revival of "Salome" was the fiery conducting of Dimitri Mitropoulos, attention inevitably focused on the latest impersonator of the most famous strip-tease in opera.

The lady was Inge Borkh, a German-born soprano who has been winning fame and notoriety in many parts of the world as Richard Strauss' neurotic heroine. She is quite a spitfire and hellcat, this new operatic headhunter from Germany.

The "Dance of the Seven Veils" seemed to begin last night with her very entrance. This certainly was a restless creature, engaged in all the contorted choreography of thwarted lust. Something obviously was bothering the girl.

Massive Snake-Pit

It was like a song-and-dance in a massive snake-pit, wild,

dissolute, absorbing and embarrassing, with the smitten Salome clambering up and down stairs, pounding the floor with her fists, squirming, clenching, panting, almost frothing.

Miss Borkh had the body to go with it, a long, lithe, sinuous body easily twisted into barked petulance or writhing desire. And the voice, though a bit cottony and variable in quality, could tear through the turmoil like a spear.

Whatever the cause—whether Miss Borkh's obvious artistic merits or still more obvious attractions as an uninhibited student of raw lust—the crowd went wild over her. One lost count of the curtain calls.

Electrifying Power

If she was the heroine of the occasion, Mr. Mitropoulos was emphatically the hero, conducting with both "Salome" and Puccini's "Gianni Schicchi" with that electrifying power that seems to be his alone.

When Strauss' score is read the way it was last night, it builds up a momentum of suspense and turbulence that could easily reduce everything else to so much pantomime and scenery. Yet there was no minimizing the artistry of last night's cast.

There was, to begin with, the spectacular Miss Borkh. Then, Blanche Thebom gave a sensitive study in outraged dignity as Herodias, and Norman Kelley, replacing Ramon Vinay, was terrific as the haunted voluptuary, Herod.

Freudian Libido

Returning after a long absence, Mack Harrell was highly impressive as artist and actor in the role of Jochanaan.

There is nothing wrong with an old-fashioned orientation. An opera of this nature is particularly fitting in the subdued Victorian splendor of the Metropolitan. And possibly a public accustomed to a repertoire largely nineteenth-century in provenance can be induced to accept more new and eventually more adventurous works if a "Vanessa" smooths the way.

At the outset Mr. Barber's musical texture has inconsistency. He writes as if his instincts and intellect were at odds. The orchestra is always effective but the vocal line fails to express character. Slowly and surely he finds unity of style.

He still miscalculates. Musical ingenuity takes the place of honest feeling. The slithering chromatic sixteenths in the second act, which Vanessa uses to convey her feeling of happiness in music and to tell us that something wonderful happened while she was ice-skating, are clever but do not convey her emotion. In the third-act duet between Vanessa and her fortune-hunting young admirer Anatol, the soprano and tenor have some rousing high notes. But the effect is cold.

The fourth and final act is a moving achievement. It sings without self-consciousness. Its two scenes are bound together by a powerful orchestral interlude, and the concluding scene contains a deeply touching quartet expressing the sorrow of parting which shows Mr. Barber at the height of his powers and which would adorn any opera.

Achievement

The Met's production designed by Cecil Beaton and staged by Mr. Menotti is a major effort. The opera is attractive to look upon, and it is acted with simplicity and sincerity. Dimitri Mitropoulos, who is usually at his best with a new, contemporary work, conducts illuminatingly.

The cast is strong. Eleanor Steber, who did not have much time to prepare the title role, does well and will probably do better. Rosalind Elias as Erika, the most affecting figure in the opera, could scarcely be improved upon, so searching is her acting and so musical and intensely felt her singing. Nicolai Gedda has a jaunty lightness as Anatol. Giorgio Tozzi is fine as the genial Doctor, and Regina Resnik is a grim old grandmother.

You may have heard a lot of nonsense about the inadequacy of English for opera. Where Mr. Barber's musical line gives the singers a chance, they enunciate clearly, and where his music reaches deeply, English is a fine and satisfying vehicle for opera.

On its merits "Vanessa" deserves its chance at the Met. As an earnest of America's operatic hopes it is heartening. As a justification of a more liberal Met policy toward the works of our own composers it is especially to be welcomed and supported. Go see and hear it—it will not bore you and will end by moving you.

From JAN 31 1958

HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

MUSIC PAUL HENRY LANG New York Philharmonic

Carnegie Hall
Conductors: Aaron Copland and Franco
Aurini, soloist, Leonid Kogan, violinist
Outdoor Overture.....Copland
Symphony No. 2.....Copland
Symphonie Espagnole, for violin and orchestra.....Lalo

It is a very nice gesture to invite a distinguished composer to conduct his own works. The composer may not be an accomplished conductor, but his very presence gives an authentic touch to the proceedings. Moreover, in this fashion a modicum of the close ties between the creative artist and the public, which have unhappily all but disappeared during the age of the virtuoso, return to brighter, for a short evening, the musical scene.

Aaron Copland, who conducted his composition last night at the head of the Philharmonic, needs no introduction. He is an American composer of world renown, and for the simple but convincing reason that he is a good composer whose music will raise an echo in any one, whatever his nationality, if he has ears for the thoughts, gestures, and sounds, of his times.

The Third Symphony is Mr. Copland's most ambitious orchestral work. It is ambitious not so much in proportions as in the execution of the ideas. Mr. Copland has abundant means at his command, notably an extraordinarily vivid conglomeration of rhythms and timbres, and his adventurous musical incidents, almost always stemming from the original ideas, help the symphony along instead of holding it back. While his fast scherzo-like movements are bracing with their sheer mobility and very imaginative and minute thematic convolutions, some of the finest moments are in the lyric meditative sections.

About the only thing that does not wear well is the occasional proclamative tone, especially at the very end of the symphony. The massed brasses announce the coming of the third millennium while the timpani pound out a tattoo. It seems to me that with a little careful pruning this fine work could be made even so much tighter and weather-proof.

The "Outdoor Overture" with its jaunty, controlled extravagance is a delightful piece of fun. It is steady and whole.

After all, Mr. Copland turned out to be a rather good conductor, though the climaxes were a bit noisy, and the orchestra followed him with friendly eagerness.

After the intermission Leonid Kogan returned to play with our local orchestra. As originally announced, he was to have played the Mendelssohn concerto, but unfortunately this masterpiece was exchanged for a fiddler's concerto composed by a fiddler: Lalo's "Symphonie Espagnole." Lalo was what one might call a

From JAN 30 1958

TIMES
New York, N. Y.

METROPOLITAN BILL OFFERS TWO OPERAS

"Gianni Schicchi" and "Salome" were performed at the Metropolitan Opera last night, with Charles Anthony singing Rinuccio in the former work for the first time with the company.

Mr. Anthony gave an admirable account of himself in the role. He is an impressive stage figure and the music suits his voice well. Lorenzo Alvary made a good impression in his first appearance of the season as Simone.

"Salome" offered Giulio Gari in his first appearance with the company as Narraboth. He was vocally effective. Gabor Carelli performed creditably for the first time this season as the First Jew.

Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted both operas. J. B.

MUSIC PAUL HENRY LANG New York Philharmonic

Carnegie Hall
Conductors: Aaron Copland and Franco
Aurini, soloist, Leonid Kogan, violinist
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From FEB 3 1958

TIMES
New York, N. Y.

Music: Young Mozart

Leonid Kogan Is Philharmonic Soloist in the Concerto No. 3 in G Major

LEONID KOGAN, Russian violinist, who played Lalo's "Symphonie Espagnole" with the New York Philharmonic Thursday and Friday, played Mozart's Concerto No. 3 in G major (K. 216) when he appeared with the orchestra in Carnegie Hall yesterday afternoon.

The work is one of the five violin concertos that Mozart wrote in Salzburg as a youth of 19. It never goes very deep, but, as Mr. Kogan showed yesterday, it can be a work of enchanting refinement. His playing was remarkable for its purity of sound, the grace of its melodic outlines and its beautiful balance between restraint and feeling.

This last was especially notable in the songful slow movement. Here Mr. Kogan resisted all temptation to sentimentalize the lovely melody, yet it was infused with exalted feeling as his bow drew

it with such unhurried ease from the strings of his instrument. The two swifter movements had the same sureness of touch, in addition to a rhythmic vitality that, for all its verve, never overstepped the essentially aristocratic framework of his conception.

The men of the orchestra, who under Dimitri Mitropoulos' direction played an accompaniment of matching grace and lightness, joined the applause at the end of the concerto. The plaudits of the capacity audience continued until the violinist had been recalled to the stage four times.

The other works that Mr. Mitropoulos led were drawn from the standard repertoire. Before the concerto there was Mozart's Overture to "The Magic Flute" and after the intermission there were Beethoven's Symphony No. 2 and his Overture, "Leonore," No. 2. R. P.

From FEB 2 1958

HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

By FRANCIS D. PERKINS

Mitropoulos Is Busy

Saturday will be a day of intensive activity for Dimitri Mitropoulos. In the morning, he will rehearse Reger's Piano Concerto with Rudolf Serkin and the Philharmonic; the afternoon will find him at the Metropolitan Opera House, conducting "Gianni Schicchi" and "Salome," and he will be back on the Carnegie Hall podium for the Philharmonic's evening concert. Such a triple-header schedule, the Philharmonic office assures us, is no novelty for this indefatigable conductor.

Charles Turner's "Encounter," the American work in the Philharmonic program for Thursday and Friday, was first played by the Cleveland Orchestra under George Szell on Dec. 29, 1955, a year after its completion. The composer, born in Baltimore in 1921, studied at the Curtis Institute and, after naval service in World War II, resumed his studies at the Juilliard School. The title, he says, "refers to an encounter with some of the complex techniques of making music today and the attempt to make them say some of the things I love in music of any age."

From FEB 3 1958

World-Telegram & Sun
New York, N. Y.

Music

Kogan Is Orchestra Soloist

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Having romanced half-heartedly with Lalo's "Symphonie Espagnole" Thursday, Leonid Kogan returned to his true love—classicism—as Philharmonic soloist in Mozart's G Major Violin Concerto yesterday afternoon.

Again there was an integrity of style almost childlike in its purity. Here was nothing to ravish the ear but the right tone, the right technique, the right style. He is no dazzler, this Soviet youth.

Mozart, of course, is that way in his music; one is taken unawares by its very perfection. There is no trickery and no flashiness. So with Mr. Kogan. He played naturally, unobtrusively—as if only Mozart counted.

Mitropoulos' Spell

That was the way Dimitri Mitropoulos made the orchestra sound too. In the concerto and in "The Magic Flute" overture, Mozart had absolute right of way. In the spell of the little fellow, the beauty and balance almost passed unnoticed.

Mr. Mitropoulos, whose return to the Philharmonic podium had originally been scheduled for Thursday, was just as inspiring in Beethoven's Second Symphony. This was the bold young Beethoven to the life.

MUSIC AND MUSICIANS

By PAUL HENRY LANG

Thoughts on 'Gianni Schicchi'

It is often said that in Rossini's "Barber of Seville" the opera buffa reached its crest, after which it was no longer in the main stream of Italian opera. It is true that after this early nineteenth-century work romantic grand opera dominated the scene, but the buffa never ceased to attract composers, and several masterpieces grace the literature between Rossini and our era. We no longer have buffa specialists, but it is most interesting to note that each of the two greatest Italian opera composers of the romantic period, Verdi and Puccini, after a life spent in setting to music romantic drama, returned to the buffa to compose their most mature works.

Puccini's "Gianni Schicchi" was a very courageous departure and bespeaks an artistic conscience which the esthetes steadfastly deny to this annoyingly successful composer. For Puccini actually cast away the subjects and qualities that made him famous and rich. The public at the turn of the century—well, to this very day—adored the grand gestures of Sardou's emotional thrillers ("Tosca"), and the romantic sentimentality of Murger ("La Boheme"), which Puccini with phenomenal sense for the lyric stage translated into operas the universal appeal of which remains undimmed. This is achieved by the alternation of sweet sentimentality with almost poster-like directness in the unison duets.

Criticism of Sentiment

But a buffa opera is something else. It does not depict great passions, it is unacquainted with fate and death, it dispenses with majesty and pathos. The laughing man is more credulous and indulgent than his tragic counterpart, though it would be a great mistake to think that the buffa is mere innocent merriment. The comic opera is a genre of merciless human characterization, of sarcastic criticism of human sentiments. At the same time it enjoys a free air, an irresponsible and happy world which is a refuge from reality.

This comedy is native to the Italian soil and is a basic ingredient in Italian life and art. Any one reading today the comedies of Plautus and Terence, the ancestors of the *commedia dell'arte*, the improvised Italian popular comedy which in turn was the ancestor of the opera buffa, will instantly recognize "operatic" elements in these pre-Christian plays. There can be no doubt that they contained sung "numbers."

And the old *commedia dell'arte* is indestructible. We may be sophisticated and steeped in the gently whimsical humor of "Die Meistersinger," or the elegantly stylized comedy of "Der Rosenkavalier," but when the growling doctor, the dainty but determined ward, the scheming music master, and the witty butler come on the stage with their sparkling melodies, a warm delight takes hold of the audience such as no other type of theater can equal.

The buffa is totally different from the comedy of the spoken theater. It does not recognize good or bad taste, the sublime or the common, nor does it have any taboos like grand opera. Its religion is that of fun, but a very special fun—in music. The figures of the buffa are not yanked at the end of a rope of passion which so often makes dramatic characters into puppets. They are neither good nor bad, they live and act, above all they act. Again, the antithesis to the spoken theater is remarkable. Shakespeare is perhaps greatest when he deals with a man who cannot act—Hamlet; for Shakespeare's was the art of the word. This is the art of music.

No Camouflage

The Italian is not a puritan, nor can he long be satisfied with romantic grandiloquence. His most engaging traits are his earthiness, his independence of authority, and his hatred of sanctimoniousness. The Anglo-Saxon is a little uncomfortable when the body of the just deceased Buoso Donati is unceremoniously dumped by the mourners as soon as a scheme has been found to prevent his money from going to the Florentine clergy. The Italian calls a spade a spade and does more than hint at the real feelings of the heirs waiting for the estate to be disposed of. The solemn gathering of family and retainers for a similar function is common enough in our world, but the true sentiments are always camouflaged; the Italian goes openly to the root of the matter.

Faulty Production

Puccini caught this macabre humor with a sure and virtuosic hand. Strauss and the other post-Wagnerians had to fight their way out of the immense gravitational pull of Wagner, but Puccini was not a whit inconvenienced by the towering figure of Verdi. He went straight back to the eighteenth century and to Rossini, witness the spirited ensembles and the wonderful thematic work in the orchestra.

The Met's production of "Gianni Schicchi" while pretty good, does not quite do justice to the genre. The stage director was not insensitive to the implications, yet the production was defective for two reasons. The conductor at times misjudged the tone, consequently what occasionally should have been a saturnine smile turned into a guffaw. But what hurt the opera most of all was the fact that the public missed the wit and satire because of the strange tongue and was reduced to the appreciation of such comedy as was conveyed by the situations and acting.

I heartily second the suggestion of my eminent colleague, Howard Taubman, that "Gianni Schicchi" should be produced in English. This, however, does not mean vocal-score-English, but a brilliant, faithful, and thoroughly modern translation. It can be done.

The remainder of the afternoon's numbers were all well played, the muscular, driving aspects of the programmed pieces being Mr. Mitropoulos' prime concern. As is every one's right, it is possible to object to so hearty a treatment of non-heroic works; what one cannot do is be bored or stand unmoved by so striking a display of orchestral vitality.

J. S. H.

music REVIEWS

By Russell Kerr

L'OPERA AMERICAINE

The Metropolitan Opera — an opulent organization which is often attended by residents in the area of Washington Square — has lately resumed its sponsorship of the American composer. And most handsomely, for the first native opera to be mounted by Rudolf Bing — "Vanessa" with score by Samuel Barber and libretto by Gian-Carlo Menotti — was given a costly Red Carpet treatment. It was a world premiere.

The costumes and sets—designed by Cecil Beaton, known for his wonderfully stylized evocation of the Edwardian era, as shown in plays and movies of Wilde—are luxurious. The production, staged by Menotti himself, is smooth and adroit in every detail. The conducting by Dimitri Mitropoulos extracts the last drop of plangent sound from a score that is orchestrated to the hilt, and even beyond. The singing cast, composed of Eleanor Steber, Rosalind Elias, Regina Resnik, Nicolai Gedda, Giorgio Tozzi, etc., is excellent.

Vanessa, a beautiful, fortyish woman of wealth, years before had a lover named Anatol. He is due to return to the castle in some vague northern European country where she lives (at about the year 1905) with her mother, a stern aged Baroness, and a pretty niece, Erika. When "Anatol" enters, Vanessa dis-

covers he is really Anatol's son and retires in dudgeon, whereupon Erika is wooed by the youth and succumbs over a couple of glasses of wine. (The household seems to be very badly supervised, socially.) The young man is nowhere convincingly characterized, but he is not the first cardboard operatic hero who has "got by" on a manly forte.

In Act II Erika avows her fault to the Baroness, who is by all odds the most sensible inhabitant of the castle, though an Old Doctor provides some mellow philosophy. The old lady warns Erika that, though Anatol has promised to marry her, he will do exactly as he pleases. This is what finally happens, for after numerous scenes of conflict between the two rivals, he marries Vanessa and departs with her, while she is kept ignorant of the seduction. The broken Erika—whose unborn child has been sacrificed through her fall in a ravine where she wanders in the cold (an "East Lynne" touch)—prepares to immolate herself in the castle. She covers all the mirrors again, as Vanessa had done before her. "Now it's my turn to wait," she sings at the end—presumably for the grandson of Anatol in about the year 1930.

The scenes are developed with great skill. An example is the ballroom episode of Act III, with Erika's heartbroken sobbing above an offstage waltz rhythm. Menotti's avowed theory of libretto composition is to provide "opportunities for lyric meditation," and this he does plentifully.

No one today could compose an opera without some influences of Richard Strauss, Puccini and even Stravinsky. And there are details that combine the best of all presently known devices for expressing emotion in graphic style, sometimes employed to underscore a chance remark. The atmosphere is full of tense foreboding from the start, and this hardly ever relaxes throughout the four acts. The exceptions are a few pages in which Barber's more gracious talents (best shown some years ago in his superb Adagio for Strings) came to the fore. The vocal line is usually singable, though often—especially in Vanessa's role—it is tortuous.

Highlights are Vanessa's poignant aria in Act I, "When the winter comes too soon"; the second act ensemble "Under the willow tree," sung by the baritone, joined by the soprano and alto, who embroider the slowly lifting measures with radiant embellishments; the tenor aria in Act II, "Who can resist your tender beauty, Erika?"; plaintive but ardent in the Puccini vein; and the quintet in the final act, "To leave, to break, to find, to keep," in which there is something of the pattern established long ago by Wagner in "Meistersinger," though the whole is much more loosely constructed and, of course, different in style.

On the whole, this is an expert score providing for the listener an intense experience, if it does not always reveal a very personal style.

From FEB 7 1958

HERALD TRIBUNE New York, N. Y.

Philharmonic Fare Favors 19th Century

Dimitri Mitropoulos, and the rest of us as well, went awfully late-Nineteenth Century romantic at Carnegie Hall last evening and even the newest work on the New York Philharmonic program, Charles Turner's "Encounter" (1954), kept us all safely, and presumably happy, within this expressive frame.

The program—brimful of lovely music as it was—made no terribly clear points, largely, for a safe guess, because its construction was ill-focused and in consequence a little messy.

A case in point: In placing Mr. Turner's modest little piece before intermission, after the Brahms Third Symphony, Mr. Mitropoulos all but threw it away. Name, indeed, a young composer who, in so retiring a musical demonstration, would want to follow Brahms.

Even at that, it was a pretty perfunctory Brahms that Mr. Mitropoulos gave us. To be sure, he read the notes, even picked the piece up occasionally to give it, as it were, a good shaking, only to let it relapse into commonplace. It's always been a tough nut to crack, this work, it hasn't the built-in success ingredients of most repertory staples. It needs attention, care, delicate formal balance, dynamic shading. It didn't get them.

Mr. Turner's "Encounter" comes to New York with a bright career already behind it: Detroit, Cleveland and Chicago have already heard it. This composer, who is American and in his middle thirties, is Samuel Barber's only pupil and "Encounter" bears the mark of the older man's highly polished, neo-romantic preoccupation. Mr. Turner's piece is sweet, pastoral in feeling, cautiously but handsomely scored, and the owner of a lyric affluence that seems curiously superimposed. It is only after the first rush of prettiness that we realize its want for distinctive rhythmic animation, and a clear point of view. We're merely being washed in mellifluous sound and when it's over we know this.

All the subtlety lacking in Mr. Mitropoulos' Brahms was resplendently present in his attention to the orchestral aspect of Schumann's Introduction and Allegro Appassionato. Rudolf Serkin, who was on hand for both this and Richard Strauss' "Burleske" that formed the post-intermission half of the program, was superb. His piano work was crisp, humane, feather-light, and highly civilized in its address. Here is a reviewer whose deadline prevented him from remaining for the Strauss and, because of Mr. Serkin, wished it hadn't.

W. F.



MUSIC TO MY EARS

—IRVING KOLODIN

Inge Borkh as Salome, Offenbachiana, Ricci

INGE BORKH may not be an outstanding Salome, but she is apt to be a very successful soprano at the Metropolitan Opera for some time to come. The German soprano made her debut in one of the most challenging parts in the repertory and vocalized it so well that one's mind began placing her in this and that Wagnerian role for which her talents are suitable (beginning with Sieglinde in a forthcoming "Walküre"). In size and quality, accuracy and sure control it took the operatic hurdles more smoothly than one would have expected from previous hearings in Carnegie and Town Halls.

For Salome, Miss Borkh has a number of striking physical assets, including more height than the average soprano, a reasonably streamlined body, good facial characteristics, and a mass of chestnut hair. Her characterization, following the line of the part, falls into three divisions. It is particularly good in the first long section, where she is credibly youthful, convincingly aroused by a perverse passion for Jokanaan. The characterization begins to falter when she has been rebuffed and must suggest a mounting, uncontrollable tide of desire which can only be satisfied by the thing she craves—the prophet's head.

The studied projection of this was made up too much of hand movements, arm waving, stalking of the stage, etc., too little of believable temper. Its weakest element was the awkwardly executed dance (Miss Borkh moves best when she doesn't move at all), which was more Mary Wigman than Mary Garden. I question particularly the physical contact with Herod, in which she throws herself across his knees and rolls to the floor. It defeats the subtle point of the scene that Salome is taunting Herod by denying physical contact.

However, when the head was forthcoming and she was once again the singing actress, the graph of accomplishment rose sharply. My suspicion is that Miss Borkh brought this characterization with her ready-made, and Hans Busch's participation as stage director was—in her case—purely nominal. Should she submit to skillful direction, her vocal talents and dramatic aptitudes (she was originally an actress) might result in something consistently striking. At bottom, however, one doubts she has the brand (used in the inflammatory sense) of

temperament to ignite the hard core of Salome. There remains only one Welitch, for all the fact that Miss Borkh is married to a gentleman of the same name, and thus is, legally, another.

Despite its dramatic unevenness, Miss Borkh's musical accomplishment provided Dimitri Mitropoulos with a sure reliance around which to build his performance. This impressed me, on the whole, as more subtle, less dynamically violent than the one he gave in 1954 when Christl Goltz was the Salome, more sustained musically. It had some incidental difficulties to overcome, such as the substitution of Norman Kelley for Ramon Vinay (tending to suggest Otto Soglow's Little King rather than Strauss's Herod) and a less than powerful Jokanaan by Mack Harrell. Both men are finely conscientious artists, but Kelley's experience (especially in singing German) is limited for this frenzied part, while Harrell's voice lacks the thrust of power delivered for Jokanaan's music by Paul Schoeffler, Hans Hotter, Joel Berglund or, in other days, Friedrich Schorr. His striking physical conception will, however, be long remembered. In smaller parts, William Wilderman was conspicuously successful as the first Nazarene (rolling tones, fine German enunciation), Jon Crain was a promising Narraboth, Margaret Roggero a satisfactory Page. As Herodias, Blanche Thebom is both familiar and welcome.

As a cart-before-the-war horse, "Gianni Schicchi" resumed the place it had served in 1937, 1943, 1948, 1949, and 1951 (in 1954, "Salome" was preceded by a ballet "Vittorio"). It was also given in Italian, which was more to the advantage of Fernando Corena's artful Schicchi than to some of the others in the cast. Corena is a presently good and potentially excellent Schicchi, Nicola Moscona made a striking characterization of Simone (he maintains, throughout, the pained twitching associated with Virgilio Lazzari in this part, though it is probably traditional), and Ezio Flagello recalled his capable Leporello as a notary. Otherwise, the parts tended to be downgraded, especially the weakish Rinuccio sung by Gabor Corelli, the insufficient Vecchia of Belan Amparan. Nadine Conner, a late replacement for Emilia Cundari, asserted her professionalism by making much of her opportunity, especially in "O mia babbino cara." Some opinion found Mitropoulos's conducting of this score unduly "symphonic." I was gratified to hear, for once, all the subtleties of the writing properly honored, in a total conception frequently entertaining.

MUSICAL LEADER
CHICAGO ILL.

FEB 1958

At the Metropolitan

By Walter F. Loeb

A remarkable new American opera, "Vanessa" by Samuel Barber received its world premiere at the Metropolitan Opera House, Jan. 15. This is the first American opera presented in eleven years. It is grand opera in every sense of the word, and in the best sense. The libretto is by Gian-Carlo Menotti, the first time he has written a libretto for another composer. Mr. Menotti also did the staging. The opera received a sumptuous production, and the cast is exceptionally fine: Eleanor Steber as Vanessa, Nicolai Gedda as Anatol, Rosalind Elias as Erika, Giorgio Tozzi as the Doctor, Regina Resnik as the Baroness, George Cehanovsky as Major Domo and Robert Nagy as the Footman. Completely in his element is conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos, who always seems to have a special joy in introducing new works and who makes the most of everything at his disposal. But, in the final analysis, the chief credit must go to composer Samuel Barber, who has created a great new dramatic work. This is the 20th American opera presented at the Met since 1910. Most of these are scarcely remembered. Here at last is an American opera which, we hope, will start a trend toward a true American operatic repertory.—S. C. C.

Last year we cheered Mattiwilda Dobbs as Gilda in "Rigoletto." It is an equally rewarding experience to listen and watch her Lucia. On Jan. 20 she sang the role with Flaviano Labo singing Edgardo. Fausto Cleva conducted.

"Gianni Schicchi" and "Salome"—a twin bill as popular as "Cav & Pag"—was revived this season. On Jan. 29 we watched an excellent buffo — Fernando Corena — foil all the relatives of Buoso Donati in "Gianni Schicchi." Nadine Conner was Lauretta and Charles Anthony was Rinuccio. The opera is a delightful gem, and while Dimitri Mitropoulos gave it heavy-handed direction, the wit still shone through. Perhaps, it was the powerful "Salome" that was on Mitropoulos' mind. He unleashed the orchestra and the sound and fury made the Strauss work a thrilling experience. But it was Inge Borkh, a German soprano who made her Met debut in this opera, who deserves the credit for the evening's success. Her sensuousness, her complete understanding of the role she was creating, and her secure voice made this "Salome" most memorable. Norman Kelley as Herod, Blanche Thebom as Herodias, Mack Harrell as Jokanaan, and Giulio Gari as Narraboth aided in uninterrupted excellence of the opera.

'Vanessa' Sung by Met Opera Company Wins Plaudits for Cast and Composer

By MAX de SCHAUENSEE

"Vanessa," the first opera by an American composer to be presented by the Metropolitan at the Academy of Music in 24 years, was sung before a capacity audience last night.

Samuel Barber, the composer, a native of West Chester, Pa., trained at the Curtis Institute of Music in this city, has written a highly sophisticated and arresting score to a libretto by Gian-Carlo Menotti.

Owing some of its Gothic Edwardian atmosphere to the "Seven Gothic Tales" of Isak Dinesen, "Vanessa" is a story of frustration and renunciation, of idealism and opportunism, set in an undetermined northern country at the turn of the century.

The opera calls to mind both Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin" and Strauss' "Arabella" in many of the details and features of its story and general aura, though it is not in the least imitative of either of those previous works.

Violet Atmosphere

"Vanessa" has a deep violet, wistful, shadowy, defeated atmosphere and is basically a pallid, gentle story, despite moments of violence and emotional tension. The opera's effect is distinctly cumulative after a rather slow start.

Mr. Barber's music is beautifully fashioned, a score of meticulous finish and highly polished sounds. It commands respect rather than affection, though the latter emotion may develop with repeated hearings.

There are many cherishable passages: Erika's "Must the Winter come so soon?"; Van-

essa's fascinating account of her joyous skating with Anatol; the latter's telling of their finding Erika in the snow; the wonderfully evocative prelude to the last scene, and the now and deservedly celebrated quintet with its bitter-sweet appeal.

Accumulated History

"Vanessa," despite its short span of existence, seems to have already accumulated a considerable history connected with its presentation. Soprano Eleanor Steber learned the very difficult title role on relatively short notice for the premiere, when Sena Jurinac was unable to come to America; last night Brenda Lewis replaced the in-turn ailing Miss Steber without benefit of orchestral rehearsal.

Barring a few tones at variance with correct pitch, Miss Lewis accomplished a splendid portrait of the regal chateleine. Playing the part with great dignity and assurance, Miss Lewis was graceful in stride and gesture, giving the illusion of an aristocratic femme fatale capable of a grand passion. Her singing was vibrant with emotion, her diction excellent, considering the heavy orchestration.

Deserved Triumph

Rosalind Elias as Erika had a deserved triumph with her telling account of the idealistic girl and her resulting grief. She has already grown into the role considerably since the New York premiere, and she sings it with passionate conviction.

Nicolai Gedda, the Swedish tenor, made his local debut as Anatol and seemed like the perfect artist for the role. Mr. Gedda managed to make the English text sound clear and beautiful, a gift not vouchsafed the greater part of American singers. His voice is a fine lyric tenor, admirably used.

There were excellent contributions by Regina Resnik as the old Baroness who will not speak to her daughter; by Giorgio Tozzi as the family doctor and friend; by George Cehanovsky as a venerable retainer.

Sets Were Just Right

Cecil Beaton's sets seemed just right for the Barber-Menotti atmosphere. The overstuffed furniture, the fussy, intricate bric-a-brac, the palm-studded winter garden all spoke on another era, of a remote set of feelings and emotions.

Last, but certainly not least, comes Dimitri Mitropoulos, whose conducting of the difficult

rom FEB 10 1958

HERALD TRIBUNE New York, N. Y.

Serkin at Piano With Mitropoulos, Philharmonic

Dimitri Mitropoulos, Rudolf Serkin and the men of the New York Philharmonic performed for its public the bizarre service of reviving Max Reger's fascinating—and rather horrifying—Piano Concerto in F minor at Carnegie Hall Saturday evening.

Reger, both in his music and in his personal department, was the walking parody of all the morose attitudinizing we associate with the beleaguered post-Romantics of Germany. Beleguered, that is, because their acts followed Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms and Wagner—hard acts to follow—and because in this era greatness was no longer the recognition of genius as an after fact of composing, but a prescribed end in itself.

Reger's Piano Concerto is a case in point. From the orchestral introduction to the piano's solo entrance—this latter a calamity of raging octaves, trills, chordal commotion and undisciplined hysteria—we are duly warned that we're in for it: The works. And we get it: Horizontal musical ideas emerge momentarily, only to be rendered amorphous by the compulsive chromatic gesture; the lower elements of the musical texture heave in constant chromatic configuration and so do the middle and upper; and always, but always this roaring deluge of shrieking, meowing chromaticism. The expressive aura is insistently that of nervous breakdown.

For all of this, the concerto's very excesses make it perfectly fascinating—but this is not to say that it is anything but stupefying as expression or as musical texture. The piece is monstrous hard for the piano, and only a score, a quick eye and a sharp ear could have told us how well Mr. Serkin managed it. It sounded awfully good, though, and Mr. Mitropoulos and the boys in the band were impressive.

The program also allowed us the Brahms Third Symphony and the conductor's handsome reading of Vaughan Williams' "Fantasy" on a theme of Thomas Tallis—a spacious work, the latter, sober, austere, controlled, yet ever so warm and lovely. This, good reader, was the other side of the coin as it is rarely shown. W. F.

MUSIC TO MY EARS

AMONG the Mitropoulos occupations in the Thursday-Sunday period were a series of collaborations with Rudolf Serkin which produced the most spirited, deft, and attractively idiomatic performance of Richard Strauss' "Burleske" which New York has heard in years. Serkin has now mastered both its problems and its pleasures to a degree that commands wholehearted admiration. With Saul Goodman as a deft master of the complicated timpani part, the audience at the Sunday performance heard an integrated effort that merited bravos.

—IRVING KOLODIN

From FEB 9 1958

HERALD TRIBUNE 'Gianni Schicchi' At Met. Opera

With sobs, snorts, limps, snuffles and grunts, the Metropolitan Opera began Puccini's wry opera buffa, "Gianni Schicchi," yesterday afternoon. And for an hour the audience was charmed and tickled with the fluttering arias an ensembles, with the outrageously funny contrasts between touching sentiment and broad farce.

This performance marked Charles Anthony's first appearance as Rinuccio. It was a pleasing portrayal. Mr. Anthony has a lovely tenor capable of melting lyricism. Again, one must take notice of Belen Amparan's witty characterization of La Vecchia. Besides being comical, she sings the part beautifully. Laurel Hurley was the Lauretta and, together with Mr. Anthony, took all the sentimentality of her pretty role quite seriously, but so did Puccini. The young lovers sang their hearts out.

The familiar cast was headed by Fernando Corena as the crafty "Gianni Schicchi." Dimitri Mitropoulos again conducted this work and Richard Strauss' "Salome," which followed. The cast included Inge Borkh, Ramon Vinay, Blanche Thebom and Mack Harrell. M. D. L.

From FEB 10 1958

TIMES New York, N. Y.

SERKIN PLAYS REGER WITH PHILHARMONIC

For his New York Philharmonic appearance at Carnegie Hall on Saturday evening, Rudolf Serkin resurrected a novelty—the Piano Concerto in F minor by Max Reger.

It was a piece of music worth hearing. Rather long—more than thirty-five minutes—and immensely difficult, it is written in the post-romantic style, with solos of Brahms and the Richard Strauss of the "Burlesque," which Mr. Serkin had played earlier in the week. But while there may be influences, the concerto cannot be classed as a derivative work. Reger had enough individuality of his own to surmount the influences of other composers. This concerto abounds in ingenious writing, captivating melodies and a rousingly effective piano part. A very heavy orchestration is used, and it needs a pianist with the strength of Mr. Serkin to make his way over the tonal background.

The pianist's performance was in the grand line. Mr. Serkin created immense volumes of tone without banging, and Dimitri Mitropoulos, who conducted, did not have to worry about drowning his soloist. Their work was received cordially by the audience. One hopes that it will not take another few decades before the work is heard at a Philharmonic concert.

Also on the program was a repeat of the Brahms Symphony No. 3. Vaughan Williams' "Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis" opened the concert. H. C. S.

From FEB 10 1958

World-Telegram & Sun New York, N. Y.

Serkin Performs With Philharmonic

Having missed the Philharmonic concert Thursday because of a seismic tremor at the Metropolitan, I caught both weekend programs featuring the distinguished pianist Rudolf Serkin as soloist. Saturday night he joined conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos in giving putting life to Max Reger's welcome, if somewhat problematic, F Minor Concerto. Both these giants of the keyboard and podium gave the score the utmost in fiery conviction.

Yesterday I heard Mr. Serkin outdo himself in dazzling brilliance and sweep in Strauss' "Burleske" and Schumann's "Introduction and Allegro."

I was also persuaded that Mr. Mitropoulos' profound reading of Brahms' Third Symphony was one of the most compelling of recent years. L. B.

RADICAL CHANGES

Philharmonic to Revise Its Concert Scheme

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

BRAVO for the New York Philharmonic! What looked like a somnambulist organization two years ago has been transformed into an institution with ideas and imagination. The plans announced for next season reveal a progressive purpose and a creative point of view.

Leonard Bernstein, the new musical director, has not hesitated to think big in designing a blueprint for an entire season, and he has had the whole-hearted support of the board of directors. Give Mr. Bernstein credit for the vigor and daring of a man intent on high adventure. Give the board credit for its willingness to take risks and to break with traditional procedures.

Behind the fresh approach there is the sense of an animating philosophy. Music is not a chore, not a grim, necessary commitment to good works, not a cheerless act of piety. It should be an exhilarating experience—gay and charming, exalting and inspiring, provocative and stimulating. It may shake the listener to the roots or it may be merely diverting, but it should never be a matter of dull routine either to performers or to audience.

In an era when radio, television, phonographs, jukeboxes and piped-in sound systems have given music of all sorts a pervasive currency, the responsibility of the formal, concert-giving agencies has an unexpected urgency. The problem is no longer simply to diffuse music. Heaven knows, it is too persistently available in versions that are denatured and in situations that allow only for superficial attention.

Added Value

The problem is to rub away the tarnish, to show that music has something magical to offer in its own right, to prove that the communal response of an audience gathered in a hall adds unexpected values to the individual's perception, to make vivid the irreplaceable excitement of listening to the living sound made by living performers.

It will be surprising if Mr. Bernstein, who is clearly determined to rededicate the Philharmonic to a fresh and enlarging service, does not accomplish all these things. The concept he has outlined for the coming season is an encouraging sign that he is headed in the right direction.

Two main points stand out: First, the decision to turn the Thursday evening concerts into "previews," and second, the attempt to give the season's programs a sense of continuity and coherence.

The Thursday-night scheme discloses Mr. Bernstein's boldness of attack. Thanks to his own special gifts, he can turn necessity into an opportunity. The public has learned that he is personable and articulate. It is safe to assume that he will give the informal "previews" a special attractiveness.

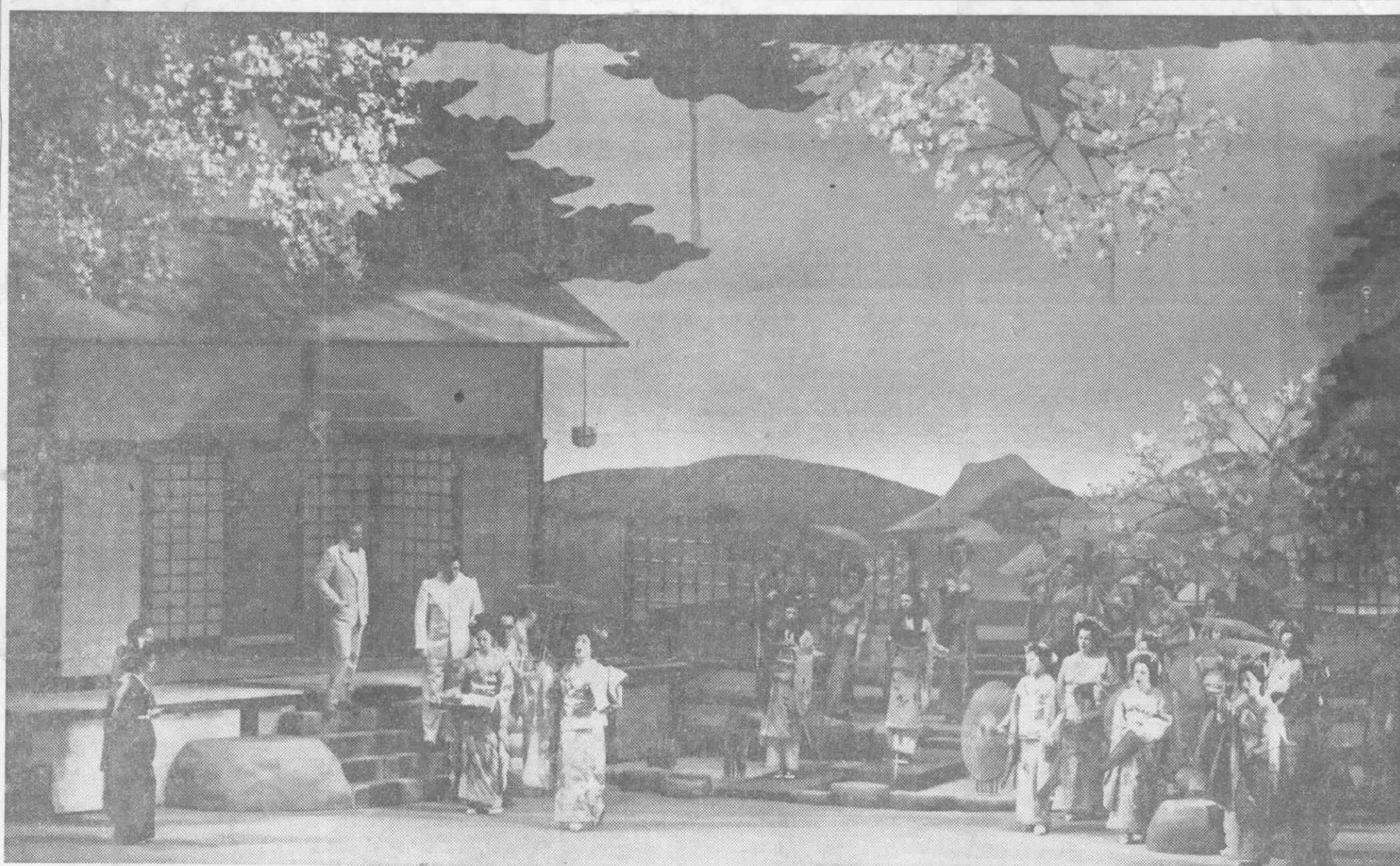
The musicians will not be in white tie and tails. The conductor will be free to stop the performance. If he does so, he will tell the audience what his objectives are. He will also talk about the music, the program and the composer if he thinks he has something illuminating to say.

Practiced Performer

Mr. Bernstein, as his television appearances have established, will handle this assignment with skill and grace. The guest conductors—Dimitri Mitropoulos, Sir John Barbirolli, Herbert von Karajan and Thomas Schippers—appear willing to try their hand at it, too.

What is the necessity behind this shift? Mr. Bernstein, like other Philharmonic conductors before him, has felt that there has not been time enough to prepare each program for the most satisfying performance. By setting up a "preview," he is providing himself and the orchestra with what amounts to a full dress rehearsal.

The Philharmonic and its conductor must face the fact that, whether they wish it or not, they are in competition with the orchestras that visit New



"BUTTERFLY" IN A NEW SETTING—Designed and directed by Japanese craftsmen, the new production of Puccini's opera, first in 34 years, will be given

a special non-subscription performance Wednesday night at the Metropolitan. In front of house in foreground, in a scene from Act I, l. to r., are Mario Zucchi, as

Sharpless; Eugenio Fernandi, who will make his debut in the role of Pinkerton; Margaret Roggero, the Suzuki, and Antonietta Stella, who will sing the hapless Cio-Cio-San.

York regularly. It is true that the Philharmonic plays a much longer season at Carnegie Hall than the ten concerts apiece of the Boston and Philadelphia orchestras. But it need not be doubted that some New York concertgoers, who prefer to subscribe to only one series of orchestral programs, shop around on the basis of comparisons between the Philharmonic and the visitors.

The visitors always enjoy an advantage. They bring to New York programs they have rehearsed and performed two or three times in their home towns. Their Carnegie Hall performances have precision, polish and the subtle lift that is possible when there is absolute assurance about detail and when every effort can be concentrated on the heart of a composition.

Unpredictable Fun

The Thursday night "preview" will give the Philharmonic a chance to run through its program before a paying audience. It should insure smoother and crisper performances the rest of the week. The Thursday night audience will have the fun of informality and unpredictable excitement. The other audiences will have the benefit of a more sharply honed ensemble. And the Philharmonic, by delaying critical appraisals until the Friday afternoon concert, will feel that it is in a more favorable position to be judged.

As for the determination to give the season's programs an over-all integration, this aim is much more important in the long run than the recasting of Thursday-night practices. Here Mr. Bernstein is reaching at the core of what should be an orchestra's policy. The music should come before all else. It should provide the point of departure for engagements of guest artists. It should dictate the design of the season.

In his eighteen weeks on the podium Mr. Bernstein will undertake a general survey of American music, and the guest conductors will have other themes running through their programs. There will be additional unifying subjects such as a series of Handel works to be conducted by Mr. Bernstein to observe the bicentennial of the composer's death in 1959. The standard repertory will be represented on most programs, for the notion of a central theme will not become an obsession.

The season will be longer. There will be more concerts and more work for the musicians. Much remains to be done, but the Philharmonic is awake. It is behaving at long last as if it knows that it is functioning in the middle of the twentieth century.



DISCUSSION AMID CHERRY BLOSSOMS—Yoshio Aoyama, left, director, with Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor, and Motohiro Nagasaka, designer of scenes and costumes.

NO FIREFLIES FOR 'BUTTERFLY'

By JOHN BRIGGS

IN a Fifth Avenue apartment furnished with Western sofas and Japanese ankle-height tables, Yoshio Aoyama and Motohiro Nagasaka were working on the white bridal gown that Cio-Cio-San will wear in the new Metropolitan Opera production of "Madama Butterfly" Wednesday evening.

Mr. Aoyama is the director and Mr. Nagasaka the scenic designer imported from Tokyo to give the new production, the first restaged "Butterfly" at Metropolitan in thirty-four years, authentic Japanese flavor.

Every detail of the production is being checked with meticulous care. Hence, after a day of rehearsals at the opera house, Messrs. Aoyama and Nagasaka were looking over the costumes that had just arrived from Tokyo.

Small props as well as costumes are being imported from Tokyo, but large scenery is being built from Mr. Nagasaka's designs in the Metropolitan's workshops.

Mr. Nagasaka, speaking through a pretty young lady interpreter named Toshi Suzuki, had high praise for the efficiency and workmanship of the Metropolitan's carpenters.

His original plan was to import fake cherry blossoms from Japan, Mr. Nagasaka said, for the Flower Duet scene in Act II. New York-made imitation blossoms, however, are convincing enough even for a Japanese and will be used in the performance.

They Do Not Fly During Cherry Blossom Season Says Opera Director

—John Briggs

"Butterfly's house will be authentically Japanese except that its proportions will be slightly larger than standard to go with the cavernous Metropolitan stage. Japanese house design is standardized on the basis of the 'tatami,' the straw and felt mat that is Japan's equivalent of a wall-to-wall carpet. A tatami is 3 by 6 feet, and a room 18 feet wide is a six-tatami room.

The interior of Butterfly's house, as seen in Act II, will look like an eight-tatami room with a six-tatami anteroom. The standard height of a 'shoji,' a sliding door covered with translucent paper, is six feet. Mr. Nagasaka is increasing the height to seven feet to suit the Metropolitan stage, and also because Western singers tend to be taller than Japanese.

At "Madama Butterfly" rehearsals everyone, including Mr. Aoyama, wears the garb which the Japanese call 'kinomomo' and which in English has been shortened to 'kimono.'

Merely wearing the kimono in real Japanese style takes know-how. The long sleeves should never expose the elbows, which in turn should always be held close to the sides. The sleeves also should not be allowed to flap, but should be held in the hands.

To tuck hands in sleeves and walk with mincing steps, though it has been done in Metropolitan productions of "Butterfly," actually is Chinese rather than Japanese.

Other points on which Mr. Aoyama has coached Antonietta Stella, who will sing Butterfly, Eugenio Fernandi, who will make his Metropolitan debut as Pinkerton, and fellow members of the cast, are the proper positions of the hand. In Japanese usage a man may spread his fingers, while a woman should squeeze hers together. Shoulders must not be rounded, although the body may arch to left or right.

The ceremonious Japanese bow takes practice, and the singers have to be reminded that in Japan one does not assume a higher position than a superior. Thus when Butterfly kneels before Pinkerton, Suzuki, the maid, should kneel, too, and should not rise before her mistress does.

The players also need to remember to take their shoes off at the threshold. In Japan one does not wear shoes indoors.

Rehearsal Manners

In contrast to directors who scream and tear their hair when things go wrong at rehearsal, Mr. Aoyama has been politeness itself. He invariably begins his instructions with "please." His command of English is limited, but Miss Suzuki has been on hand to translate. Also, Mr. Aoyama has staged opera productions in Germany and Italy, and with a command of German and Italian one can get by in so linguistically varied a company as the Metropolitan.

Smiling a shy, self-deprecating smile, Mr. Aoyama parried any suggestion of friction at rehearsals. Everyone had been most kind, most helpful, most cooperative. No one had said, "We used to do it this way."

As a matter of fact, he said, the thing that had surprised him most was that there had been so little difficulty with artistic temperaments at rehearsals. Oriental politeness could go no further.

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

Febr. 16 - 18

AMERICAN CONDUCTORS

To the Music Editor:

Mr. Taubman's articles attacking the prejudice, still strong in our native country, that imported talent is somehow better than the native variety, come at a most appropriate moment. For the American conductor has just had the last of a series of doors slammed in his eager face. The Dallas Symphony Orchestra has announced that its new musical director will be the Polish conductor, Paul Kletzki, who is visiting America for the first time.

It was known in the musical world this year that Dallas, St. Louis and Baltimore were seeking conductors for next season, and we American conductors had hoped that we might finally be given at least a chance to compete for the openings. First the St. Louis Symphony was given to a young Belgian (Edouard van Remoortel). Then the Baltimore Symphony stirred our hopes for a moment by making an offer to Milton Katims, an American. But he declined in order to remain at his post in Seattle.

The thing that grieves me and my colleagues is that we are not even in the running. Patronizing boards of directors consider us good enough to conduct the amateur orchestras of schools and small communities. But let a really good post become vacant and the managers are frantically cabling Europe for conductors—often for men about whom they know little except that their own countries treated them better than we do our conductors: that is, gave them not only equality but preference in conducting assignments.

The least our orchestras can do is to give us some guest-conducting appearances every year, just to try us out. A few seasons of that and they would be amazed at the number and the quality of the American conductors they would uncover.

AN AMERICAN CONDUCTOR.
New York.

New Look Outlined By the Philharmonic

By ROSS PARMENTER

The New York Philharmonic will scrap its old formal Thursday night concert next season in favor of an informal Thursday preview.

At these "run-throughs" the musicians will wear sack suits, and the conductor will talk to the audience. Some of the previews will probably be televised.

This experiment in modernizing concertgoing was announced to the press yesterday by Leonard Bernstein, who was a major force in implementing this break with the past.

Starting next fall, he said, Friday afternoon will be the time of the first formal program of the week, and this program will be repeated each Saturday night. This new pairing will replace the Thursday evening-Friday afternoon pattern that has been in force since the 1911-12 season. The Sunday afternoon concerts will be continued.

Scheduling concerts every Saturday is also an innovation. Usually, the orchestra only gives sixteen Saturday night concerts a season. Next season there will be thirty.

Mr. Bernstein will initiate the "preview" plan on Oct. 2, when he opens the orchestra's 117th season and his first as its musical director. Yesterday he also announced that during the eighteen weeks he will lead the orchestra through 1958-59 he would conduct a survey of American music. In his last six weeks he will lead a Handel festival to honor the two-hundredth anniversary of the composer's death.

It will be possible to buy tickets or subscribe to the previews, for the orchestra wants to have its run-throughs as a source of revenue. Critics, however, will not be present in their official capacity. Reviews will be based on the formal presentation of the same program the next afternoon.

Mr. Bernstein said the previews would not be rehearsals and they would not be "talk-fests" on the part of the conductor. The conductor will speak briefly about what was controversial in the program or about the special point the program was trying to make. He will be privileged to stop the music, should he feel it necessary.

"We want the public to feel closer to the orchestra, to the conductor and the composer," Mr. Bernstein said.

Dimitri Mitropoulos, Herbert von Karajan, Sir John Barbirolli and Thomas Schippers will be the guest conductors of the season. Asked if they would also talk at their previews, Mr. Bernstein said, "I think they will."

Mr. Bernstein said he planned to have a number of "cycles" or "festivals" integrated into the programs, and he said the guest conductors would cooperate. Herr von Karajan will feature German music Mr. Schippers Scandinavian music, Sir John English works and Mr. Mitropoulos French.

Mr. Bernstein's weeks with the Philharmonic will be divided into four blocks. The American works he will include during his first period will feature the first generation of serious American composers. He mentioned the names of George Whitefield Chadwick (1854-1931), H. F. Gilbert (1868-1928), Edward MacDowell (1861-1908), and Carl Ruggles, who was born in 1876.

None of his programs will be all-American, and he will conduct parallel series at the same time, perhaps the six Bach Brandenburg Concertos or a Vivaldi series. Each program is to have a big standard work, and it is hoped that it will be related to the rest of the program.

In Mr. Bernstein's second period with the orchestra he will play American music of the Thirties. His third period will feature American music from the depression to World War II. The fourth period, running parallel to the Handel festival, will contain music of the generation that has grown up since World War II.

This Means 'Madama Butterfly'

By JAY S. HARRISON

By any standards the scene was a strange one. Backstage at the Metropolitan Opera, in a dressing room used by Caruso, a reporter sat at the makeup table, and at his left, on a red leather couch, were three Japanese. A fourth settled herself in a straight-back chair.

One of them, Yoshio Aoyama, stage director of the company's new production of Puccini's "Madama Butterfly," was dressed in a yukata, a simplified kimono used for casual wear; another, Motohiro Nagasaka, set designer for the first revamped Metropolitan "Butterfly" in thirty-four years, wore a natty brown suit. Of the two remaining figures, one, Rei Kaita, was the translator supplied by Cornelius V. Starr, the production's angel, to insure that everyone knew what everybody else was up to; the other, Miss Toshi Suzuki, is general liaison counsellor between the Japanese artists and the Met management.

Together, the four have in the past months become an almost permanent fixture in the company's backstage operation, supervising every move made by the singers and stage crew alike. And on Wednesday, in a benefit for the Metropolitan Opera Guild, the results of their work—what is presumably the authentic "Madama Butterfly," as Japanese as possible in style and design—will be made known for the first time. In the opera, Antonietta Stella will sing the title role and Eugenio Fernandi, making his American debut, will be heard as Lt. Benjamin Franklin Pinkerton. Margaret Roggero is Suzuki and Mario Zanasì United States Consul Sharpless. Dimitri Mitropoulos will conduct.

Since it happens that the reporter's knowledge of Japanese is confined exclusively to the recently-acquired word "sayonara," the entire meeting was conducted, by necessity, in the form of translated question and answer. This presented no problems, however, for, as opposed to most persons in the public opera eye, neither Mr. Aoyama nor Mr. Nagasaka seemed prone to hedge on any of the replies. For example, the first question dealt with differences between what is really Japanese and what the Western world believes is Japanese. The answer, as Mr. Aoyama put it, takes in "the entire matter of recent Japanese history. 'Japan,' he said, 'in recent

The Metropolitan Opera's new production of Puccini's "Madama Butterfly" features (above) Margaret Roggero as Suzuki, Antonietta Stella as Butterfly and Eugenio Fernandi as Pinkerton. The work, designed and directed by Japanese artists, will be presented on Wednesday. Dimitri Mitropoulos will be the conductor.

Authentic 'Butterfly' In Japanese Style

(Continued from page one)

years has embraced so many Western styles that the old traditions in clothes and housing, the old customs and modes of daily life are sometimes lost. So it is difficult for Westerners to decide what is really Japanese and what is imported. Today, the oldest traditions of Japan are retained only by the very rich and very poor. The very rich can afford to improve on the old ways of life and therefore do not have to change them. And the very poor cannot afford Western importations and Western ideas. They must live as they always have.

"But the middle class has taken much from the West and combined it with our old traditions. And because the middle class is the one best known in the West, it is hard for an outsider to decide what belongs to Japan and what is a recent addition."

How does the whole matter of "genuine" and "non-genuine" Japanese traditions affect "Madama Butterfly"?

"The opera, as created by Puccini, Belasco and Long, is a fantasy based on false modes of living, false, that is, from a Japanese point of view. At any rate, it gives a slightly erroneous impression of Japanese life, though you would not know that unless you, as I have, lived all your life in Japan."

False Notes
In what way is "Butterfly" false?

"You want specific answers? All right. In the wedding scene between Butterfly and Pinkerton a gong has always been struck several times on stage. There are even little gong-like noises in the orchestra. But in Japan a gong is used at a funeral, not at a wedding. A gong does not express joy at all—its sad sound depicts the departing of an ancestral soul. So in my production the gong is out, though, of course, the gong noise remains in the orchestra."

"Then, also, in the second act, it has become traditional—

it is in the printed score—for Butterfly to punch three holes in the shoji screen that is the wall of her house. She does it so that she, Suzuki and her child can watch for Pinkerton's return. But a shoji screen is a sliding door, so why would any one poke holes into their walls when all they have to do is slide them? In our production there will be no holes. We have even changed the Italian words of text to 'Slide the doors open.'"

Any Puccini Errors?
Does that commit what might be called errors of Japanese style?

"Many. To my ears Puccini's music often expresses joy in scenes of sorrow. But the whole thing is so well composed that you are willing to overlook this and concentrate on the beauty, the inspiration of the music."

Did you have any trouble teaching your Western singers to behave like authentic Easterners?

"Trouble? No. They took direction very well. But there are some things it is hard to make them understand. You see, the Japanese are very static in expression and Westerners are very mobile. It is difficult, for example, for an Italian to keep his expression simple."

To demonstrate, Mr. Aoyama mimicked a Western woman crying. He put both hands, their fingers curved and shaking, to his eyes. The hands moved nervously, groping over his entire face. But in the Japanese way, as he showed it, a crying woman gently bows her head and, with one hand held rigid, simply shields her eyes.

"On our stage," he explained, "that is the way sorrow is defined. Then, too, in the matter of walking. Westerners always try to show Japanese walking with short, mincing, frequent little steps. But that is quite contrary to the Japanese way. We take normal steps, which are small because our legs are much at home.



Yoshio Aoyama

short. But the mincing movement comes only from China, where the feet are bound and make it impossible to take a normal step."

It was now Mr. Nagasaka's turn to answer questions. The major one dealt with the style of his sets, which he has dedicated to his teacher Kikugoro Onoe, the celebrated Kabuki artist. Was Butterfly's house—which is present in all three acts—a typical Japanese stage house?

"It is a stage house," Mr. Nagasaka answered. "Japanese houses are made of the shoji screens known in America, but they are surrounded on the outside by wooden shutters to protect the thin screen against wind and rain. Also, Butterfly's house is always shown with a wall missing so you can see the inside of it. The Japanese prefer to have all their walls up."

Comfortable House

"And in a typical Western set showing an interior, you show the interior only. My sets always show the eaves and the roof, not only the inside of the house. The house itself is quite a real one, though I have made the ceilings higher to accommodate the height of your Western actors. But a Japanese could live comfortably in my Butterfly house if someone put up the shutters and wooden partitions that belong there."

Mr. Nagasaka seemed prepared to go on, but a knock at the door signaled the beginning of another rehearsal. Single file, the quartet approached the stage and went into Butterfly's living room. They looked around, nodded to each other and smiled. They seemed very

'Madama Butterfly' In New Met Dress

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

Last night's new Metropolitan production of Puccini's "Madama Butterfly" was a beautiful product of American-Japanese co-operation on the cultural front—with a small assist from Italy.

The production, the first new at the Metropolitan in 34 years, was given in a fascinatingly authentic version of Puccini's music stemming largely from the way Mr. Mitropoulos does. Staging of Yoshio Aoyama and scenic designs and costumes of Motohiro Nagasaka, its living pulse. This is embodied in the Japanese theater.

One fairly gasped at the quiet evocative beauty of the terrace and livingroom scenes, little Antonietta Stella last at the gorgeous raiment of the geisha girls and the innumerable exotic and artistic touches serving to picture the Japan of the early 1900s.

Shrewd Director.

There was much of movement and acting and subtle traditional observance that pointed to the hand of a shrewd stage director who knew his background but knew also how to make necessary compromises with so Western an art form as grand opera. The whole picture was

entrancing.

Just as entrancing was the conducting of Dimitri Mitropoulos. For behind the visual "Madama Butterfly" was a beautiful product of American-Japanese co-operation on the cultural front—with a small assist from Italy.

The production, the first new at the Metropolitan in 34 years, was given in a fascinatingly authentic version of Puccini's music stemming largely from the way Mr. Mitropoulos does. Staging of Yoshio Aoyama and scenic designs and costumes of Motohiro Nagasaka, its living pulse. This is embodied in the Japanese theater.

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pathos. Her ovations were fully deserved.

Tenor in Debut.

A newcomer to the Metropolitan last night was Eugenio Fernandi, the young Italian tenor, a tall, good-looking man, he seemed a little self-conscious in naval uniform. While he has a long way to go as an actor, he has at least a suave and robust voice to accompany him.

Mario Zanasì, the Italian baritone who made his debut in "La Traviata" earlier this month, was again impressive of voice, except for the few occasions when his singing seemed to lapse into the dry casualness of the spoken word. The expert hand of Kurt Adler was evident in the fine-spun choral work.

This is definitely a "Madama Butterfly" to see and to hear. Few, if any, productions of Puccini's opera can have been so authentic and sensitive in color and mood, or so costly. One is grateful to Cornelius V. Starr, whose generous financial contribution made it possible.

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER FEBRUARY 12, 1958

'Vanessa' at the Academy

Met Offers American Opera

By EDWIN H. SCHLOSS

One of the most interesting and glamorous events of the season came to the Academy of Music last night when the Metropolitan Opera Association presented the first performance in this city of Samuel Barber's "Vanessa" to the usual glittering, capacity audience.

The first opera by an American composer staged by the Met since 1947, last night's production offered the original cast of the world premiere in New York four weeks ago with one important exception. Owing to the illness of Eleanor Steber who created the title role, Brenda Lewis, a former Philadelphia, sang the part of Vanessa.

HIS FIRST OPERA

Though Mr. Barber's music has been long and favorably known in concert halls on both sides of the Atlantic, "Vanessa" is his first opera. And the fact that it represents a brilliant beginning in no small part due to its libretto by the composer's close friend, Gian-Carlo Menotti.

Menotti, as everyone knows, has had years of success on the lyric stage on and off Broadway. As composer and librettist of his own works he has shown a striking talent which has scored again in his collaboration with Mr. Barber. The "Vanessa" book is the work of an expert craftsman who has been called "an opera composer the most talented man of the theater since Puccini."

IDEALLY SUITED

With a few minor exceptions the new opera's book is ideally suited to its purpose. The locale is given as "Vanessa's country place in a northern country, the year about 1905." But Cecil Beaton's elegant period sets and costumes; the snowstorm raging off stage at the opening, the Chekhovian moods and frustrations of the characters, all suggest Czarist Russia, a resemblance confirmed by a glimpsed ballroom scene and a peasant ballet a la Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin."

The story tells of Vanessa, a handsome and wealthy woman in her forties, who lives as a recluse with her bitter and aging mother and her niece Erika, an attractive



BRENDA LEWIS

young girl of 20. Vanessa is fatally waiting for the return of a lost lover of her youth, Anatol. Out of the stormy night comes another Anatol, an attractive young man, the son of Vanessa's old flame.

Vanessa succumbs to the new Anatol and they become engaged. Erika succumbs more passionately and she is to be the mother of Anatol's child. She conceals her condition, partly because of a revulsion of feeling, partly out of loyalty to her aunt. And at the end Anatol and Vanessa are off to a new life while Erika and her old grandmother brood by the fireplace. "It is my turn to wait now," Erika says as the curtain falls.

Barber's music rises handsomely to the story's challenge.

From FEB 18 1958
HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.
Salome 'Herod' Sung by Kullman

In the performance of Strauss's "Salome" given at the Metropolitan Opera last night, Charles Kullman assumed the role of Herod for the first time this season. In excellent form both vocally and histrionically, Mr. Kullman added harrowing intensity to the drama that was played at high pitch by all the major participants. These included Inge Borkh, Mack Harrell, and Blanche Thebom. Also appearing for the first time this season was Deszo Ernster as the First Nazarene, and a last-minute substitution led to the replacement of Norman Scott by Ezio Flagello, who sang the part of the First Soldier.

In Puccini's "Gianni Schicchi," the first item on the evening's double-bill, Emilia Cundari was cast as Lauretta for the first time at the Metropolitan. Hers was a creditable debut in the part, if not an extraordinary one. Her colleagues in the comedy included Fernando Corena, Belen Amaran, and Gabor Carelli, among others. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted both operas with his accustomed vigor.

A. H.

Brenda Lewis Is Heard In Title Role of 'Vanessa'

Brenda Lewis sang the title role of Vanessa Saturday night at the Metropolitan and her appearance marked the first change of cast in Samuel Barber's opera since the work received its world premiere on Jan. 15. Since comparisons with

Eleanor Steber, who created the part, are inevitable and justifiable, it should be said straight off that the two sopranos view the character differently and that each offers an interpretation which has a fair share of values and flaws.

For one thing, Miss Lewis is not a soaring voice, nor does she float a tone so that it rings and stands mirrored in the air. Thus, the duet and quintet did not yield their melodic riches quite as easily as they had when Miss Steber was on hand to guide them. On others scores, however, Miss Lewis brought more to the role than her predecessor, since she is an actress of deeper conviction and a theater personality of greater incisiveness and power.

As she played Vanessa, the lady was more intense, more edgy and neurotic, more clearly the product of frustration and thwarted desire. The first act, in consequence, gained immeasurably in tightness; the culmination of it, Vanessa's discovery that after twenty years of waiting the wrong man had come to court her, was stinging and achingly sad.

Then, too, her subsequent relaxation on finding young Anatol compatible, brought to the figure a mature, womanly quality that is not present if Vanessa treats her romance as a topic for giggles and coy glances. And Miss Lewis, in her strawberry-blond wig and handsome velvet costumes, was very much a woman who, on finding her long-awaited happiness, treated it with dignity and respect.

The remainder of the cast, conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos, included Rosalind Elias as Erika, Nicolai Gedda as Anatol, Regina Resnik as the Grandmother and Giorgio Tozzi as the Doctor. So much has been said about them all that further praise is not necessary beyond pointing to the fact that they are as good as ever, perhaps even better for being more secure in their tasks.

J. S. H.

From FEB 22 1958

Times New York, N. Y. Harvut Sings Role In 'Vanessa' at 'Met'

Clifford Harvut made his first appearance in the role of the old doctor last night at the Metropolitan Opera House in the fifth performance of Samuel Barber's "Vanessa."

Mr. Harvut not only sang well, but also proved an effective character actor, too. He handled himself with ease on the stage and sprang about quite briskly for an old doctor, yet not too briskly in his second act dancing demonstration.

In what might be called his "champagne monologue" of the third act, he reeled about the stage with comic grace and sang the humorous lines of Gian-Carlo Menotti's text with the greatest of tipsy ease. It was a more than professionally smooth performance.

The remainder of the cast, including Eleanor Steber in the title role, had been heard in their parts before. They were Rosalind Elias as Erika, Nicolai Gedda as Anatol, Regina Resnik as the old baroness and George Cehanovsky and Robert Nagy in smaller roles. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted. E. D.

BERGEN EVENING RECORD
HACKENSACK, N. J.
FEB 22 1958

Philharmonic's New Look

Though it had been expected that Dimitri Mitropoulos would do a substantial segment of next season's New York Philharmonic season, a recent announcement assigns only 4 weeks to its former music director. They will come in a batch in March. Earlier, the arrangements provide for Herbert von Karajan's first appearance as director of an American orchestra (2 weeks in November), and a return to his old ensemble for Sir John Barbirolli, who has not visited New York professionally for 15 years. He will do the month of January. The only other guest will be Thomas Schippers for 2 weeks, leaving 18 weeks (in 4 to 6-week segments) for the new music director, Leonard Bernstein. Fundamental changes in concert sequences will make the Friday afternoon-Saturday night sequences an identical pair for the first time, with the customary Thursday night premiere converted into a preview, for which tickets will nevertheless be sold. Among other objectives, the rearrangement will permit more rehearsal time with fewer changes of programs.



PIANO REHEARSAL FOR "ELEKTRA"—Dimitri Mitropoulos, at left, directs his leading ladies, left to right, Frances Yeend, who will sing Chrysothemis, sister of Elektra; Blanche Thebom, the Klytemnestra, Elektra's mother, and Inge Borkh, who will

appear in the title role. Behind the piano, played by Martin Rich, are Thomas Fisher, who will sing the role of an attendant, and a group of singers who are the Handmaidens. The Richard Strauss opera will be given in concert form this week by the Philharmonic.

From MAR 2 - 1958

HERALD-TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.



SILHOUETTE OF A CONDUCTOR—An unusual photograph of Dimitri Mitropoulos, whose busy schedule this week includes three performances of Strauss' "Elektra" with the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall and a repeat of Puccini's "Madama Butterfly" on Friday night at the Metropolitan Opera.

From MAR 3 1958

HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

MUSIC

PAUL HENRY LANG New York Philharmonic

CARNEGIE HALL
Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos; soloist, Jacques Abram, pianist. The program: Choral-Prelude, "Komm, Gott, Schöpfer, heiliger Geist"; Bach-Schoenberg Symphony No. 1 (first performance); Sicilianos Piano Concerto No. 1; Britten Three Dances from "The Three-Cornered Hat".

It is well known that Dimitri Mitropoulos is a great believer in contemporary music and a friendly and conscientious servant of its composers. In this he is rare among conductors and deserves full honors. But we cannot always trust the validity of his judgment; the program he selected for Saturday night's Philharmonic concert was atrocious.

The premier of Yeorgo Sicilianos' First Symphony was a pathetic affair. This composer bows his head to so many masters that his neck must need to be held up by braces. The work starts with a theme from Prokofiev's Classical Symphony and ends with a quotation from "E Lucevan Le Stelle" from "Tosca." In between there was mostly coarse and trivial noise which were aided and abetted by Mr. Mitropoulos to such an extent that the symphony must have been audible in the Coliseum. Mr. Sicilianos is worse than an eclectic composer; his music is like a mound of shingles upon which the listener must walk, sliding in every direction at every step.

Benjamin Britten's Piano Concerto Number 1 does not suffer from the professional ineptitude displayed by Mr. Sicilianos, the piece is well-written, but here we have a truly eclectic trifle without any spiritual content. The program notes give a clue to the profound emotions that fired this concerto: "The concerto was conceived," says its composer, "with the idea of exploiting various important characteristics of the piano-forte." Well, it is just that, and it might be fun in a short, one-movement piece. But four movements of it leave the hearer deeply disappointed.

Jacques Abram, the soloist, played it with dash and fleeting fingers, though perhaps a bit uniformly. However, he had little chance to exhibit any "important characteristics" beyond the percussive. There were a few schmaltzy tunes that I found embarrassing; an Englishman should not venture into such dangerous waters only a Frenchman can navigate them with impunity. At that, with a great deal of suavity and whimsical handling something might have been salvaged from this lightweight piece, but Mr. Mitropoulos elected to turn it into a rip-snorting demonstration of orchestral power.

The concert began with two



Jacques Abram

Bach organ preludes as transfigured by Schoenberg. These transfigurations remind me of the old transcendentalists in Concord who preferred long hair on men and short hair on women. The intimate lyricism of these essentially linear pieces is absolutely opposed to such flamboyant treatment; they are entirely distorted by the trimmings hung upon them. Piccolos whistling way up, horns bugling in unison while the strings are racing around, then glockenspiel and triangle throw in the sequins that complete the gaudy garment. Falla's dances from "The Three-Cornered Hat" closed the program. A frail flower which did not dry up the marsh, it only endowed the dismal scene with a spot of beauty.

4 Μαρτίου 1958

«ΤΟ ΒΗΜΑ»

ΤΙΜΗΤΙΚΗ ΔΙΑΚΡΙΣΙΣ

ΕΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΕΛΛΗΝΑ ΑΡΧΙΜΟΥΣΙΚΟΝ
ΔΗΜ. ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΝ ΑΠΕΝΕΜΗΘΗ
ΤΟ ΒΡΑΒΕΙΟΝ ΤΩΝ ΜΟΥΣΙΚΩΝ

Διά την μεγάλην συμβολήν του
εις την μουσικήν τῆς Ἀμερικής

ΝΕΑ ΥΟΡΚΗ, 3 Μαρτίου. Ἰδιαίτερα ὕψιστος—τὸ ἐτήσιον βραβείον τοῦ Ἐθνικοῦ Συμβουλίου Μουσικῶν ἀνεπεμήθη ἑξέως εἰς τὸ ἴδιον στήθιον Ἑλληνα μουσικοῦ κ. Δημήτριον Μητρόπουλον. Ἡ σχετικὴ ἀπόφασις τοῦ Συμβουλίου ὑπογραμμίζει τὴν πλούσιαν συμβολήν του κ. Μητρόπουλου εἰς τὴν μουσικὴν κίνησιν τῆς χώρας καὶ τὴν μεγάλην ἰσχύον ἐνίσχυσιν ποὺ προσέφερεν αὐτὸς εἰς τοὺς ἐντεπίους Ἀμερικανικοὺς μουσικοσυνθέτας. Ὁ κ. Μητρόπουλος παρουσίασε τὰ ἔργα πολλῶν νέων Ἀμερικανῶν μουσικῶν κατὰ τὴν ἐφετησὴν αἰσθὺν τῆς Φιλαρμονικῆς τῆς Νέας Ὑόρκης, καθὼς ἐπέσκη καὶ πέρυσιν εἰς τὸ Φεστιβάλ τοῦ Σάλτσμπουργκ, ὅπου διηγεῖται τὴν ὀρχήστραν τῆς Βιέννης.

From MAR 3 1958

TIMES
New York, N. Y.

MITROPOULOS LEADS SYMPHONY BY GREEK

Dimitri Mitropoulos, at the New York Philharmonic concert on Saturday evening, conducted the world premiere of Yeorgo Sicilianos' Symphony No. 1. Mr. Sicilianos is a Greek composer, born in 1924, who has studied in this country and abroad. He now lives in his native country.

He has composed an exuberant four-movement work, about twenty-five minutes long. But it cannot be said that many of his ideas are original. One heard twelve-tone elements, a good deal of Shostakovich, a touch of early Stravinsky and other sources. The writing was strongly melodic, and if Mr. Sicilianos fuses everything into a personal style his music will be well worth listening to.

For most of the post-intermission part of the program, Jacques Abram officiated at the piano in the Benjamin Britten Concerto No. 1. Mr. Abram played the 1945 revised version of this lively, clever work with steel-fingered efficiency. If only he could get more color into his playing!

Also on the program were two Bach chorale-preludes—"Schummecke dich, O liebe Seele" and "Komm, Gott, Schöpfer, heiliger Geist"—as arranged for full orchestra by Arnold Schoenberg, and three dances from Falla's "Three-Cornered Hat." H. C. S.

TIME, MARCH 3, 1958

MUSIC

Brilliant Butterfly

Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* has always suffered from a kind of triple cultural vision. Based on an American story (by John Luther Long) and play (by David Belasco), it tells what an Italian thinks an American would feel if he went ranching with a Japanese girl. Most of the time, this confusion is compounded by the staging. In the words of an old Far East hand, Cornelius V. Starr, *Butterfly* productions usually present "a kind of tourist Yokohama, or half New York Chinatown."

The characters no longer walk in mincing steps, or tuck their hands in their sleeves, movements characteristic of China rather than Japan. The fireflies that spanned the night sky during the love duet in Act I have been abandoned (there are no fireflies during the cherry-blossom season); though Puccini's gonglike orchestral effects are kept, the onstage gong that signaled the wedding is out (gongs are sounded at Japanese funerals). Cio-Cio-San no longer punches holes in the shoji (paper screen) walls of the house to watch for Pinkerton's return—for the good reason that a shoji



THE NEW "MADAME BUTTERFLY," ACT I
No gong at the wedding, no peepholes in the shoji.

Starr, a wealthy insurance executive, decided to remedy the situation, offered to finance a really authentic new Met production of the opera as viewed through Japanese eyes. The result still had a few blurred edges, but physically and vocally it was surely the handsomest *Butterfly* ever mounted on a U.S. stage.

Authentic Touches. The previous Met mounting of *Butterfly* lasted an astonishing 34 seasons, dating back to the year Geraldine Farrar retired from the role. For the new production, General Manager Rudolf Bing suggested several European designers, including Cecil Beaton, but Patron Starr would have none of them, personally went to Japan and brought back two experts: Yoshio Aoyama of Tokyo's Kabukiza Theater as director and Stage Designer Motohiro Nagasaka for sets and costumes. Between them, they stripped *Butterfly* of all its sukiyaki-styled stage business, painted it in subdued colors ("to express inner harmonies and conflicts"), dressed the actors in gorgeously detailed costumes hand-sewn in Japan. They also added authentic dramatic touches.

slides open. Director Aoyama has Cio-Cio-San bind her legs before her suicide to prevent exposing them ("Even dying, a lady stays elegant"). As for Puccini's music, Director Aoyama still feels it is out of character—Puccini's death theme is a Japanese drinking song—but he admits that it has always packed them in in Japan.

Tribute to a People. Good as the new production was, it was the performance that made last week's *Butterfly* truly memorable. In her first Metropolitan appearance in the role, Italian Soprano Antonietta Stella, 28, made her Cio-Cio-San a wonderful complex of childish fever and womanly fire, effectively underplayed the bathetic frills the role is heir to. Her large, easily ranging voice shimmered and soared ecstatically, brought the house alive with a roar after her famous aria, *Un bel di*.

As Lieut. Pinkerton, hulking Tenor Eugenio Fernandi, making his U.S. debut, rolled about the stage like a stub-footed schoolboy, but in his big moments swelled his barrel chest and belted out thundering, on-target salvos of sound that rocked the house. Conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos had one of his best nights, led orchestra and singers in a carefully controlled performance that lent tension and dramatic shape to the libretto. The production, said pleased Angel Starr, was "not only great opera and great theater, but a tribute to the Japanese people, their taste and art."

'ELEKTRA' AT CARNEGIE HALL

Mitropoulos Is Overwhelming

By MILES KASTENDIECK

RICHARD STRAUSS' symphonic opera "Elektra" burst forth in full orchestral glory in Carnegie Hall last night. In an overwhelming performance by Dimitri Mitropoulos, the Philharmonic, and Inge Borkh, it had an impact almost as cataclysmic as Elektra's harrowing experience itself. An emotionally exhausted audience nevertheless summoned strength for a tremendous ovation.

This was one of those occasions when Mitropoulos proved himself the most phenomenal of present-day conductors. With his feverish temperament attuned to the hypertension of this Strauss score, he projected every bit of feeling and drama lurking in it. That he did so from memory undoubtedly gave him the freedom to interpret with abandon.

In Miss Borkh he had an ideal Elektra. Her big voice had the requisite power to soar above the most thunderous fortissimos, yet the lyric beauty to suplicate Orestes most persuasively. The role fell well for her voice, calling forth its best quality. No Elektra has sung it as well in the last 20 years; and Miss Borkh gave her finest performance to date.

The actress in her added distinction to her singing through she was naturally inhibited on the concert stage. Her enunciation of text contributed further to the conviction of her portrayal. In short, she was stunning in every meaning of the word.

From MAR 7 - 1958

World-Telegram & Sun

Music: The Philharmonic

Carnegie's 'Elektra' Is Overwhelming

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

After an absence of six years from the local scene, Richard Strauss' one-act opera, "Elektra," returned to circulation in an overpowering concert performance by the Philharmonic in Carnegie Hall last night.

If the hero of the occasion was conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos, the heroine was Inge Borkh, who gave the most brilliant impersonation of Agamemnon's haunted and avenging daughter that I have ever heard on or off the opera stage.

When first heard in 1909, "Elektra" was almost terrifying in its screaming dissonances of orchestra and wild, soul-searing outbursts of text. It was still something of a cataclysm last night.

Symphonic Sorcerer.

This is Richard Strauss at the crest of his powers as symphonic sorcerer, sparing neither the heart nor the nervous system in his shattering picture of a Greek legend charged with monstrous misdeed and insatiable revenge.

Just what a stage setting, complete with costume and acting, would have added to last night's performance it is hard to say. Emotionally and imaginatively, the experience was complete and overwhelming.

NEW YORK POST, FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 1958

WORDS and MUSIC

By Harriett Johnson

Mitropoulos Leads Savage 'Elektra'

Strauss' demoniac "Elektra," in its sweeping incandescence, was "on-stage" last night under the aegis of Dimitri Mitropoulos.

If piercing the essence of the horrendous, hypnotic score is the key criterion of re-creation, then "concert-form" is a misnomer for the impassioned Carnegie Hall performance by the New York Philharmonic and collaborators.

At times, Mitropoulos was too savage for his soloists, though the cumulative drive under these circumstances was tremendous, leaving any sensitive listener limp at the work's conclusion. The only detraction was that the one-act music-drama was cut. In order to provide an intermission, Mitropoulos eliminated the entire scene between Elektra and Chrysothemis in which the former, thinking her brother, Orestes, is dead, urges her weaker sister to join her in murdering her mother, Klytemnestra, together with the latter's lover, Aegisthus. There were also minor cuts.

With the orchestra increased from 107 to 120, Mitropoulos still spared nothing in the many sections where violence was at its height. The orchestral transitions in the same diabolical vein, such as the one prior to the entrance of Klytemnestra, also came through with terrific impact.

The Greek maestro conducted, incredibly enough, from memory as he had during his memorable performances of the work in 1954. A work of white-hot inspiration, the music of "Elektra" may be consistently neurotic, but fortunately it is far from unrelenting insanity.

Just as the Von Hofmannsthal libretto is more voluptuous and excessive than the original austere Sophocles tragedy from which it was taken, so Strauss produces a continuous richness of image and characterization.

There are passages of haunting lyrical beauty as the apostrophe of Elektra to Orestes just after she has recognized him. Klytemnestra's detailed complaint to Elektra that she can't sleep is stark, weird and fascinating. The dance music is unmistakable.

All of these lights and sha-

and she created one of the most memorable moments of this music season.

Though Miss Borkh quite dominated the cast, the roles of Klytemnestra and Chrysothemis were well done. As the former, Blanche Thebom had the vocal and dramatic intensity to convey her character. Only the utter degeneration of Klytemnestra escaped her. As the latter Frances Yeend did some of her best singing in recent years. Her voice sounded better focused and more flexible.

The other roles were well sung: Giorgio Tozzi as Orestes and David Lloyd as Aegisthus rose to the occasion; Thomas Fisher, Margery Mayer, Liza-

beth Pritchett, Evelyn Sachs, June Kelly, and Marjorie McClung sustained the high level of performance.

That the Philharmonic outdid itself calls for special mention. It whipped itself up to fever pitch along with Mitropoulos. The result was a magnificent performance. What a pity that so wonderfully worked-out on interpretation can be heard again only this afternoon and Sunday afternoon!

Supreme in Strauss, Mitropoulos achieved one of his greatest moments with the Philharmonic in "Elektra" last night.

From MAR 7 1958

HERALD TRIBUNE

New York, N. Y.

At Carnegie Hall

The Philharmonic Presents 'Elektra' Music by Strauss

'ELEKTRA'

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

Opera in one act (in concert form).

at Carnegie Hall, libretto by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, music by Richard Strauss.

The cast:

Elektra..... Inge Borkh

Klytemnestra..... Blanche Thebom

Chrysothemis..... Frances Yeend

Aegisthus..... David Lloyd

Orestes..... Giorgio Tozzi

Attendant of Orestes..... Thomas Fisher

Handmaidens..... Margery Mayer, Lizabeth Pritchett, Evelyn Sachs, June Kelly, Marjorie McClung.

Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos

By Jay S. Harrison

With "Elektra," Richard Strauss reached the end of a road. He had gone as far as any man is able to depict, in tone, a clawing obsession without allowing that obsession to snap into madness, which, of course, is an entirely different thing.

In the figure of Elektra Strauss has given us a heroine incinerated by the fires of revenge burning within her, has given us the ultimate portrait of a woman driven, through hate, to a despair so terrible that it can only feed on blood.

This being the case, it is understandable that Strauss, in his desire to echo every shattering phrase of Hofmannsthal's text, had to create an orchestra of demons. And this orchestra snarls, spits, cackles, pours out such a lava of sound that it all but inundates the singers who must compete against it.

Surprisingly, too, the work contains not only this brutal surge of tone, but it also encompasses the sort of sweet, stretching chromatic line that had become Strauss' earlier trademark, and was, indeed, one of his major contributions to music.

Each of these details, and others as well, were made dazzlingly clear last night at the Philharmonic's performance of the opera in Carnegie Hall, with Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting and Inge Borkh in the title role.

"Elektra" was given, obviously, in concert form, which did the work no disservice since everything proceeds in terms of lengthy vocal narratives by means of the instrumental writing. Moreover, the acting is built into the melodic lines, so that it is impossible for a singer to do more with her body and face than is already implied in the layout of the arioso. Sing it, sing it loud and with color and "Elektra" unfolds as one of the most stinging experiences available to devotees of the lyric theater.

The present occasion, moreover, boasted performers who made up a cast strong as steel. Miss Borkh's Elektra is infinitely superior to her Salome, and her ability to cut through a tissue of orchestral tone is only this side short of being indescribable. Can you imagine what it is like to sing in front of 120 men each of whom, in his acceptance of Strauss' printed instructions, considers it his business to drown you out? If you can visualize it only in part then you can conceive what an Elektra must be like.

And however wondrous you conceive it, Miss Borkh is more than a match for your dreams. She is Elektra, and that is that.

Miss Borkh, to her good fortune, was further surrounded by artists who are in no way intimidated by Strauss and who take him, consequently, on his own terms. Miss Thebom sang with more color, warmth and sheer, healthy vigor than she has displayed for several years, and Miss Yeend, though a mite pale in comparison to her colleagues, made the diffident Chrysothemis a stirring, a striking figure. And Mr. Tozzi, whose endless array of skills never ceases to amaze, was a grand and ringing Orestes, a presence all commanding and imperious.

Still, there is no skirting one basic issue. The star of the enterprise, its ray and its light was Dimitri Mitropoulos, whose conducting shone with the kind of brightness that is usually associated only with visionaries and holy men. At any rate, he seemed to divine his composer's intentions and, having absorbed them, gave them back to us with the voice of an oracle.

From MAR 10 1958

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

Betty Allen, Soprano, Excels in Concert

Of New York Chamber Music Ensemble

The world premiere of a wind quintet by Vittorio Rieti and the first New York performance of Darius Milhaud's "Aspen Serenade" for nine instruments were the novelties of the New York Chamber Music Ensemble concert last night. This was the final program of the group's seventh season, presented at the Ninety-second Street Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association.

Although the new Milhaud and Rieti works promised to be the center of attention, neither proved so interesting as the singing of the mezzo-soprano Betty Allen in two better-known works. They were Chausson's "Chanson Perpetuelle" and Ravel's "Chansons Madécasses," which she sang not only with sensitive musicianship but also with a fine sense of style and dramatic flair.

To these accomplishments Miss Allen added superb vocalism, including several high planissimos of an exquisite velvet quality and an unusually accurate sense of pitch. Except for some rather harsh loud phrases her performance would rank her with the top singers of our day. She was accompanied by Leonid Hambro, pianist, and a chamber group.

Mr. Rieti's quintet seemed a rather shallow effort to be chic and charming. Mr. Milhaud's "Serenade" is written by a master but in a rather aimlessly loquacious mood. It was conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. E. D.

From MAR 7 1958

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

Music: 'Elektra' Cut

Crucial Scene Dropped by Mitropoulos

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

DIMITRI MITROPoulos gave, and Dimitri Mitropoulos took away. He conducted Richard Strauss' searing tragedy, "Elektra," with passion and intensity at Carnegie Hall last night, but he weakened his achievement by sanctioning an intermission in this one-act opera and eliminating a crucial scene.

It is difficult to understand how Mr. Mitropoulos could countenance such procedure. If the opera's 100 minutes would oblige the New York Philharmonic audience to stay longer than it is accustomed to, why not for once drop the intermission, which does not belong here anyhow? And why not start the concert on time instead of ten minutes late? Certainly the Philharmonic audience can take "Elektra" uncut and uninterrupted, as the Metropolitan Opera public does.

In the face of a memorable performance, these seem like finicking objections. But they involve the integrity of "Elektra." The piece is continuous with good reason. Its power, like its psychological insight, is cumulative. To call a temporary halt after fifty minutes and to let the performers parade back and forth for bows and to let the audience take a breather is to do violence to dramatic and musical logic.

When the performance resumed with the Elektra-Orestes scene, the mood had to be restored. The scene just before this, the one in which Elektra pleads with her sister, Chrysothemis, to join her now in avenging their father's murder, was left out. It does not take long and it is vital, for it is pitiless and savage in its contrasts.

Say for the quality of this performance that, even with the break, the encounter of Elektra and Orestes soon took hold. When the Recognition Scene arrived, one was immersed again in the composer's terrible compassion. Then the reading went on to its shattering climax.

Mr. Mitropoulos is a Straussian from way back. The music seethed and soared and at times seemed ready to break the bounds of endurance, but all this was accomplished with the utmost control. The Philharmonic, in excellent form, played with brilliance and opulence. It is not often that one hears this



Inge Borkh

The Program

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC, concert performance of "Elektra," opera in one act by Richard Strauss, libretto by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, after the drama of Sophocles, conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. At Carnegie Hall, last night.

Elektra..... Inge Borkh
Klytemnestra..... Blanche Thebom
Chrysothemis..... Frances Yeend
Orestes..... Giorgio Tozzi
Attendant of Orestes..... Thomas Fisher
Handmaidens..... Margery Mayer, Lizabeth Pritchett, Evelyn Sachs, June Kelly, Marjorie McClung.

superb score performed with such sweep and ardor.

Inge Borkh, German soprano, sang the title role, which is an exacting test of endurance, vocalism and musicianship, with unremitting authority. The word sang is not used by courtesy, as it often has to be with Elektras. Miss Borkh had the part entirely within the voice.

She phrased with feeling, and her big dramatic soprano was equal to the climaxes. If she did not bring the last bit of obsessive wildness to her singing, she was nonetheless a credible and touching Elektra, even in an evening gown rather than the tatters she wears in the opera house.

Blanche Thebom, the Klytemnestra, conveyed the evil and fear in the Queen through her darkly colored voice and its sensitive handling. Her slinky black gown and her stance helped to evoke the character.

Frances Yeend as Chrysothemis sang with security, comprehension and richness of tone. Giorgio Tozzi was a smooth-voiced and impressive Orestes. David Lloyd was effective in the brief part of Aegisthus. The others in the cast were in the vein.

It was a striking performance, and it could have been altogether unforgettable.

From MAR 7 1958

World-Telegram & Sun

New York, N. Y.

Music

'Elektra' Sung at Carnegie

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

For those who have always believed in the unique powers of Dimitri Mitropoulos it was doubly moving to hear the crowd's ecstatic response to his last performance of Strauss' "Elektra" in Carnegie Hall yesterday.

This third philharmonic concert reading of the searing score was to me even more exciting than Thursday night's. It sank in more deeply than the other, and there was no intermission to break the pulsing tension of mood.

I was again powerfully stirred by the almost wild genius of Strauss, the splendid artistry of Inge Borkh and Blanche Thebom, and the truly inspired and unprecedented dynamism of the orchestra.

Even more was I impressed by Mr. Mitropoulos—his ability to get to the beating heart of the music and become the composer's other and more EXPANSIVE self. Yesterday's rousing ovation was a memorable tribute to this dedicated artist.

In a season of very great things in music, both at Carnegie Hall and the Met, I would be tempted, as of now, to nominate this "Elektra" as the most brilliant single accomplishment of all.

I felt again, as I have so often in the past, that Mr. Mitropoulos was utilizing to the utmost the high voltage embedded in an awesome score. Call it second sight, or second hearing, it was podium mastery of the highest order.

The Rieti work, clearly an essay in frivolity and charm, was a bit flat in effect. Its whimsy seemed forced; its materials disturbingly frail. The "Aspen Serenade," in the three movements this reviewer could stay to hear, was another of Milhaud's intricately contrapuntal and slightly unsealed creations—a bit shrill and hard to keep the mind on. The seldom heard Saint Saens Septet, and the Chausson "Chanson Perpetuelle," on the other hand, were in turn amusing and downright lovely. Betty Allen was a stunningly fluent soloist in the Chausson. L. T.

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Chamber Group

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Philharmonic Splits Sides As Danny Kaye Takes Baton

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC
CARNegie HALL
Pension fund concert last night. Conductors: Danny Kaye and Dimitri Mitropoulos. The program: Under the direction of Mr. Mitropoulos: Overture, "Der Freischütz"..... Weber
"Dances of the Seven Veils"..... Strauss
Dances from "The Three-Cornered Hat"..... Falla
Under the direction of Mr. Kaye: Overture, "The Thieving Magpie"..... Rossini
"Tritsch-Tratsch" Polka..... Strauss
"Trepak"..... Tchaikovsky
"Look Sharp, Be Sharp"..... Merrick-Bennett
"Lohengrin" Prelude to Act III..... Wagner
Overture, Miniature..... Tchaikovsky
Fiddle Faddle..... Anderson
Prelude to "Carmen"..... Bizet
"Stars and Stripes Forever"..... Sousa

By Jay S. Harrison

When Danny Kaye mounted the podium of the Philharmonic last night in Carnegie Hall he fulfilled a dream shared by every musician worth his stripe. He was conducting—which is to say that he was, for the moment at least, the emperor of all he surveyed, a dictator, a monarch, who, according to the rules, has absolute power over the men in his command. It was an awesome sight, made even more magnificent by the fact that the Philharmonic lads—a high-minded group given to no signs of ribaldry save in the playing of pinochle—could scarcely function for the tears of laughter rolling down their cheeks.



Danny Kaye, who conducted the Philharmonic last night.

Still, Danny Kaye, a gentleman far-famed for being hilariously out of step with the universe, was this once at the helm of control. As co-conductor, with Dimitri Mitropoulos, of a Pension Fund Benefit, he was in charge of 100 men, despite the circumstance that he cannot read a note of music and had to learn his pieces by playing them on a phonograph. But win or lose, he was maestro for an hour.

It would be rash to assume, however, that it was an ordinary hour, as Mr. Kaye is far from being an ordinary fellow. This alone was indicated by his entrance and opening selection. He loped onstage carrying twelve batons, shook hands with near half the orchestra, kissed two harpists and a double-bassist, and proceeded to test the batons. Finally selecting one—he had flung the others away disdainfully—he launched into his first number, which consisted entirely of a single, simple B-flat chord.

The conductor raised his baton and brought it down with an imperious swoop: the orchestra gave out a crash of sonority. Mr. Kaye then broke off a piece of the baton and produced another downbeat. This time the band played a note softer. And in proportion as he snapped off snippets of his stick, so the Philharmonic played more and more quietly until there was nothing left in the maestro's hands but the cork nub of his symbol of authority.

Thereupon, gently, delicately, ever so gingerly, he gave the signal for the lightest of pianissimos, but the orchestra, having had enough, returned a forte likely audible on Mars. Expecting a whisper and receiving a shout, Mr. Kaye promptly fell off the podium. And the massacre had only just begun.

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L. T.

Music: Maestro Danny on the Podium

Kaye Regales Capacity
Concert Audience

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

DANNY KAYE bestrode the podium at Carnegie Hall last night, and conducting will never be the same again. Neither, for that matter, will the New York Philharmonic.

If the maestros of the world are wise, they will unite. They will form a society for the prevention of cruelty to conductors. They have nothing to protect but their jobs.

If the capacity house that turned out for the Pension Fund concert expected an abnormal musical evening when Maestro Danny took over for the second half of the program, they were not disappointed. They got some music straight. They got some improvisations and imitations. They got some pure Kaye clowning. And they got more chuckles, laughs and guffaws than any Philharmonic audience in the oldest subscriber's memory.

From his first entrance Maestro Danny made it clear that he was no neophyte. And though this was his New York debut as a chief of orchestra, he is no neophyte. This is the man who has stood in front of such orchestras as the Boston, Philadelphia, Los Angeles and Israel. This is the man who has launched enough gags during the playing of the famous composers to make a satisfying evening at the Palladium or the Palace.

Maestro Danny stepped out with a dozen or so batons under his arms. He shook hands with the concertmaster, the assistant concertmaster, the first-desk men of the second violin section. He worked his way into the rear rows of the ensemble, cheerfully greeting men with a firm handshake. When he reached the female harpists, a handshake would not do; he kissed each tenderly. Then, as if overcome by emotion, he planted a kiss on the brow of a bullfiddler, male.

At last he reached the podium. To some of his musical helpmeets he handed out batons as if they were New Year's favors. He wound up for his first downbeat and his stick flew back into the audience. He gave a beat, the orchestra played a chord. He broke off a piece of the baton, and the orchestra played the next chord more quietly. And so it went. Maestro Danny had discovered a new way of achieving a neatly graded decrescendo.

The orchestra took off on Rossini's "La Gazza Ladrà" Overture. Maestro Kaye did not look like a man who could not read a note. His beat was a thing of beauty. If he did not have his head in the score or the score in his head he had the feel of the music in his mind and body. And the sounds pouring out from the orchestra seemed to send him. "Is beautiful!" he shouted.

All through the evening Maestro Kaye aimed a crossfire of comment at the players. In a supplicating voice that rose steadily in pitch he cried, "Sing! Sing! Sing!" Answered at the response, he ranted, "Get out of here!" Ready to give the musicians a cue for the start of a piece, he yelled, "Lay back!" When they had difficulty keeping a straight face, he ordered, "Serious boys, serious!" As they broke down completely, he stared at them and observed with incredulity, "Are you always laughing like this?"

The men joined so thoroughly into the spirit of things that they began to make musical jokes of their own. At one point in the procedure Maestro Danny paused and asked an oboist for an A. Engelbert Brenner gravely put on his glasses before he sounded the note. Maestro Kaye invited the first violins to repeat the A. As they saved away, other sections offered their A. And then spontaneously, under the impetus of Mr. Brenner, the boys were playing "Dixie."

The guest conductor was not fazed. He beat time for "Dixie" as if he knew it was coming. Later the players injected a bit of Ravel's "Bo-



Danny Kaye conducting New York Philharmonic last night

The Program

THE NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC, conductors, At Carnegie Hall. Overture, "Der Freischütz"..... Weber
Dances of the Seven Veils from Salome..... Richard Strauss
Dances from "The Three-Cornered Hat"..... Falla
Hail of Rossini..... Johann Strauss, Wagner, Tchaikovsky and Sousa, conducted by Mr. Kaye.

lers' without warning. It was okay with Kaye. Bits of "Carmen" turned up. The Philharmonic management had been wise to place a huge question mark on the face of its program-book under the words, "Under the Direction of Danny Kaye." And to make doubly sure that it would not be misunderstood, it had added in small type, "The Management assumes no responsibility for this portion of the program."

There was a program of sorts going on while Maestro Kaye was on or near the podium. Strauss' "Tritsch-Tratsch" Polka, the Trepak from Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker" Suite, the Prelude to the third act of "Lohengrin," Leroy Anderson's "Fiddle Faddle," Sousa's Stars and Stripes Forever and a novelty that Maestro Kaye dedicated to the men who use electric shavers, "Look Sharp Using the Trepak, Maestro Danny acted out his notion of the classic types of time beaters: the coffee grinder, the meat chopper, the baby-carriage pusher, the emotionally explosive leader, the conductor suffering from an allergy. He did a devastating take-off on a distinguished baronet of the baton. He demonstrated the conductor's innermost secrets by leading

one piece while facing the audience.

He found time to coach the men in how to rise to acknowledge applause and to be seated. He got them to sing a chorus. He managed to introduce his daughter seated in a box. He borrowed the chair of the solo violinist, William Lincer; set it up on the podium and had a heart-to-heart talk with a woman from whom he borrowed a pair of opera glasses. He danced on the podium and even lay on it and conducted with his feet.

Throughout all these zany gyrations, Danny Kaye made it clear that there was music in him. He had evidently studied conductors of all sorts with a photographer's eye. He had also listened to the music he undertook by heart. Maybe the men could have performed without him, but make no mistake about it, he conducted. He confessed at the end that his shoulders ached.

Dimitri Mitropoulos, a brave man to precede Maestro Danny, directed seriously enough in the first half, and his readings of Weber, Strauss and Falla had a lot of pep and sonority. All of this set the proper tone for Maestro Danny.

The guest summed up his feelings to the audience: "I don't know about you—and I couldn't care less—but I'm having the greatest time of my life." To the hills, men. Next thing you know this Kaye will turn to criticism.

NEWS

Detroit, Mich.

MAR 12 1958

By JAY S. HARRISON

(SPECIAL TO THE DETROIT NEWS)

NEW YORK, March 12.—

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He was conducting—which is to say that he was, for the moment at least, the emperor of all he surveyed, a dictator, a monarch, who, according to the rules, has absolute power over the men in his command.

It was an awesome sight, made even more magnificent by the fact that the Philharmonic lads—a high-minded group given to no signs of ribaldry save in the playing of pinochle—could scarcely function for the tears of laughter rolling down their cheeks.

DANNY KEEPS CONTROL
Still, Danny Kaye, a gentleman far-famed for being hilariously out of step with the universe, was this once at the helm of control.

As co-conductor, with Dimitri Mitropoulos, of a Pension Fund Benefit, he was in charge of 100 men, despite the circumstance that he cannot read a note of music and had to learn his pieces by playing them on a phonograph.

But win or lose, he was maestro for an hour Monday night.

CARRIES 12 BATONS

It would be rash to assume, however, that it was an ordinary hour, as Mr. Kaye is far from being an ordinary fellow. This alone was indicated by his entrance and opening selection. He loped onstage carrying twelve batons, shook hands with nearly half the orchestra, kissed two harpists and a double-bassist, and proceeded to test the batons.

Finally selecting one—he had flung the others away disdainfully—he launched into his first number, which consisted entirely of a single, simple B-flat chord.

CRASH OF SONORITY

The conductor raised his baton and brought it down with an imperious swoop: the orchestra gave out a crash of sonority.

Kaye then broke off a piece of the baton and produced another downbeat. This time the band played a note softer.

And in proportion as he snapped off snippets of his stick, so the Philharmonic played more and more quietly until there was nothing left in the maestro's hands but the cork nub of his symbol of authority.

FALLS OFF PODIUM

Thereupon, gently, delicately, ever so gingerly, he gave the signal for the lightest of pianissimos, but the orchestra, having had enough, returned a forte likely audible on Mars.

Expecting a whisper and receiving a shout, Kaye promptly fell off the podium. And the massacre had only just begun.

Subsequently, in the performance of the string of works listed above, he gave his cues by 1) kicking out his foot like a petulant ostrich, 2) sticking out his tongue, 3) shouting

GABOOM, 4) barking like a seal whenever he was pleased by the orchestra's bravura, and 5) giggling maniacally at the sound of anything even remotely pleasant.

One piece, too, the Tchaikovsky "Trepak," he repeated several times to demonstrate how different conductors might approach the same work.

IMITATES DIRECTORS

In the course of it, he imitated directors whose beat simulated a coffee grinder, a meat chopper and a new father pushing his baby's pram.

Further, in the "Carmen" Prelude, as the Toreador Song approached, the conductor let a holler and assumed the guise of a bull fighter such as has never been imagined by man.

You know the Kaye sneer and leer—one eye grimly closed and the mouth puckered up so as to suggest that, his hands tied behind him, he was blowing a bee from his nose. That was his Escamillo.

Music

Danny Kaye Wields Baton Before the Philharmonic

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

There may be three "B's" of music, but as far as last night's Philharmonic crowd was concerned, there is only one "K"—Danny Kaye.

To repeated gales of laughter and bravos, the dapper maestro of mirth made his Carnegie debut on a podium trod by such lesser luminaries as Toscanini, Walter and Stokowski.

Danny even had an assistant conductor last night—Dimitri Mitropoulos, who took over the first part of the program, then vanished before the cyclone struck.

Costly Security.

The concert was for the orchestra's pension fund and, brother, did Danny make the men work for their future security!

"We will now play a piece called 'Fiddle Faddle' at a tempo absolutely impossible to play." And they did! Danny had them singing, standing, half-standing, taking all kinds of ribbing and playing everything from Rossini's "La Gazza Ladrà" to "The Blue Danube."

Oboe Argument.

During the music, Danny, who showed remarkable rhythmic gifts, would quarrel with an oboe player, take a quick bow for a clash of cymbals, talk to someone in the audience.

Once he asked for a pianissimo and shrieled at the unexpected fortissimo the men gave him. In a "Carmen" excerpt he sang a few measures and stamped a neat zapateado. He even managed to slip a little rock 'n' roll into Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker" music. "I don't know when they plan to tear down Carnegie Hall, but this should hasten the process," he said.

"Up, Up!"

When he came out, the men rose, sat down and rose again at his sharp "Up, up!" He shook hands with everyone, kissed both female harpists—and stumbled over the podium.

He began with twelve batons and ended with a third of one. For Strauss' "Tritsch-Tratsch



DANNY KAYE conducted the New York Philharmonic last night in Carnegie Hall.

Polka" he asked for a gay, light, dancing style, and illustrated on the podium. "I don't know about you, and I couldn't care less about you," he told the audience, "but I'm having the time of my life." The crowd was, too, especially during the sideplay with the oboe-player.

No Glasses.

"Brenner, give me an A." Brenner put on his glasses. "Without glasses he can't give me an A," said Danny to the crowd, and then to Brenner: "I suppose when Mitropoulos conducts you get hysterical."

Danny showed the podium technic used by various conductors in the "Trepak" dance of the "Nutcracker" suite.

"First, there's the conductor grinding coffee," and Danny ground coffee with his right arm. "Second, there's the meat-chopper," Danny gave a graphic sample.

Paternal Approach.

"Third, there's the new-

father technic, the baby-carriage pusher," and Danny reminded us of at least three maestros who use the paternal approach.

At one point he introduced the Gillette Blue Blade march with the words: "This is a sprightly march dedicated to all men who use electric razors."

Once he turned to the crowd and said, "Ain't that pretty?" To show the power of a conductor over an orchestra, he had the men rise and be seated in a nerve-racking slow-motion routine.

Please, an A.

Later he asked Brenner for another A. While the men were tuning up every which way, Danny shouted:

"I don't want a hundred conductors! Brenner, want to do me a favor? Get out of here!" While the tuning went on, Danny hummed a bit from "Scheherazade," and, slyly, cleverly, before you knew it, the band was playing "Dixie." "For years," said Danny, "you've seen nothing but the back of a conductor. You must have wondered what was going on in his face."

'Lohengrin' Helps.

With a little help from the prelude to the third act of "Lohengrin," Danny enlightened the crowd and then, at a blast from the brasses, topped off the podium.

"Brenner, give me a nice clean A," Brenner did. "Brenner," said Danny, "you're back with us."

A rousing performance of Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever" followed, and the crowd was on its feet cheering.

Danny Kaye was quite the clown last night. But make no mistake about it. He has a terrific ear for music, and his heart is in the right place, too.

MIRROR
New York, N. Y.

MAR 11 1958

D. Kaye Alias Phil Harmonic

Monday was fun night at the Philharmonic, as the veteran Dimitri Mitropoulos shared the podium with a newcomer named Danny Kaye. The concert was for the benefit of the orchestra's Pension Fund, and gaiety reigned throughout most of the evening. The boys were in fine fettle, for they were playing for themselves.

Mitropoulos put the august organization throughout the "Freischütz" overture. "The Dances of the Seven Veils" from "Salome" and excerpts from "The Three-Cornered Hat," after which he turned the stage over to colleague Kaye. A program note assured us that the management assumed no responsibility for what followed.

MAESTRO DANNY, decked out in white tie and tails for the occasion, made a flamboyant entrance. Since Mitropoulos had shaken hands with the concert master, he proceeded to do likewise with the entire ensemble, reserving a couple of kisses for the female harpists.

Equipped with a dozen batons, the pixie Kaye had quite a time finding just the right one to fit his beat. A pair even flew out into the audience. Eventually, he broke one down to size for Rossini's "La Gazza Ladrà" overture. Having achieved its measures triumphantly, he received robust applause from the patrons and a buss from Maestro Mitropoulos.

By the time he got to Strauss' "Tritsch-Tratsch Polka," a mere baton was useless for his purposes. He interpreted it with dancing shoulders and flying feet. To Tchaikovsky's Trepak from "The Nutcracker," he imitated the coffee-grinding, meat-chopping, baby-carriage-pushing and allergy-ridden conductors.

IN WAGNER'S prelude to Act III of "Lohengrin," Kaye faced the audience so that it could see

what a batoneer looked like to musicians in some of his more soulful moments. It seemed, by this time, as if the customers had run out of laughing gas, but they hadn't.

They roared louder than ever as Kaye paced the Philharmonic through a symphonic arrangement of a razor-blade commercial, "Fiddle Faddle" and "Stars and Stripes Forever." There are going to be a lot of aching sides about town this morning, judging by the howls that rocked Carnegie Hall's venerable rafters.

Danny tuned up for his New York bow via engagements with symphony orchestras in Philadelphia, Boston, Los Angeles and Israel. He confesses that he conducts without score. This is due not only to a remarkable memory, but also to the fact that he cannot read music. Despite this, he is a master of musical hilarity.

ONE FIRST-NIGHTER overheard to say that Danny Kaye is a Victor Borge of conductors. He might have added that Victor Borge is a Danny Kaye of pianists. Anyway, both these magnificos are terrific showmen, with a genius for deflating the exalted.

Thanks to Mitropoulos, Kaye and the public, the members of the Philharmonic raised a sizable sum for their pension fund. The lucky ticket holders, many of whom paid premiums for them, will be talking about last evening's rib-wrecking events in Carnegie Hall for quite a spell. Everyone had a wonderful time in a worthy cause.

From MAR 23 1958
NEWS
Dallas, Texas



Dimitri Mitropoulos and Danny Kaye . . . for repertory, a question mark.

MUSIC AND MUSICIANS

By PAUL HENRY LANG

Task of the Modern Performer

Until a generation or two ago a capable conductor and a well-trained orchestra faced no particular problems in handling a repertoire consisting largely of works of the fairly recent past which still reflect a living musical practice. With the growth of musical literacy came an awareness of history and a realization of the artistic value of the immense literature stretching beyond the "standard" repertoire. There was a genuine desire to bring this treasure before the public, though the manner in which this was done was highly questionable.

Accustomed to the vast resources of the modern orchestra, conductors and public believed that the old masters simply did not know enough to dress up their works properly, therefore willing hands went to their rescue. The nineteenth century inaugurated the Age of Transcription, when the most incredible atrocities were committed. Happily, this period is nearing its end; conductors and players are increasingly turning to the originals.

Different Standards

This, however, has led to a new set of problems. "Old" music cannot be performed by simply relying on the natural musical instincts of the performer, for our musical instincts are trained by standards quite different from those prevailing in times as late as those of Mozart, let alone Bach and earlier. Indeed, it has become mandatory that conductors should understand not only the technical structure of the work they are performing, but its historical position and attendant stylistic characteristics and requirements.

The performance of Bach's D minor concerto for piano and strings by Glenn Gould and the New York Philharmonic on March 13 was an example of good intentions misfiring for want of knowledge concerning this type of music. The Bach concerto is little more than chamber music; a string orchestra of twenty to twenty-five, aided by a harpsichord (which was missing) would have been perfectly adequate even in Carnegie Hall, yet we heard at least sixty-five players. The result, of course, was a thick and opaque texture.

This work is not an original composition but a utilitarian transcription of a violin concerto, not unlike our modern piano reductions. Whose violin concerto we do not know, but the chances are strong that it was not composed by Bach.

though by a very fine composer. The extant score is complete as far as the orchestra is concerned but Bach did not bother to make a pianistic transcription of the solo part and in many instances left the violin writing practically untouched. This was not carelessness, either he played the solo part himself, or perhaps one of his sons or pupils, all excellent players and composers, used the skeleton score as a guide for improvisation.

Great Care

All this means that the texture of the solo part is thin and unplanistic, often consisting of a bare right hand melody (the original violin part), the left hand being identical with the orchestral bass. Consequently great care and delicacy in performance are required. Obviously, a large string orchestra will not permit any such delicacy, and indeed Mr. Gould pounded the piano mercilessly in order to be heard. But then he, too, must have a pretty meagre knowledge of the nature of this music. Surely, Mr. Mitropoulos, who is anything but a tyrant, would have acceded to requests from the soloist. The sad truth is that both of them just cut loose with romantic gusto.

Soloist and conductor should have known that they were dealing with a work that is only a shadow of its original shape. Why not use the very good reconstruction for violin? If the distinguished artists responsible for the performance had done a little study on the subject they could have channeled their talent and enthusiasm into something more rewarding. An intelligent stage director and an actor about to mount a play by Shakespeare or Molière will read the relevant literature and first of all acquire a correct text; why should not our conductors and pianists do the same?



Stage director Yoshio Aoyama (downstage in kimono, right) and Sharpless (in civvies) watch wedding of Butterfly and Pinkerton.

Poor Butterfly?

By DICK OWEN

Not any longer; Met's made her a glamor gal

MOST OPERAGOERS think of Madame Butterfly as a simple Japanese child bride who was done wrong by a heartless visiting American naval officer. Well, while that is the plot of the opera itself, there's nothing poor about the new Metropolitan Opera's production of the Puccini masterpiece. It is the first time this opera has had new settings and costumes in 34 years, and the Met has done itself proud.

The job was done by two of the top men in the Japanese theatre—Yoshio Aoyama, director, and Motohiro Nagasaka, who designed both the scenery and the costumes. And to top off the whole production, Dimitri Mitropoulos, one of the world's outstanding conductors, directed the entire show.

Aoyama spent weeks teaching chorus and principals how to move and gesture a la Japanese. The results testify to his skill. On the great opera house stage the settings are so authentic and the performers so skillful it appears that the action is actually taking place in Japan.

The costumes are things of beauty. When Cio-Cio-San (Butterfly) puts on one of the superb robes that Nagasaka designed for her, she never had it so good. They are all of heavy silk, hand-stitched in Japan and enriched with exquisite embroideries. The rest of the cast are similarly gowned and in this opera, the Met can boast it has one of the prettiest-looking chorus lines on Broadway.

The success of "Madame Butterfly" makes one wonder how could it have been such a fiasco at its premiere in Milan in 1904. The audience began to boo it almost from the first scene while Puccini, almost mad with rage in the wings, yelled back at them that some day they'd admit he had written a great work.

He later revised the score. When the opera was first performed at the Met in 1907, Puccini was there to witness its success although he said he didn't like the soprano—Geraldine Farrar!

Few operas have such an appeal to American audiences as "Butterfly." This is probably because it is an American story, written originally by John Luther Long. David Belasco adapted it for the stage and it was as a stage play in London that Puccini saw it and decided it was a natural for an opera. To get an authentic feeling to his music, Puccini had records of Japanese folk tunes sent to him.

THE OPERA tells the story of a young Japanese girl who marries an American naval officer while he is on a visit to Japan. He intends some day to return home and marry an American girl. His little bride loves him deeply and bears him a son while he is away with his ship. Sometime later the officer returns with his American wife, who asks Butterfly to give up her baby so he can be educated by her in America. Realizing that her American husband no longer loves her, little Butterfly surrenders the child and kills herself.

Puccini confessed that the score for this opera was the one among his many compositions that he could listen to over and over. Among many musicians it is considered his finest work. Not only does Puccini weave Japanese melodies into the score, but he interpolates strains of "The Star Spangled Banner" whenever there is any reference to America.

The colorfotos on this page were taken at rehearsal on the Met stage. It will be sung at the Saturday matinee of March 29, so if you can't get to the Met in person to hear it you may at least enjoy the music via your radio. **END**



Dimitri Mitropoulos (left) and tenor Eugenio Fernandi discuss score while scenery and costume designer Motohiro Nagasaka listens intently.



Antonietta Stella (Butterfly) poses in the hand-sewn silk costume imported from Japan.

PAGE 14

SUNDAY NEWS, MARCH 23, 1958

Wheeling News Register
Wheeling, W. Va.

MAR 21 1958
RECORDS:

Mitropoulos 'Pathetique' Dramatic

Reviewed by Paul N. Elbin

Tchaikovsky symphonies have not been conspicuous among late record releases, but Columbia offers a "Pathetique" that enters the market with a bang.

Indeed few records of the New York Philharmonic under Mitropoulos are so notably successful on all counts as Columbia ML 5235. A sanely dramatic presentation of Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6 in B Minor, this recording of a perennial favorite is destined for the best-seller list.

More than most conductors, Mitropoulos is generally felt to be selective in his abilities. But no one ever questioned his ability to take a warhorse like the "Pathetique" and ride it to triumphant victory. When Mitropoulos did the "Pathetique" with the Philharmonic last fall, the "Times" called the performance "vivid and emotional." "Musical Courier" used the terms "burning and dramatic."

Such a Tchaikovsky reading calls for superior reproduction, which Columbia's engineers have provided. I can think of no Columbia release more deserving of praise or superior sound.

EVENING NEWS
Newark, N. J.

MAR 24 1958

Should Have Been There

To the Editor:

Sir—Too bad the writer of your recent editorial, "Musical Jokers," could not have been there. Those of us who were privileged to see Danny Kaye at Carnegie Hall were treated to an unforgettable performance—a performance not of a "joker," but of a genius! To a man, the members of the Philharmonic Orchestra thought so, too, and Maestro Mitropoulos must have thought so, as he rushed from the wings to throw his arms about Kaye and kiss him while the "kissing mood" was on.

The audience never for a moment felt they were watching a joker, as they rose to their feet and screamed applause as Kaye led the orchestra through the "Razor Symphony" and again at the finale when the strains of "Stars and Stripes Forever" resounded through the hall. Sousa must have smiled down in pride.

Too bad you could not have been there.

AGNES BARRETT NAGEL,
West Orange.

Mitropoulos, a Musical Phenomenon

By MILES KASTENDIECK

PEOPLE paid little attention to the fact that Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted his last concert officially with the Philharmonic last Sunday. Because he will return as a guest conductor for a month next season, his withdrawal from being a principal conductor of the orchestra may not have appeared so significant. It nevertheless marked an important milestone in his career as well as in that of the Philharmonic.

Mitropoulos has been associated with the orchestra for 18 years. He made his first appearance in 1940. Thereafter

he became prominent as a guest on its schedule until made one of the chief conductors in 1950.

Then for six years he served as musical director. Last year he curtailed his overall supervision by sharing this season with Leonard Bernstein.

Great Capacity

Next season Bernstein assumes leadership for a three-year term. The hope is fervent that Mitropoulos will continue to make guest appearances. Probably no more phenomenal conductor exists today. The prodigious capacity of this extraordinary man may be comprehended through a few notes on his activities. Just recently

within the space of eight days—Sunday through Sunday—he made a public appearance between the Philharmonic and the Metropolitan and the New York Chamber Ensemble.

Then there was that Friday when he conducted Strauss's "Elektra" with the Philharmonic in the afternoon and Puccini's "Madame Butterfly" at the Met in the evening—a feat made the more remarkable since he conducted the "Elektra" performance from memory. This is musical achievement of a rare kind and Mitropoulos at his finest.

Those performances of "Elektra" are seared on the memories of those who attended them for the remainder of their lives. Such

is the genius of Mitropoulos.

That he is temperamentally suited to certain composers, notably those of the 20th Century, has been known for years. When he returns to the Philharmonic, perhaps his programs will highlight these judiciously.

Pearl Choice

His final program was poorly chosen. The fact that it brought a first hearing of the two movements of Mahler's Tenth Symphony, however, provided the compensation so characteristic in his concerts. These he played as only a master conductor would interpret them—with a depth of understanding few others can summon.

The Philharmonic has lost a director of unique stature musically.

New York Journal-American, Sun., March 23, 1958 ** 25-1



MUSIC TO MY EARS

"Banzai" for "Butterfly" -- Reiner from Chicago -- K's

GIACOMO PUCCINI never heard of Cornelius V. Starr, but thanks are owing to the latter's generosity (he is a New York insurance broker) for making the former's "Madame Butterfly" something it has not been at the Metropolitan in the memory of New Yorkers for a quarter-century: a feast for the eyes as well as the ears. Japanese artisans executed the designs of a Japanese scenic artist, Motohiro Nagasaka; and a Japanese stage director, Yoshio Aoyama, was brought from Tokyo to take the cast not only in hand, but also in feet. The result is as close to enchanting as any production of recent times.

Nagasaka's artistry embraced not only the ingeniously authentic scenery, but also the subtly blended costumes—Butterfly, at her entrance, was a sunburst of gold and yellow against the violet-hued kimonos of her companions—which contributed so much in atmosphere. To this inexperienced eye, it seemed that Nagasaka had made an exquisite compromise between realism and fantasy, with enough of the former to suggest the surroundings of Nagasaki, enough of the latter to remind us that this, after all, is an Italian opera. He even managed to enlarge slightly the dimensions of Butterfly's house to suit the Metropolitan stage without unsuiting the "small people" within.

All of this would have been no more than pleasantly picturesque without Aoyama's devoted attention to movement and gesture. Any stylized technique that circumvents the gross actions that pass for acting on the operatic stage is, of course, welcome. When it becomes a means to a dramatic end, giving continuity of effect to Antonietta Stella's Butterfly, the Suzuki of Margaret Roggero, Alessio de Paolis's Goro, Ezio Flagello's Bonze, and George Cehanovsky's Yamadori, one can only exclaim "Banzai" and wish Nagasaka many more happy operatic ventures. Omission of the Sharpless (Mario Zanas) and Pinkerton (Eugenio Fernandi) from the foregoing summary is an implied compliment to Aoyama for differentiating them, as Westerners, from the actions of the others.

Thanks to the clean lines and fine discipline achieved by Dimitri Mitropoulos as musical director, the sound of this "Butterfly" was rather more than the sum of its parts. Stel-

la's absorption of Aoyama's direction should be worth thousands of dollars to her, for she will be playing this Butterfly the rest of her career. Much of it was faithfully done, and she used her strong, accurate, occasionally even well-shaded voice to better effect than in any previous effort here. However, she refused the hurdle of the top D flat at her entrance, she indulged in some grossly Italianate sobbing when it suited her whim, and she rarely developed the quality without which Butterfly is no more than an automaton—charm, magnetism, personality, call it what you will. With Japanese directors and a Greek conductor, a certain Spanish soprano would not have been out of place.

Fernandi made his debut Pinkerton a welcome one by the freshness and assurance of his vocal work, the uncommon inches (close on seventy-two) he owns, the lyric suavity plus powerful top which promises well for his future. Granted normal development, his few years of background could be but the prelude to the long career ahead of him. As an actor, he is a fine sailor; but time may prove otherwise. Zanas did his thankless part well, utilizing his vocal output to advantage in projecting Sharpless's soaring lines against the orchestra. Compliments are in order to Miss Roggero for the best studied action of all, plus a sweet, clinging sound for Suzuki's music, especially in the "Cherry Blossom" duet.

Withal, the principal beneficiary of the fine feathers was the invincible bird that wore them. Like a phoenix risen from the ashes of too many casual "representations" (over a hundred since the last thoroughgoing renovation in 1924) Puccini's score took wings and soared from first to last. Admittedly, it is no eagle, only a butterfly—but to the extent it was relieved of burdensome conventionality, it was not merely reborn, but airborne.

COMMERCIAL APPEAL
MEMPHIS, TENN.

MAR 30 1958

Wizdriy Of Mitropoulos Extends To 'Vision Fugitive'

Famed Greek Will Conduct 'Madama Butterfly'
May 8 To Close Two-Night Met Season

DIMITRI MITROPOULOS may be remembered by some 1956 Mid-South opera-goers as the man who wasn't there.

On a May night that year the North Hall of the Auditorium was hushed in anticipation of the distinguished conductor's re-entry for the second act of "Tosca."

From a door at the side, a man in evening dress, his head catching a glint of light from an outer hallway, marched toward the orchestra. Applause thundered. The man neared the podium. And then suddenly he ducked, half bent, and turned up the middle aisle. Somewhere in the dark, the anonymous ticket-holder found his seat.

Mitropoulos followed, and the applause was repeated.

Tribute From Audience

He could well have appreciated the tribute of an audience so anxious to applaud him that it clapped for the first man who hove in sight.

This is the Mitropoulos who returns to the Auditorium May 8 with the all-new production of Puccini's "Madama Butterfly." He was on the podium, too, at the New York's Metropolitan Opera House the night of Feb. 19 when the new "Butterfly" was unveiled, and the press praise was as much for Mitropoulos as for the singers.

Said the New York Post: "Mitropoulos' sensitive understanding of the work's essential pathos pervaded the whole . . . he projected a misty mood . . . or he could alternately sear the emotions with a dynamic climax."

Time magazine's appraisal: "Mitropoulos had one of his best nights."

Even The New Yorker

Howard Taubman of the New York Times: "Under Dimitri Mitropoulos' direction it had musical validity."

And in the condescending New Yorker: "He conducted things, on the whole, with great dedication."



GORGEOUS GREEK—Dimitri Mitropoulos, dynamic conductor of symphony and opera, will be on the podium in the North Hall of the Auditorium on May 8 to direct the Metropolitan Opera production of Puccini's "Madama Butterfly."

From MAR 25 1958
EVENING SUN
Baltimore, Md.

-The Week's Music-

By George Kent Bellows

EUGENE ONEGIN," by Tchaikovsky, which opened the Metropolitan Opera Company's spring season last night at the Lyric Theater, was given a beautifully balanced and eloquent performance, superbly conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos.

Expertly staged by Peter Brook, this new production had handsome sets and brilliantly colorful costumes, designed by Rolf Gerard, and the great advantage of the imaginative English translation of Henry Reese.

"Onegin" is actually an intimate opera, although it boasts several big scenes, one which was not only close to the composer's heart, but one in which he created some sensitive and appealing characterizations.

Tatyana, the heroine, naive and highly romantic is one, and the young lover of her sister, Lenski, is another. But there is also the faithful old nurse and the dignified husband, Prince Gremin, deeply in love with his beautiful wife, an older and wiser Tatyana.

Orchestral Comment

TCHAIKOVSKY'S music for "Onegin" is some of the most beautiful and appealing that he has written. Like Wagner, he uses his orchestra in much the same manner of the old Greek choruses, to comment on the action, or to anticipate or to recall certain situations through various motives.

For the big scenes, the composer of the earlier "Swan Lake" had little trouble in turning out the most bewitching waltzes, mazurkas and polonaises.

Last night's cast was excellent in every respect. Lucire Amara as Tatyana has undoubtedly grown tremendously in her conception of the simple country girl, and her big letter scene in

Act I was splendidly acted and beautifully sung. Her voice has a purity of sound and smoothness of texture that is instantly compelling, secure as to pitch, and her diction was impeccable.

Fans of Richard Tucker heard him to good advantage as the ill-fated Lenski, a role which gave him several poignant arias, and which he sang with his customary ease.

George London's conception of Onegin, to which he brought his incredibly fine musicianship and glorious voice, was masterly in every detail.

All But Stole The Show

ONE of the pleasant surprises of the evening was Giorgio Tozzi as Prince Gremin, who all but stole the show in his third act aria in praise of his wife, Tatyana, which he sang with luscious tones and noble dignity.

Others in the cast included Martha Lipton as Madame Larina; Rosalind Elias as Olga; Louis Sgarro as a Captain, and George Cehanovsky and Alessio de Paolis as Zaretski and Triquet. Belen Amparan, in light of her recent success here as Carmen, deserves special mention for her portrayal of Niania, the old nurse, a role which she sang and acted with insight and imagination.

The Metropolitan chorus, so well trained by Kurt Adler, has never been heard to better advantage, and Zachary Solov's choreography for the peasant dances and ballroom scenes was enchanting throughout, its accent being on the fresh, exuberance of youth.

Under Mr. Mitropoulos's baton, the orchestra was a marvel of beauty and precision. It was his pacing of the various tempos and his unerring instinct for the dramatic, that made "Onegin" such a delight to listen to.

For the big scenes, the composer of the earlier "Swan Lake" had little trouble in turning out the most bewitching waltzes, mazurkas and polonaises.

MAR 27 1958

Interrupted Melody

The Metropolitan Opera's broadcasts of Saturday matinees this season have been unusually fine, which makes all the more deplorable the interruption last Saturday of the performance of "Der Rosenkavalier." Station WCOM carried a sports broadcast in the Metropolitan's usual afternoon time period, taping the opera for broadcast in the evening. Then, after many overlong interruptions to urge people to go downtown to welcome home the victorious basketball team, the opera was cut off entirely near the end of the second act on the grounds that the tape was faulty. It was unfortunate for many reasons, because the performance had been a glowing one to that point, with Eleanor Steber in glorious voice and Rise Stevens at the top of her form. It seems unlikely that many of the opera listeners would want to rush downtown for any reason, let alone the one given. Apparently the station received many complaints, and officials said the incident was regretted.

This week's broadcast, scheduled for the usual time starting at 2 p.m., will be Puccini's popular "Madama Butterfly." There was a new production of the 1906 score, probably the most authentic ever performed from the visual standpoint, when the Met imported a set designer and stage director from Japan this season. Three young Italian singers performed the leading roles for the first time in New York, with special credit given the rich-voiced Antonietta Stella for her carefully studied vocal and dramatic performance of the title role. The tenor was Eugenio Fernandi, making his Metropolitan debut, and another young Italian, baritone Mario Zanas, also was new here this season. Stella and Fernandi will repeat their roles in the Saturday broadcast, with Clifford Harvuot of Cincinnati cast in the baritone lead. Margaret Roggero will sing Suzuki, the faithful servant of the heroine, and the conductor will be the dynamic Dimitri Mitropoulos.

ΒΑΝΕΣΣΑ

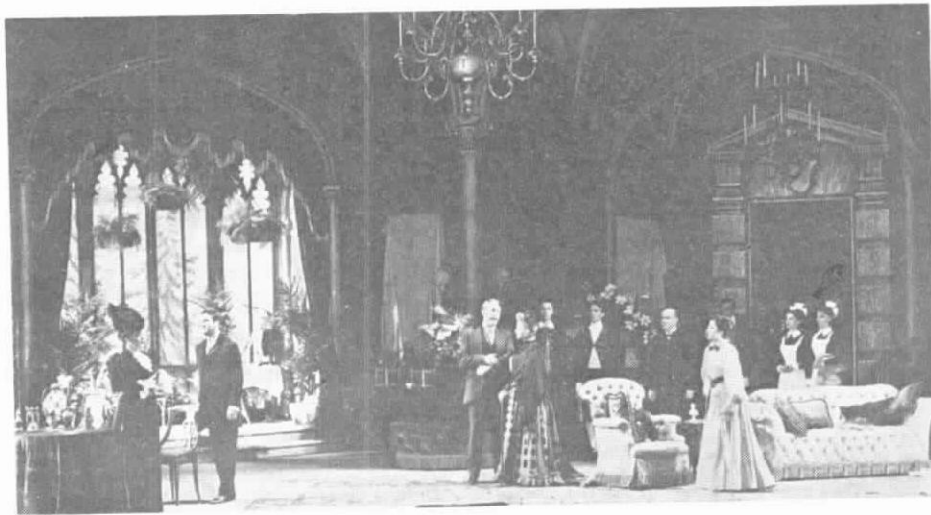
ΜΙΑ ΝΕΑ ΟΠΕΡΑ

Όπως όλες οι μεγάλες όπερες του κόσμου έτσι και η Μετροπόλιταν Όπερα της Νέας Υόρκης βασιζει το ρεπερτόριό της κυρίως στα κλασσικά μελοδράματα. Από το 1883, που ιδρύθηκε, η Μετροπόλιταν Όπερα δεν παρουσίασε παρά ελάχιστες «πρεμιέρες» μελοδράματος. Θεωρείται, λοιπόν, εξαιρετικό γεγονός η πρεμιέρα μιας καινούργιας όπερας. Μια καινούργια όπερα δεν είναι εύκολο να εμφανισθεί, όπως θα μπορούσε μία σύνθεση συμφωνικής μουσικής. Τα έξοδα της παρουσιάσεώς της είναι τεράστια και οι διευθυνταί είναι μάλλον δύσπιστοι μπροστά σε «καινούργιες» όπερες.

Μπορείτε, λοιπόν, πολύ καλά να

καταλάβετε γιατί πρό δύο μηνών, τον Ιανουάριο, πλήθος κόσμου γεμάτο ένταση και περιέργεια περίμενε να ακούσει την πρεμιέρα μιας νέας όπερας στην Μετροπόλιταν Όπερα της Νέας Υόρκης. Η Μετροπόλιταν είχε να παρουσιάσει νέα όπερα από το 1947. Το γεγονός όμως είχε μεγαλύτερη σημασία γιατί πρώτη φορά η όπερα που θα έκανε την πρώτη της εμφάνιση πάνω στην γεμάτη μεγαλοπρέπεια σκηνή της Μετροπόλιταν ήταν ένα έργο συγγρόνου Αμερικανού συνθέτη. Η όπερα λεγόταν «Βανέσσα» και την έχει γράψει ο Σάμουελ Μπάρμπερ, ηλικίας 48 ετών.

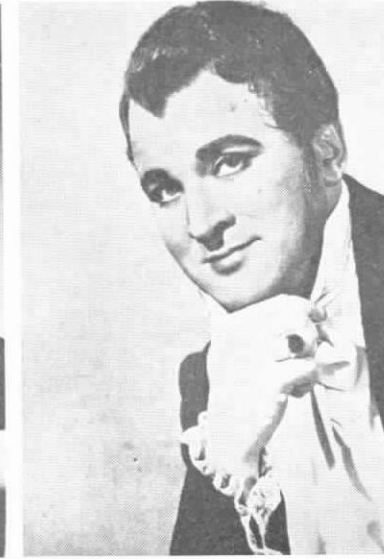
Πολύ πριν κλείσει η αυλαία, έβλεπε κανείς ότι ο κόσμος έπαψε να βρίσκε-



Σκηνή από το τέλος της πρώτης πράξεως της όπερας «Βανέσσα».
Αριστερά η Έλινορ Στήμπερ και ο Νικολάϊ Γκέντα.



Έλινορ Στήμπερ



Νικολάϊ Γκέντα



Ροζαλιντ Πλάτς

ται σε αγωνία και ένταση. Ήταν όλοφάνερο ότι η όπερα που παρουσίαζε ο Μπάρμπερ δεν ήταν απλώς ένα έργο κοινό αλλά μια όπερα που θα ζούσε πολλά χρόνια με πραγματικά ανώτερες αξιώσεις. Είναι αναμφισβήτητο γεγονός ότι η πρεμιέρα της «Βανέσσας» ξεπέρασε σε επιτυχία όλες τις άλλες όπερες που παρουσίασε σε πρώτη έκτακτη η Μετροπόλιταν Όπερα. Πολλοί λένε ότι το νέο αυτό έργο θα περιληφθεί στο «κλασσικό» ρεπερτόριο του μεγαλύτερου μελοδραματικού οργανισμού της Αμερικής.

Ο Σάμουελ Μπάρμπερ θεωρείται ένας από τους σημαντικότερους συγχρόνους Αμερικανούς συνθέτες, με διεθνή φήμη. Στα 1935 πήρε το βραβείο της «Ρώμης» και είναι ο μόνος συνθέτης που κέρδισε δυο φορές το βραβείο «Πούλιτζερ» για τη μουσική.

Η «Συμφωνία του σε ένα μέρος» ήταν το πρώτο έργο Αμερικανού συνθέτη που παρουσιάστηκε στο Φεστιβάλ του Σάλτσμπουργκ στα 1937. Ένα χρόνο αργότερα, ο Άρθουρ Τοσκανίνι διηύθυνε δύο έργα του Μπάρ-

μπερ: το «Αντάτζιο για έγχορδα» και το «Λοκίμο για ορχήστρα».

Ο Σάμουελ Μπάρμπερ άρχισε να γράφει τη «Βανέσσα» στα 1943, ενώ υπηρετούσε στο στρατό και παρ' όλο που γνώριζε πώς η Μετροπόλιταν Όπερα ήταν ένα πολύ αυστηρό και πιστό στις παραδόσεις θέατρο, όταν έγραφε την όπερα αυτή δεν είχε στο μυαλό τίποτε άλλο από την Μετροπόλιταν Όπερα. Το λιμπρέττο το έγραψε ο παλιός του φίλος Τζάν Κάρολο Μενόττι, που σε ηλικία μόλις 47 ετών έχει στο ενεργητικό του δέκα επιτυχημένες όπερες, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των «Ο Άγιος της οδού Μπλήκερ» και «Ο Πρόξενος». Όπως είναι σ' όλους γνωστό, ο Μενόττι βρισκόταν στην Αθήνα τον περασμένο μήνα. Ο συνδυασμός των δύο αυτών ταλέντων, του Μπάρμπερ και του Μενόττι, που είναι στενοί φίλοι από τον καιρό που παίζαν μαθήματα συνθέσεως, είχε αποτέλεσμα μια πλήρη όπερα, πράγμα που δικαίωσε την απόφαση της Μετροπόλιταν να την εμφανίσει με ένα λαμπρό έπιτελείο εκτελεστών και με όλη την πολυτέλεια που συνηθίζει.



Ἀπὸ ἀριστερά: Τζούλιους Μέργκερ, Ρούντολφ Μπίνγκ
Ἑλινόρ Στὴμπερ, Σάμουελ Μπάρμπερ καὶ Τζ. Κ. Μενόττι.

Ἡ « Βανέσσα », πὺν ἡ ἱστορία της δια-
δραματίζεται τὸ 1905, ἔχει ὅλα τὰ
στοιχεῖα τῆς κλασσικῆς ὄπερας: ἔρωτα,
λύπη, εὐθυμία. Δεδομένου ὅτι ἡ υπό-
θεση ἐξελίσσεται σὲ βορινὰ χιονισμένα
μέρη, οἱ ἀπαιτήσεις σὲ σκηνικὰ εἶναι
τεράστιες. Ἡ Ἑλινόρ Στὴμπερ ἦταν
ὥραιότατη στὸν ρόλο τῆς Βανέσσα καὶ
οἱ ἐνδυμασίες της μοναδικές. Ἀνέλαβε
τὸν δύσκολο αὐτὸ ρόλο τὴν τελευταία
στιγμή, ὅταν ἡ Σένα Γιούρινγκ ἀρρώ-
στησε. Ἡ ἐρμηνεία τῆς ἐγκαταλειμμέ-
νης γυναίκας πὺν περιμένει ὑπομονη-
τικὰ τὸν ἀγαπημένο της, ἦταν σχεδὸν
τέλεια. Ἡ πλούσια φωνή της ἀπέδωσε
θαυμάσια τὰ συναισθήματα καὶ τὶς
λεπτές ἀπογοῶνεις πὺν ὁ συνθέτης
θέλει νὰ μεταδώσει.

Ἐνῶ ἡ Ἑλινόρ Στὴμπερ κρατοῦσε
μὲ τὴν ἐρμηνεία της ὅλο τὸ βάρος τῆς
ὄπερας ἔχοντας δίπλα της τὴν Ρόζαλιν
Ἰλιάς, πὺν ἔπαιζε τὴν ἀντιπάλ της Ἑρ-
ρικὰ καὶ τὸν Νικολάϊ Γκέντα, πὺν
ἐρμήνευε τὸν ρόλο τοῦ ἀγαπημένου
γιου τῆς Βανέσσα, δημιουργήθηκαν
σκηνές ὑψηλῆς ποιότητος καὶ στὶς
φωνές τῶν ἐρμηνευτῶν καὶ στὴν κα-
θαρή μουσικὴ τῆς ὁρχήστρας. Ἡ ὡ-
ραία φωνή τοῦ τενόρου Γκέντα εἶχε
μὴ μαγνητικὴ γοητεία καθὼς ἔπαιζε
τὸν ρόλο τοῦ στοργικοῦ ἐραστῆ καὶ

στὶς δύο γυναῖκες. Ἡ Ρόζαλιν Ἰλιάς
ἔδειξε ἀκόμη μιὰ φορὰ τὸ λαμπρὸ της
ταλέντο καὶ τὴν ἱκανότητά της στὴν
ὕποκριτική.

Ἡ « Βανέσσα » ἔχει ὅλα τὰ στοι-
χεῖα μιᾶς πραγματικῆς ὄπερας. Ἴσως
ἡ πρώτη πράξη νὰ παρουσιάζει λίγο
σιγανὸ ρυθμὸ, ἀπὸ τὴν δεύτερη ὅμως
καὶ ὕστερα ἐξελίσσεται μὲ γοργότητα
πὺν κορυφώνεται στὴν τέταρτη πράξη
ἡ ὁποία εἶναι καὶ ἡ τελειότερη ἀπὸ
μουσικῆς ἀπόψεως.

Πρέπει νὰ τονισθῇ ὅτι ὁ μάεστρος
Δημήτρης Μητρόπουλος διηύθυνε τὸ
ὅλο ἔργο μὲ τὴν γνωστή του εὐαισθη-
σία καὶ ἱκανότητα πὺν ἔχει νὰ ἀπο-
δίδει τέλεια τὰ ἔργα πὺν παρουσιάζει.

Τὸ λιμπρέττο, ἂν καὶ ἔχει ὠρισμένα
ἀδύνατα σημεῖα, ἀποδεικνύει πὺς ὁ
Μενόττι εἶναι ἀπόλυτα κάτοχος τοῦ
τρόπου μὲ τὸν ὁποῖο μπορεῖ νὰ ἐκ-
θέσῃ μιὰ μουσικὴ ἱστορία. Ἡ συνερ-
γασία τοῦ Μενόττι καὶ τοῦ Μπάρμπερ
στὴν ὄπερα « Βανέσσα » ἦταν ἀπολύ-
τως δημιουργικὴ. Ἡ ὄπερα « Βανέσα »
θὰ παρουσιασθῇ γιὰ πρώτη φο-
ρὰ στὴν Εὐρώπῃ στὸ φετινὸ μουσικὸ
φεστιβάλ τοῦ Σάλτσμπουργκ. Ἔτσι,
θὰ ἔχει καὶ τὸ εὐρωπαϊκὸ κοινὸ τὴν
εὐκαιρία νὰ τὴν κρίνει.



Along with wind and stringed instruments, players often bring cameras to rehearsals

TIMES PICAYUNE
New Orleans, La.
APR 6 - 1958

Musicians Picture

WHEN GOING TO REHEARSALS, most musicians take along only their musical instruments. Some, however, take along an additional small leather case in which they keep their cameras.

They occasionally find time to snap pictures of the conductor, guests or other members of the orchestra. The camera enthusiasts in the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra are coming to the end of this season with more than the usual camera record, however.

Original plans for the season seemed interesting enough. Then, when conductor and music director Alexander Hilsberg suffered a heart attack, extra guest conductors were engaged. The result was that these professional musicians who also were amateur photographers ob-

tained some remarkable camera studies of the outstanding visitors who arrived for the New Orleans podium.

To make their series of pictures even sweeter, the players were able, before the season concluded, to capture again the image of maestro Hilsberg leading them.

The orchestra has only one more subscription concert this spring, to be given Tuesday night at the Municipal Auditorium. The musicians also will play for the orchestra's children's concert April 11 at McAlister auditorium, and for two orchestra pop concerts on the steamer President April 10 and April 15.

Then will end the season that has brought them such memories they've captured on the films printed here.

Their Conductors



Dimitri Mitropoulos smoked French cigarettes in rehearsing

From APR 8 1958
NEWS
Chicago, Ill.

Opera Contest Stresses Libretto

The Artists' Advisory Council of Chicago believes poor librettos have wrecked the chances of many contemporary American operas, and the group means to do something to remedy that situation.

In collaboration with the New York City Center Opera, the Chicago group, headed by Mrs. William Cowen, is offering a two-part prize of \$2,000 to the composer and \$1,000 to the librettist in a contest to discover a new American opera.

But—and here is the unusual approach—the rules insist that the libretto must be submitted first; then, after the judges make suggestions, which may include changes of many sorts, the opera as a whole must be submitted.

JUDGES WILL be Dimitri Mitropoulos, Peter Adler, Giorgio Polacco and Julius Rudel.

Deadline for librettos is Dec. 1, 1958, and for the complete opera, June 1, 1960. Works must be submitted under a pen name.

The winning opera will be given its premiere by the New York City Center company.

For contest rules and additional details, write to Mrs. William Cowen, Artists Advisory Council, 55 E. Washington, Room 201, Chicago 2.

From APR 15 1958
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

U. S. MUSIC TO BE HEARD

Philharmonic to Play Some at Each Concert on Tour

A work by a living United States composer will be performed at each of the thirty-eight concerts of the New York Philharmonic during its forthcoming tour of Central and South America.

The tour will take the orchestra to twelve countries between April 27 and June 15. Dimitri Mitropoulos will conduct nine concerts; the remainder will be conducted by Leonard Bernstein.

The American works to be performed are "Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance" by Samuel Barber, Aaron Copland's Third Symphony, George Gershwin's "An American in Paris, Roy Harris' Third Symphony, William Schuman's Sixth Symphony and Charles Turner's "Encounter."

The orchestra also will perform a number of Latin-American compositions.

From APR 4 1958
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

CAST CHANGES MARK 'BUTTERFLY' AT 'MET'

Puccini's "Madama Butterfly" received its eighth performance of the season last night at the Metropolitan Opera. There were numerous cast changes on this occasion.

Carlo Bergonzi sang his first Pinkerton at the Metropolitan. Vocally, he was smooth and supple; dramatically, a bit hesitant.

Victoria de los Angeles was heard for the first time this season in the title role, and it was not one of her best nights.

The Spanish soprano, who has the most beautiful of lyric voices, indulged in some considerable forcing to make it sound louder than it is. Often the results were edgy and unpleasant, though there were some more relaxed moments in the second act "Un bel di," and conse-

quently more auditory pleasure. Others heard in their first "Butterfly" roles of the season were Frank Guarrera as Sharpless and Norman Scott as the Uncle Priest, both dependable vocally and both skillful as actors.

Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted. He seemed more interested in the orchestra than in his singers; his was a loud, nervous-sounding performance that was not even always in the with the work of the participants on stage. H. C. S.

From APR 8 1958
HERALD TRIBUNE
New York, N. Y.

'Butterfly' At the Met

Puccini's "Madama Butterfly" was repeated at the Metropolitan Opera House last evening. Antoinetta Stella was heard again in her performance of the title role; Carlo Bergonzi was Pinkerton; Mario Zanis was Sharpless, and George Cehanovsky was Yamadori. Belen Amaran as Suzuki and Helen Vanni as Kate were both "firsts" with the company, while Paul Franke sang his first Goro of the season. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted.

The performance was in just about every way as pretty, flexible and mobile as it could be. Miss Stella sang all sorts of melting planissimos, acted with great feeling, and all the way confirmed the impression now current that hers is a Butterfly that will be long remembered. Mr. Bergonzi was in first-rate voice, as well.

Miss Amaran's Suzuki was nothing less than stunning. She sang it beautifully and she knows, what is more, how to direct her second act singing towards its proper blend with the music and vocal characterization of the heroine. Suzuki's is a role that can either fall away to nothing (which it usually does), or, in the wrong hands, jar; Miss Amaran will have none of either approach. She knows what this part is about.

W. F.

Chicago Council Offers Prizes for a New Opera

Prize money for the composition of opera is being offered by the Artists' Advisory Council of Chicago jointly with the New York City Opera company. Attention will be given both to music and libretto, with respective awards of \$2,000 and \$1,000. Contest rules provide for entry of the libretto first. The announcement says, "on the basis of reaction by the judges, which may include suggested changes, will depend the acceptance of the complete opera as an entry in the contest."

Judges will be Dimitri Mitropoulos, Peter Herman Adler, Giorgio Polacco and Julius Rudel. The New York City opera, of which Mr. Rudel is general director, will stage the world premiere, "provided the contest reveals a work deemed worthy of production."

Deadline for submission of libretto is Dec. 1, 1958, and for the complete opera June 1, 1960. Full directions for application and a set of rules may be obtained by writing to Mrs. William Cowen, president, Artists' Advisory council, 55 E. Washington st., room 201, Chicago 2, Ill.

The Intelligencer Wheeling, W. Va.

By DELOS SMITH
United Press Staff Correspondent

While on the subject of conductors and Russian composers, Dimitri Mitropoulos has done a remarkable job projecting Tchaikovsky's sixth ("Pathétique") symphony, with the New York Philharmonic (Columbia-ML5235).

Tchaikovsky has fallen out of fashion during the past few years, both in the concert hall and on records, and it would be reasonable to blame conductors for it—conductors who pushed the effects to such excess that they courted notoriety. Mitropoulos' effort suggests he restudied the score with earnest humility—and rediscovered the composer.

From APR 9 - 1958
NEWS
New York, N. Y.

The New York Philharmonic's Latin American tour, April 17-June 15, will find the orchestra playing in 12 South and Central American countries, giving 38 concerts in 21 cities. Dimitri Mitropoulos and Leonard Bernstein will share conducting honors.

From APR 6 - 1958
TIMES
New York, N. Y.

TCHAIKOVSKY: Symphony No. 6 (Pathétique); New York Philharmonic conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos (Columbia). One of Mitropoulos' best disks: a warm, sympathetic, well-controlled performance of the ever-popular and oft-recorded symphony.

TRIBUNE
Chicago, Ill.

APR 13 1958

On the Aisle

Met's Best Throat Forward for What May Be Its Swan Song at 'Civic'

By Claudia Cassidy

IF THE METROPOLITAN OPERA'S spring visit to the Civic Opera house turns out to be its Chicago swan song until we clear up our housing problems, at least it comes closer than some Metropolitan engagements to putting its best throat forward. Two of the season's four new productions are on deck, the revival in English of Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin," saluted in the east with modified rapture, and the Japanese designed and staged "Madama Butterfly," which has the sound of a triumph. Antonietta Stella makes her debut here as Cio-Cio-San, and Dimitri Mitropoulos conducts both operas.

For the shopping list, here are reminders of the booking schedule, with notes:

Thursday, May 22, at 8—"Eugene Onegin," Tchaikovsky's opera to Pushkin's poem, with four musical interludes suggested by Dimitri Mitropoulos and adapted and orchestrated by Julius Berger. Designed by Rolf Gerard, staged by Peter Brook, English text by Henry Reese. The cast includes George London as Onegin, Lucine Amara as Tatyana, Rosalind Elias as Olga, Richard Tucker as Lenski, Martha Lipton as Mme. Larina, Giorgio Tozzi as Prince Gremin. Mitropoulos conducts.

"Onegin" was never done here by the resident opera groups, but the New York City Opera tackled it in 1948 and missed the Russian flavor. The Metropolitan first staged it in 1920, in Italian, with Claudia Muzio, Giovanni Martinelli, and Giuseppe De Luca.

Saturday, May 24, at 2—"Madama Butterfly," Puccini's opera newly designed by Motohiro Nagasaka and freshly staged by Yoshio Aoyama. The cast includes Antonietta Stella as Cio-Cio-San, Margaret Roggero as Suzuki, Carlo Bergonzi as Pinkerton, Mario Zanis as Sharpless, Paul Franke as Goro, George Cehanovsky as Yamadori, Ezio Flagello as the Bonze. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducts.

This is the Metropolitan's first new "Butterfly" in 34 years, colorfully designed by two of Tokyo's leading theater craftsmen. It should help banish the woeful memory of the worn down and tired out "Butterfly" the Met brought to town last spring, a performance rescued from utter disaster only by Mitropoulos' vitality in the pit. This time not only the picture, but the singing sound has changed. I last heard Miss Stella in Verona where she had an exquisite voice, tho not the voice to go all the way in "Aida." Her Puccini should be worth hearing. You probably remember Bergonzi from his Lyric engagements.

A TRANSITIONAL 116TH SEASON

Decisions for the Future of New York Philharmonic Play
A Much Larger Part This Year Than Is Customary

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

THE 116th season of the New York Philharmonic, which ends this afternoon, will be remembered more for its decisions than for its accomplishments. It was the season in which the board of directors took its courage in its hands and voted to entrust the institution's destinies to a young American conductor.

The performances during the 116th season were under divided control. It was as if the Philharmonic sought to avoid being victimized by the cult of personality. Dimitri Mitropoulos and Leonard Bernstein were designated as principal conductors. Who had control over what was never made clear. But there is no need to flog a dead horse. This was an arrangement of convenience, for this amounted to a transitional season.

At the outset it looked as if it would be a season in name only. When opening night arrived, there was no concert. The Philharmonic authorities and Local 802 of the American Federation of Musicians were locked in negotiations for a new contract. Though the dispute was settled, the season started two days late; the first two concerts were forced to be canceled.

After the stormy beginning, life at Carnegie Hall with the Philharmonic was fairly serene. There were some exciting evenings, some dull ones and too many that were competent and thoroughly routine.

Conventional System

The conventional system that had served for many years was in effect. That is to say, there was no system and no coordinated point of view. An assortment of guest conductors, nearly all estimable men, and a variety of soloists of varying gifts were engaged. Minimum precautions to avoid obvious repetitions in programs were probably made, and some big evenings like those devoted to "Elektra," "The Creation" and "Joan of Arc at the Stake" were arranged.

But there was no binding point of view in the season's plan. How could there be? No one had the responsibility to do some long-range thinking and no one had the centralized authority to impose a carefully considered artistic design.

One is bound to say that one looks forward to the 117th season with more enthusiasm than one can find in one's memories of the 116th. But there were occasions worth recalling.

It was stimulating to hear Aaron Copland conduct his own Third Symphony. It was agreeable at long last to have Ernest Ansermet as guest conductor. It was good to have Robert Shaw get a week of his own at the helm. It was heartening to note that Mr. Bernstein had a large and devoted public of his own.

The Bright Side

It was a stimulating contribution to the entire country for Mr. Bernstein to put his vivid lectures and concerts for young people on a national television network, and this is a service that should be continued.

It was an unmitigated joy to witness Danny Kaye, a maestro of no musical pretensions whatever, disport himself on the podium. If that concatenation of personalities—Kaye and the Philharmonic—is not a natural and a must for television, the home screen deserves to be darkened forever.

It was exciting to hear the Philharmonic and so able a singer as Inge Borkh in "Elektra," even if it was frustrating to have the opera with cuts and a gratuitous intermission. This department was rather severe with Mr. Mitropoulos for what it still regards as a fall from musical grace. Mr. Mitropoulos could have said something in his own defense, but forebore.

An explanation that the needs of the singers dictated the decision would have produced sympathetic understanding. One would continue to insist, however, that if the Philharmonic is to deal with a tightly knit, tant, cumulative work like "Elektra," it should do so without compromise. If it cannot find the singers to carry out the task in full, it should leave "Elektra" to the Metropolitan Opera.

preferable to seek guest conductors and soloists after the main lines of a season had been planned with the music as the overriding consideration.

The music is the justification for an orchestral season. To be sure, music is made by human beings, and some have personalities with special appeal to the public and the box office. The Philharmonic should play host to the vital figures of our day—as well as to the gifted young ones on the way up. But the guest appearances should be in conformity with a musical purpose. They should not be the excuse for making a quick sensation with someone in the news.

Major Obligation

If one keeps always in mind that the service of music is the great obligation of an orchestra, one will arrive at the proper perspective of one of Mr. Bernstein's forthcoming experiments. His idea of turning the Thursday night concerts into a preview with some of the traditional formality ruled out has disturbed a number of old subscribers. There have been murmurings of protest against the idea of having the orchestra play in street clothes on Thursdays.

Do the clothes really make the musician? For all this department cares, the Philharmonic can wear evening clothes, business suits or bathing suits.

MUSICAL LEADER
CHICAGO ILL.

APR 1958

WALTER F. LOEB, 125 Christopher St., New York City 14. Tel: WATkins
Other Critics: Shirley Cecille Cash (Orchestras), Harry L. Fuchs, Sherman Gottesman

With The Orchestras

By Shirley Cecille Cash

New York Philharmonic

The world premiere of Marc Blitzstein's "Lear: A Study" and the New York premiere of Mendelssohn's Concerto for Two Pianos in A flat major were the two novelties on the Philharmonic program, Feb. 27, when Dimitri Mitropoulos conducted. Exuberantly performed by Arthur Gold and Robert Fisdale with the orchestra, the concerto revealed the amazing creative ability of the 14-year-old Mendelssohn. Mr. Blitzstein took bows after the performance of his austere work, which attempts a musical psychoanalytical study of "Lear." Also on the program were Schoenberg's arrangements of two chorale preludes by Bach and the same composer's "Verklarte Nacht" for string orchestra. . . . The entire performance of the New York Philharmonic, March 6, was devoted to Richard Strauss' one-act opera, "Elektra," in concert form, and it was one of the most exciting evenings we have ever spent at the Philharmonic. There couldn't have been a much better choice in the title role than Inge Borkh whose performance from beginning to end was a triumph of artistry and vocal prowess. Other leading roles were taken by Blanche Thebom, Frances Yeend, David Lloyd and Giorgio Tozzi, all of whom proved equal to the occasion.

At the second Pension Fund Benefit Concert of the season, March 10, Mitropoulos played second fiddle to Danny Kaye.

The Future

But even as we lay a feintly withered forget-me-not on the remains of the 116th season, let us turn cheerfully to the prospects of the 117th. With Mr. Bernstein established as musical director, a consistent artistic orientation is being formulated. His notion that an orchestral season should have certain central themes is admirable. His agreement with the guest conductors that they will concentrate on areas congenial to their backgrounds and tastes is encouraging.

It is this column's hope that in succeeding years Mr. Bernstein will go farther in his pursuit of an over-all musical scheme. With guest conductors engaged, it becomes necessary to adjust plans to the interests of the visitors. It would be

Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York Dará Concierto en Guayaquil.

La Presentación Estará Auspiciada Por la Asociación Cultural Ecuatoriano-Norteamericana y la Casa de la Cultura del Guayas



Dimitri Mitropoulos, co-director de la Filarmónica de Nueva York, aparece aquí durante un ensayo. La Filarmónica ofrecerá un concierto en Guayaquil el 9 de Mayo, bajo la batuta de Leonard Bernstein, y los auspicios de ACENA y la Casa de la Cultura, Núcleo del Guayas.

EL UNIVERSO
Guayaquil, Ecuador
April 20, 1958

Met Opera Shines Despite Hub Stage

By Harold Rogers

Music Critic of
The Christian Science Monitor

Boston

In spite of Boston's present humiliating predicament—that of being a cultural center without an opera house—Bostonians heard grand opera on April 14 when the Metropolitan Opera opened its annual spring engagement.

The visit, as nearly everybody knows, is taking place in the Metropolitan Theater, commodious in every respect with the unhappy exception of the stage. And this was truly unhappy. When the Metropolitan comes to Boston one has a right to expect more than a performance that appears to be improvised in the local high school gym.

The flimsy curtain, for instance, so thin that the audience witnessed a shadow-play of scampering stagehands on the other side; the drafts that caused it to billow upwards, revealing the feet of those on stage; the shallow orchestra pit that elevated some of the instruments above stage level; the shallow stage that put an obvious crimp in the ballet—all these things should stimulate civic action.

Opera House Needed

Boston must have an opera house—not a civic auditorium that can at times serve with difficulty as an opera house, but a house designed for opera under ideal conditions. This is a crying need, not outside the possibilities of Boston initiative to bring about.

But in spite of present difficulties one can be grateful that we still have opera, and that the piece April 14, Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin," was a musically superb production. This we expected, knowing that Dimitri Mitropoulos would be in the pit, infusing both the players and these singers with his own ardor and flexibility.

This we also expected from the stellar cast, and from Lucine Amara we received more than we expected. In her Tatiana we found a depth of characterization not before observed in her work—a sense of fire that turns a first-rate singer into a prima donna.

Her Letter Scene (a challenge

that only the most gifted actress-singers can face successfully) was a tour de force of eloquent singing and impassioned turmoil. It was marred only by an ill-timed burst of applause from the audience, which Mr. Mitropoulos rebuked with violent gestures by his left hand (but which the listeners doubtless considered part of his directions to the orchestra).

Americans have the bad habit of applauding while the music is sounding, a practice that Europeans scrupulously avoid. Composers are just as desirous of applause as anyone, and they accordingly provide a pause for it. Listeners should wait for the stopping places.

This is one of the Metropolitan's new productions of the season, and Rolf Gérard's settings and costumes are handsome and atmospheric. One cannot say how much Peter Brook's directions have been altered in adjusting to the confines of this stage. The grand march in Act II, for instance, was eliminated in favor of a ballet sequence far less effective than a grand march can be.

'Lyric Scenes'

But musically, as we said before, the production was superb. This is an opera in which the listener, with the exception of the shot in the dueling scene, can relax in the sheer beauty of the Tchaikovsky melodies. Tchaikovsky himself, aware that he had not turned out a typical grand opera, called the seven episodes "lyric scenes"; and Mr. Mitropoulos helped to eliminate the awkward waits between changes by devising four interludes, extracted by Julius Barger from the score.

Supporting Miss Amara were Martha Lipton, giving us another of her careful characterizations as Mme Larina; Rosalind Elias, a lovely combination of physical and vocal beauty as Olga; Richard Tucker as Lenski, whose tenor admirably throbbed with the operatic sob; George London, appropriately sinister as the dissolute Onegin; Belen Amparo as the loyal nurse; and Giorgio Tozzi as Prince Gremin, whose declaration of love for Tatiana was a high point, vocally and dramatically, of the evening.

From APR 30 1958

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

THE PHILHARMONIC ON TOUR

Under its directors, Dimitri Mitropoulos and Leonard Bernstein, the New York Philharmonic Symphony has begun a seven weeks' tour of Latin America which will encompass twelve countries, twenty-one cities and thirty-eight concerts. It would be hard to make a more intelligent choice of a cultural ambassador than this orchestra.

Rich with honors and tradition, the Philharmonic is the oldest orchestra in the United States and one of the oldest in the world. And though its length of service will not be on view in Latin America, in a real sense its years will be one aspect of this ensemble. For the precision and refinement of the orchestra, its tone and color, the balance of the choirs, its response to the conductor, the very sound of its strings are not haphazard qualities, nor are they fashioned overnight. They result not only from the excellences of the individual performers but also from the many years of playing together, those unnumbered rehearsals when the disparate materials of an orchestra were blended into a seamless fabric.

But the Philharmonic is the ideal spokesman in more than its skill. The message it brings transcends geography or the tongues of men. The power of Beethoven, the devotion of Bach, will be as comprehensible in Portuguese-speaking Brazil as in Spanish-speaking Mexico. It is the wondrous faculty of music to bring peoples of all kinds into the closest spiritual communion. Mankind is fortunate in possessing so all-embracing a language. And we are fortunate that we have the Philharmonic to speak that language for us.

From APR 30 1958
CONSTITUTION
Atlanta, Ga.COTTON BALE FASCINATES MET CONDUCTOR
Dimitri Mitropoulos Inspects It at Airport HereOpera's Mitropoulos
Here Without Fanfare

By MARJORY RUTHERFORD

Dimitri Mitropoulos, who will wield the baton twice during Atlanta's current opera season—at the opening night's "Eugene Onegin" and at the closing "Madame Butterfly"—slipped into the Atlanta Airport unheralded and unmet Tuesday.

"Is better that way," the expressive-faced maestro shrugged. "I don't like fuss and fanfare!"

The 62-year-old Greek conductor, known throughout the world, looked for familiar landmarks as he approached downtown Atlanta.

"I have been here many, many times," he smiled, "both with the Met and as conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony. I came early to rest a little and to look up some old friends. After this Met tour there will be no resting; I get on a merry-go-round and don't stop until June, 1959."

His fall and summer "merry-go-round" will find the conductor, long-time musical director of the New York Philharmonic, conducting five different touring orchestras abroad. Mitropoulos will take the Philharmonic on a South American swing, will conduct the Vienna Philharmonic, perform at the Salzburg Festival, and join other symphony groups for tours in Tel Aviv and Greece.

"It's fortunate that I am a bachelor and like traveling as well as conducting," he twinkled.

The energetic maestro is conducting 16 operas for the touring Met company. From Atlanta he goes to Memphis, Dallas, Minneapolis, Chicago, Bloomington, Ind., and Toronto. He will rejoin the Met in New York next fall to conduct the Met's first production of Verdi's "Macbeth."

This year Mitropoulos directed the Met revival of Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin"—Atlanta's Wednesday night opener — and the world premiere of Samuel Barber's "Vanessa."

He does not anticipate that the latter production will go "on the road" any time soon. Its elaborate sets, he explained, would be difficult to use in catch-as-catch-can touring arenas.

PLANS REUNION

Mitropoulos was planning a reunion with old friends John Beer, who plays trumpet for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, and Dr. John Tsouderos, Georgia Tech professor of philosophy.

He will also break his usual rule of "no parties" while he is in Atlanta. "Your hospitality is so delightful," he smiled, "I am attending no less than four social functions."

The conductor has "no favorite opera — just the one I am conducting each time" but declared Atlantans "should love the wonderful new 'Butterfly' they will see Saturday night."

LEGION OF HONOR

Mitropoulos, who wears the red emblem of the French Legion of Honor in his buttonhole for his cultural contributions, finds conducting operas "satisfying." The maestro's European reputation as an orchestral conductor preceded his success in the United States. He first conducted an opera—Strauss' "Elektra"—at the Florence May Festival of 1950. He has conducted at Milan's famed La Scala and made his Met debut Dec. 15, 1954.

Mitropoulos is the only conductor to "repeat" in this week's feast of opera.

Not Everything Glittered as the Met Opened

By DICK GRAY

All was not glitter at the Fox Theater Wednesday night.

There was one off-the-beaten-track spot which was downright drab—in comparison to the furs and diamonds of the audience and the greasepaint and gowns of the artists on the stage.

In this place of relative obscurity and drabness, all that glittered was gold—or perhaps well-shined brass—and polished wood, and the various other materials that musical instruments are made of.

One other thing glittered in this dark, semi-obscure spot—the music: One of the greatest symphonic orchestras in America played in Atlanta Wednesday night.

For in that dark and drab orchestra pit sat the real unsung—or unsinging—heroes of the Metropolitan Opera Company.

Without those serious-humorous men, the opera aficionados might as well have left their furs in the moth balls and their jewels

in the pawn shop, because they wouldn't have heard much grand opera.

Sitting in the pit, beside veteran timpanist Fred Noak, behind the three trombones and section of French horns, and beside an assistant conductor who was reading the score for practice, one gets an unusual view of opera—and it's a pretty good seat.

The pit smells of valve oil and trombone slide grease; it is a place of relaxed warmth mixed with vibrant intensity; it is crowded with talent.

Their faces illuminated by the little lights on the music stands, 60 excellent musicians sat—many wearing loafers with their tired tuxedos; some reading magazines during their tacet passages, and all putting their best efforts into making music.

The opera sounds different from the orchestra pit—more like a vocal-instrumental duet, rather than vocalists accompanied by in-

strumentalists. It's a thrilling sound.

One could get a composite view of audience, stage and orchestra.

On the stage, the male dancers perspired heavily through their smiles. The stars didn't always look at each other when they made musical love. Some of the looks that passed between the chorus and ballet members were not indigenous to the opera. But this is the opera, and the closeness doesn't detract from the effect.

In the audience, the spectacles glittered in the light from the stage. The front row looked asleep through most of the performance, not even jumping when George London shot Richard Tucker in Act II.

The audience's buzz sounded more like a roar from the orchestra pit—particularly noticeable when the orchestra was performing the beautiful interludes interspersed between scenes.

Kindly Dimitri Mitropoulos—who engages in a mutual admiration society with the members of his orchestra—turned toward the audience and shook his head sadly, as if saying "Ah, why can't you listen to the beautiful music?"

The musicians sat and conversed when not playing, or appeared to doze in their seats. But when their parts arrived, they played with virtuosity and verve. They rarely looked either at the crowds or at the stage. They had seen the same things many times before.

When the curtain fell, they returned to their hotel rooms to sleep, or retired to restaurants to eat and talk, or sought other amusements according to their individual tastes. Unlike many cities, Atlanta has no parties for the orchestra members—but just for the stars. But the musicians are stars too, and are content with that fact.

5,000 First Nighters Cheer Opera's Magic

By MARJORY RUTHERFORD

It hasn't changed since that first week in May, 1910. The gaiety and glitter... the music and the magic... the top-hat and tiara whoop-dee-do at opening night of Atlanta's Metropolitan Opera season.

Some 5,000 fashionably attired persons launched this city's annual feast of music and fine feathers Wednesday night as the Met began a four-day, five-performance stand at the Fox Theater with the Russian revival "Eugene Onegin."

Later this week opera-goers will hear two classics performed in Atlanta's very first opera season 48 years ago—"Aida" and "Madame Butterfly."

A few long-time Atlantans who heard Caruso and Geraldine Farrar here in 1910 were in the Wednesday night audience.

And, they said, the magic is still there.

"I still get just as excited on other opera stories and pictures on Pages 16, 22 and 24."

opening night as if it were my first opera," a plump little old lady with diamonds flashing in her gray curls confided. "And I still come early to see the show outside!"

"The show outside" was a fascinating kaleidoscope Wednesday night.

The Fox Theater's spangled marquee spelled out "METROPOLITAN GRAND OPERA TONIGHT." Although the curtain didn't go up until 8 p.m., traffic was backed up as far as Tenth street by 7:15 p.m.

"If all them long white gloves was laid end to end," a grizzled male rubbernecker calculated, "bet they'd reach halfway to Griffin."

THE YOUNGEST

Youngest stage-door Johnny was 17-month-old Charles B. Jones Jr. of 710 Peachtree St. N.E., who reached out from his grandmother's arms to fondle a passing white fox stole.

Long skirts rustled. Jewels—both Tiffany's and 10-cent-store varieties—twinkled. Furs and orchids were as common as dogwood in in Druid Hills. There were dowagers and debutantes in one-of-a-kind creations from Paris, females in homemades and hand-me-downs, one standing-room ticket-holder wearing sensible shoes and a shoulder-strap bag so she could manipulate her libretto and opera glasses.

A young mother had a dime slipped down inside her pink kid gloves for that intermission telephone call to the baby sitter.

There were "new look" dresses, and there were radiant girls with Scarlett O'Hara waists and bouffant net skirts attesting to layers of starched petticoats beneath.

Mrs. Leonid V. Skvirsky of 75 Ponce de Leon Ave., N.E., was wearing "something old"—a sheath of gold metal cloth originally woven for a maharajah. Her husband bought it in India, and she wore it one other time—to a performance of "Eugene Onegin" in Shanghai in 1937.

Ushers from Georgia Tech seated some opera buffs who came early and settled down rapidly, eyes closed in blissful anticipation. The music lovers were outnumbered by opera-goers who paraded their finery up and down the aisles, scuttled about seeking friends, and whispered about their after-opera plans.

But there was magic for everybody in that electric moment when the lights dimmed, Maestro Mitropoulos' baton lifted, and the overture began.

First-nighters forgot their own "show," bemused with the sparkling performances of Lucine Amara, George London, Richard Tucker, and Giorgio Tozzi.

The Tchaikovsky classic was sung in English. (A dress-circle ticket-holder may have echoed widely held sentiments, however, when he yawned, "English or Russian, it's Greek to me!")

Just as in 1910, there were curtain-calls, show-stopping applause, even "Bravo's!"

Patients from Warm Springs occupied all available "wheelchair space," a small area on either side of two big pillars where there are no chairs.

Frankish students from Georgia Tech staged their annual spoof of opera arrivals. DramaTech members Grant Schneider, Doris Bucher and Bob McIntyre pulled up at the Fox in a spluttering ancient Ford just at curtain-time.

London and Amara Triumph in Onegin

By BRUCE GALPHIN

The Metropolitan Opera Company mounted a handsome and brilliantly sung production of Peter Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin" to initiate its 1958 Atlanta season Wednesday night.

After such an admirable interpretation, it is difficult to understand why the work has been neglected so long; it is musically substantial, the plot is less inane than many commonly encountered in opera and there is an abundance of pleasant arias, choral numbers and ballet numbers.

But, naturally enough, it is on the singing that most persons judge an opera. In this respect, Wednesday's "Onegin" deserves all A's.

Polished Baritone

In the title role, George London displayed not only a resonant, polished baritone but also the dramatic insight into the work which his public has come to expect of him.

Perhaps his most touching aria was "Are you indeed the same Tatyana?" sung at his moment of realization in the sixth scene. Memorable too, was his somewhat pompous lecture "Were I a man who had been fated."

Lucine Amara, singing Tatyana, further sustained the belief of those who had heard her here earlier this year and in previous Metropolitan productions, that she is destined for the company's Olympus. Her clear, firm tone was a delight and she capably handled the transition from an impetuous country girl to a sophisticated princess.

LYRICAL ARIA

Miss Amara had the opera's most lyrical aria, "Thou it destroy my soul," and she beautifully filled its potentialities. Indeed, she unforgivably met the demands of the entire "Letter Scene," which Tatyana so dominated.

The audience was pleased, too, with her final scene, "Onegin, surely I was better."

The character Lenski meets his demise about midway in the opera, and inasmuch as Richard Tucker was singing the role, the death was doubly unfortunate. As recompense, Tchaikovsky gave him three solid arias before the fatal bullet.

FIRST SCENE

"Oh where have flown my days of springtime," sung just before the duel, was especially effective under Tucker's dramatic reading, and his voice was displayed at its lyrical best in "Yes, I love you," sung in the first scene.

Rosalind Elias, another fast rising star in the Metropolitan roster, was limited by the score to Ogle's one aria, "Oh Tatyana, Tatyana, you're always dreaming," but she delivered it superbly.

Miss Elias will be given more scope as Siebel in the Saturday matinee production of "Faust."

Had the composer known he would have Giorgio Tozzi for his Prince Gremin, he doubtless would have given the role more than "All men surrender to love's power." But it ranked second only

Met Closes In Memphis; Dallas Next

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (Sp.) — Be- vitchingly beautiful is the least you can say for the new Met opera production of "Madame Butterfly," which closed the two-night season at the Amphitheater here Thursday night.

That applies whether you are speaking of the magnificent soprano voice and poignant dramatics of Antonietta Stella in the title role, the fluid and eloquent orchestral integration evoked by Dimitri Mitropoulos, or the stage setting, with its gently falling cherry blossom petals and its exquisite costuming and authentic Japanese mannerisms.

Giulio Gari, Rumanian-born tenor, displayed a powerful voice in the role of Pinkerton. His love duet, closing Act I with Miss Stella, was skillfully brought to a keen dramatic pitch, which swept the audience along with it.

The revised Puccini opera, with staging, sets and costumes by Japanese natives, was the hit of the two-day season.

Belen Amaran sang the role of Suzuki with a fine contralto voice, and real emotional impact. Mario Zanasi portrayed the American consul Sharpless. His letter scene with Butterfly was particularly impressive.

An estimated 4,200 persons filled the Amphitheater to capacity. The Met company will open Friday in Dallas with "Samson et Dalila."

BEST OPERA SEASON ENDS

'Madam Butterfly' Fascinating Finale

By FRANK DANIEL

Amid Nagasaki's cherry blossoms, the faithful Cio-Cio-San fell upon her father's samurai sword, the orchestra shuddered and wailed and the Metropolitan Opera Assn.'s 36th Atlanta season became history Saturday night at the Fox Theater.

It was a great season, for sure, and the performance of "Madam Butterfly" combined a familiar opera with a brilliant new staging which gave the occasion great fascination.

... Saturday evening's final performance.

Miss Stella received an ovation unequalled in modern Atlanta operatic history for her role.

Twenty minutes after Miss Stella completed her death scene, a full-house audience was still on its feet cheering and clapping. The house lights were finally turned up to get the enthusiastic crowd to go home.

Mario Del Monaco was a Pinkerton of rich voice and positive histrionic abilities. He gave the part special dash and energy. Frank Guarrera as Sharpless sang with impressive art, and Margaret Roggero brought great feeling to the perhaps thankless role of Suzuki.

The support was excellent, including George Cehanovsky, Osie Hawkins, Paul Franke — three ever-resourceful, ever-welcome singing actors—and Calvin Marsh and Helen Vanni. The orchestra under Dimitri Mitropoulos performed with glowing strength.

AT THE OPERA

Familiar Gems in 'Onegin' Delight First Nighters Here

By FRANK DANIEL

Atlanta greeted the Metropolitan Opera Assn.'s 36th spring-time appearance Wednesday evening with all its familiar opening-night gala, and with perhaps an added sparkle of brilliance, these being high-voltage times.

The offering was the Met's newly accoutered "Eugene Onegin," a work new in Atlanta's opera-going experience. It certainly was a bright new feather in Impresario Rudolf Bing's war-bonnet, and a big earful and eyeful for everybody in the capacity audience.

Atlanta took "Eugene Onegin's" Tchaikovskian sentiments to heart and as promptly for

THOUGH "ONEGIN" has never before been presented in Atlanta, many of its melodies have. They are Tchaikovsky's music, and Tchaikovsky's musical style, and None But the Lonely Heart has failed to make his musical acquaintance. Also, "Onegin" has its familiar gems—and they happily permeate the entire score of the opera.

"Onegin," hence, was new but no stranger, and neither were the principal performers—from Mitropoulos on the podium to George London in the title role.

London sang with the opulent outpouring of voice which distinguishes his performance, and was particularly happy acting the byronic hero of this Russian tale.

Tucker, too, was in full, rich voice, and eloquence itself, and Miss Amara, who has a habit of singing magnificently for Atlanta, sang with a special charm and sincerity, and was more at ease as Tatyana than she may have seemed at the time of the radio performance of "Onegin" way last winter.

HER FAMOUS "Letter Scene," in which for 20-odd minutes she alone is responsible for most of the singing, showed a sweeping

sense of the swelling tensions and feelings.

"Onegin" has many felicities, and these include the opportunities for other principals—opportunities which gave us Tozzi in a memorable scene, and the luscious-voiced Martha Lipton in several scenes and the delightful Rosalind Elias in others—all show-stoppers and heart-warmers.

If "Onegin" will never exactly displace "La Traviata" as a public favorite, will will surely always be held in esteem after the favorable hearing this Met production provides.

AN EXTRA attraction were the musical interludes, devised for this offering, and lovingly expatiated by the orchestra and under Mr. Mitropoulos' prompting. The ballet was charming, the chorus eloquent. The English language, alas, was no more cooperative than usual in allowing itself to be understood while being sung, but nobody but the Devil and Daniel Webster are to blame for that.

Staging, settings and costumes are by Japanese craftsmen, Aoyama and Nagasaka, who were brought to the Metropolitan to do the production from the ground up this season. And if that ground is in part orchestral, they found ready a conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos, who knows that the ground of Japan, like Italy's, is volcanic.

Met Stages Lavish New 'Butterfly'

"MADAMA BUTTERFLY" Opera by Giacomo Puccini, with Italian libretto by Illica and Giacosa. Staged by Yoshio Aoyama. Settings and costumes by Motohiro Nagasaka. Presented by the Metropolitan Opera Company of New York in the Civic Opera house Saturday afternoon, May 24, 1958.

THE CAST

Cio-Cio-San.....Antonietta Stella
F. F. Pinkerton.....Carlo Bergonzi
Sharpless.....Mario Zanasi
Suzuki.....Margaret Roggero
Goro.....Paul Franke
Yakusabe.....Osie Hawkins
Yamadori.....George Cehanovsky
Kame Pinkerton.....Helen Vanni
Imperial Commissioner.....Calvin Marsh
Conductor.....Dimitri Mitropoulos

BY SEYMOUR RAVEN

THIS New production of "Madama Butterfly" wins the full respect of those who love the opera. But that is only the beginning. It goes on to enmesh the observer in the web of Puccini's throbbing tragedy and draws him to a new center—where lurks a hotly penetrating sting of Japanese fatalism.

Staging, settings and costumes are by Japanese craftsmen, Aoyama and Nagasaka, who were brought to the Metropolitan to do the production from the ground up this season. And if that ground is in part orchestral, they found ready a conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos, who knows that the ground of Japan, like Italy's, is volcanic.

Music

Philharmonic Carries the Torch

By LOUIS BIANCOLLI

There is something both symbolic and practical in the seven-week tour of the Latin-American countries that the New York Philharmonic Symphony embarked upon after

its closing concert in Carnegie Hall last Sunday. Here is as good a representative of American culture and artistic stability as one could find in any of the arts.

America's oldest orchestra and one of New York's two major institutions of higher entertainment. The Philharmonic is a collective ambassador of both good will and good music.

In glancing at the extended itinerary, I feel a glow of civic pride as I realize that the orchestra plays today in Maracaibo, Venezuela, that Monday it will play in Bogota, Colombia, and that thereafter, every day, or every other day, it will be playing to the rest of the Latin-American world.

Carries Our Hopes.

A traveling orchestra like the Philharmonic takes a little bit of each of us along with it. It carries our hopes, our best ideals, and something of our enthusiasm

and encouragement—without which no artistic ensemble of the kind can flourish and survive.

South and Central America are thus being exposed not only to a repertoire of splendid music splendidly performed and conducted, but to the home atmosphere of community interest and pride in which the Philharmonic has achieved primacy in its century and more of continuous activity.

It is significant, too, that the programs are not limited to a standard repertoire of established world favorites. American composers, as well as Latin-American composers, some of them in the forefront of modernism, will be heard at many of the concerts on the seven-week schedule.

Dominant Figures.

Even in its touring conductors, the Philharmonic is offering our neighbors the two

musicians who are today perhaps the most dominant figures in New York's musical life—Dimitri Mitropoulos and Leonard Bernstein. They are not only our most active conductors, but our most versatile and influential, too.

The tour is being conducted under the auspices of the President's Special International Program for Cultural Presentations, in conjunction with the American National Theater and Academy (ANTA). It is part of a growing plan to acquaint the world with our best artistic resources.

There is no way to assess the gain in prestige and friendship to be derived from projects like the Philharmonic tour. That it will be great and lasting is unquestionable. Wherever our best orchestras go, and in the past few years they have gone everywhere, they are a reminder and a guarantee of active idealism at home.

Great Saint Called Once a Delinquent

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos says the rock 'n' roll craze is an "epidemic" and juvenile delinquency is "deplorable" but we "must not be too depressed."

"Look at St. Francis of Assisi," Mitropoulos said, on tour here with the Metropolitan Opera Company, said Wednesday. "He was something of a juvenile delinquent but he changed in early manhood and became one of the greatest saints that ever lived."

EUGENE ONEGIN

Tchaikovsky and Top Casting Charm Saturday Night Audience

By RUAL ASKEW

As far as these eyes and ears were concerned, Eugene's friend, Lenski, summed it up when he first entered the garden of Madame Larina's country estate: "It is so very charming here."

Charm and the spell of Tchaikovsky's typically overflowing heart were at least two vital keys to his "Eugene Oegin" in its first Dallas performance here at State Fair Music Hall. We would say, too, for the abundant response throughout the seven lyric scenes from Pushkin that the majority of the 2,759 who said the novelty such rapt attention that it won't again be so long between "Oegin's" in Metropolitan Opera tour seasons.

The work's most vital and misunderstood aspect is probably that makes it the increasingly compelling evening on first acquaintance. In setting Pushkin's ironic text, Tchaikovsky created a hybrid fabric that enhanced, overshadowed, the narrative intent and propelled the impassioned aura of a period straight into the emotions of his listeners.

ough styles that, by turns, are aphonic, as hand-in-glove with Broadway musical drama, AS LYRIC THEATER, then, not opera in the conventional or traditional sense, Saturday evening's performance was a genuine thrill of discovery and eminently worthy of later repetition. Tchaikovsky did his part impressively and so did the Metropolitan forces—singers, designers and directors. Staging and individual portrayals were held in context to complement the singing surge of the score and, thanks to the generous gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller Jr. that made possible the work's return in New York last season for the first time in more than 30 years, a most refreshing evening was freshly possible in Dallas.

Casts and Credits

EUGENE ONEGIN: State Fair Music Hall, May 10, 1958 (evening). Seven lyric scenes by Peter Ivitch Tchaikovsky (1840-1893). Libretto from Pushkin with English text by Henry Resse. First presented in 1879. Chorus master, Kurt Adler. Movement and choreography by Zachary Solov. Staged by Peter Brook. Decor by Rolf Gerard.

Madame Larina, Martha Lipton (Mezzo) Tatiana, Lucine Amara (Soprano) Olga, Rosalind Elias (Mezzo) Eugene Oegin, George London (Baritone) Prince Gremin, Richard Tucker (Tenor) Filippovna, Giorgio Tozzi (Basso) Captain, Louis Sgarro (Basso) Zaretski, George Cehanovsky (Baritone) Triquet, Alessio De Paolis (Tenor) Conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos

bits by George Cehanovsky and Louis Sgarro.

WE LIKED Conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos' approach to the seven lyric scenes, not standard opera. Always intent on effects

of the moment, the vibrating conductor channeled the flow to his own erratic way, which is to intensity when it isn't consistent. Rolf Gerard's set and costumes, appropriately simplified, but elegant on demand, won their "oohs" were fetchingly done.

For all its bittersweet period romance "Eugene Oegin" does not cloy. If you have gathered it was sung in English translation, it was, and clearly well by most.

NEWNESS ASIDE, we can't recall a more completely captivating evening of lyric theater that sang its way home to the heart and settled there so comfortably. Latest curtain on record or not (11:52 p.m.) it was worth it.

From MAY 12 1958 NEWS Dallas, Texas

MADAMA BUTTERFLY

Stella Means Star In Operatic Idiom

By JOHN ROSENFELD

(Opera in Review)

The word Stella, in Italian, means star. As far as the Dallas operatic firmament is concerned Stella was born Sunday afternoon, first name Antonietta.

She sang Cio-Cio-San's grief not only into the hearts to an over-capacity Music Hall but also sang herself into next season's repertory. The brilliance of her performance was the dominant scintillant in the current jewel of the Metropolitan's operatic list, the Nipponized "Madama Butterfly" of Puccini.

There were stage settings with the stiff and characteristic grace and delicacy of Japanese prints, kimonos to match and American costumes of authenticity. The Gilbert and Sullivan touches for the Commissary, Goro and Yamadori were discarded and these people made sense. Cio-Cio-San, Suzuki and the Japanese chorus were trained in the hand, wrist and back postures of Cherry Blossom Land.

These merely made Rudolf Bing's "Madama Butterfly" production of this season his masterpiece of true Italian opera presentation. For "Butterfly," without the decor, is still Italian opera and nothing else.

MISS STELLA scored first as a soprano of vocal amplitude, steadiness of production and dramatic ring of timbre. Had one closed his eyes he would have heard one of the best-sung Cio-Cio-Sans of his life, musical passionate and full of climactic power, also soft, maidenly and shaded. Not in years, for example, have we heard any Cio-Cio-San negotiate the half-voice ending of the Flower Duet with such audible velvet.

"Un Bel Di," as Miss Stella sang the famous arioso, was a moving theatrical experience, full of meaning beyond spun-tone lyricism. And if a star was born for Dallas in this "Butterfly," a couple of fair-sized sputniks also were launched. Carlo Bergonzi's Pinkerton was sung by a robust, tastelessly full-toned tenor which will grow better as he matures. He was still an admirable partner for Miss Stella as they hymned love and the stars in the magnificent finale of Act I.

Baritone Mario Zancasi's Sharpless was vocally assertive and pleasing and he was quite plausible in action. Both signors sounded and looked like major operatic assets with a future even brighter than the present. Since the best mayor of America's biggest city was named Fiorello La Guardia, we should have no trouble accepting two Latin types as representatives of our naval and consular services, especially when they can sing better than such functionaries usually do.

THE PETITE Margaret Rogers was a pretty Suzuki and her pleasant personality is beginning to project as her mezzo-soprano grows firmer and larger. Wholly in the fetching pictures and the unique regie of this "Madama Butterfly," were Helen Vanni, a Kate Pinkerton whom you could see and hear; Paul Franke as a Goro equal for once to the demands of his springy tenor music; George Cehanovsky as an unclownish Yamadori and Ezio Flagello, as a terrifying Uncle-Priest.

There was no Trouble trouble at this "Madama Butterfly." The child of Pinkerton and Cio-Cio-San was played by a blonde Miss Vickie Christiansen, daughter of a Camp Gary (San Marcos) Army officer and his wife. This four-year-old, spotted in the parking lot Saturday by W. A. Suter of the invaluable Dallas Civic Doormen and Ushers Association, was the most responsive child-extra ever located for this often distracting role.

Little Miss Christiansen not only embraced warmly, eavesdropped with poise but also enabled Miss Stella to make a melodramatic wow out of her harakiri episode. The astute direction does not leave the child onstage to wit-

ness her mother's death. She is sent outdoors to play, while the steady of production and dramatic ring of timbre. Had one closed his eyes he would have heard one of the best-sung Cio-Cio-Sans of his life, musical passionate and full of climactic power, also soft, maidenly and shaded. Not in years, for example, have we heard any Cio-Cio-San negotiate the half-voice ending of the Flower Duet with such audible velvet.

THE LOVABLE Puccini score, first presented in 1904, mixes exotic scales and harmonies about as well as Verdi contrived ancient Egypt for "Aida." No argument is advanced that the music is Japanese, but only effective Italian-lyric theater with Oriental reminders.

When through setting the scene, Puccini writes in his native idiom and on his favorite subject, a passionate woman cruelly manhandled. Cio-Cio-Sans are hard to come by for if they look the part they can't sing it and vice versa. The exceptions would be a couple of doll-like Japanese sopranos we remember, abetted by loud-speaker systems.

For orthodox operatic purposes Miss Stella was a fortunate choice to head up this unusual production. It is true that she is a shapely armful rather than a cunning plaything but she has style, manner and the ability to fill the eyes as handsomely as the ears.

DIMITRI MITROPOULOS, conducting his second opera here this season, gave the music a con amore reading. We could not always agree with his tempi and balances or admire invariably his ability to hold things together. But we could not doubt that he loved "Madama Butterfly" as much as the many other hands that went into making one of the best productions the Metropolitan ever has offered in Dallas.

MUSIC STAND

May 18 1958 TIMES-HERALD Dallas, Tex.

By DR. JACK F. KILPATRICK Times Herald Music Critic

Met's Maestro Mitropoulos And His Musical Philosophy

"I TOLD THEM in New York that there was one person in Dallas who would really understand and appreciate 'Oegin,'" Maestro Mitropoulos said to the Music Stand. We trust we betrayed neither coyness nor embarrassment. For if the Metropolitan conductor had our number, we also had his. We knew before we ever heard the opera it was Mitropoulos' kind of music because we knew our friend Mitropoulos.

Dimitri Mitropoulos has the reputation of harboring an inordinate fondness for contemporary music. During his tenures on the podium of both the Minneapolis Symphony and the New York Philharmonic he managed to accumulate a good deal of adverse comment upon his tendency to play too much dry, cerebral and mechanical music which is what many believe all contemporary music to be.

Well, what he selected must not have sounded that way to him. We know what he thinks of dry, cerebral and mechanical music.

"There is a science of music," he philosophized to us, "but a musical work of art ought to be constructed in such a way that the science does not show. There has been a tendency in our time to commit a sin in worshipping the scientific side of music."

NO FLESHPOTS Evidently Mitropoulos is satisfied that in "Eugene Oegin," one of the two operas he conducted here during the Metropolitan's recent visit, composer Tchaikovsky avoided the fleshpots of musical science.

"It's like a drink of cool spring water," he pronounced ecstatically.

Mitropoulos is very fond of Russian music, of the Russian people and of the Russian landscape, which he himself has seen. Russian political ideology is another matter. In that, he can discover no virtue at all. In fact, it is diametrically opposed to three of the principles in life that are the most necessary to him—the teachings of Christ, democracy and freedom of artistic expression.

PRE-CZARRIST The Metropolitan's maestro will take pains to point out that the qualities he admires in Russian music not only existed before the origin of Marxism, but were there before the Czars. It is the joyous verve, the unfettered lyricism, the direct human communication in Russian music—Imperial or Communist, of conservatory or folk origin—that appeal to him.

And also to us, may we add parenthetically. We like them wherever we find them, whether they come from Stalingrad or South Bend.

Mitropoulos is puzzled by music that seemingly has no community with either humanity or God. We gather that he thinks music ought to be offered to one or the other, or perhaps both. It could be that he has played some that was addressed to neither, but if he did, he was only trying to be fair. Because he can't readily see a particular thing in a piece of music, he doesn't deny its existence. He keeps trying to find it.

MUSICAL TASTES The musical tastes of Mitropoulos are, to a singular degree, the mirror of his qualities as a man. None of us will ever be likely to know a musician of like stature who will also be as pious, as humble or simple.

The great conductors of our era have created legends that will persist long into the future. The mere mention of the name Toscanini a century hence can hardly fail to conjure a memory of demonic drive and a fabulous exactitude. Surely the stiletto of the Beecham wit has many a target yet unborn.

And long after Mitropoulos



MITROPOULOS CONDUCTS The Met's Maestro in Action

has followed St. Francis of Assisi as far as he can, his Byzantine figure, bowed in prayer over the score and those about to translate it into a human message, will live in the consciousness of our grandchildren.

From MAY 23 1958 NEWS Chicago, Ill.

Met's 'Oegin' Here Has Its Good Moments

Most of Cast Performs Well In This Ineffective Opera

(Story of Society at the Met on Page 29.)

BY DON HENAHAN

Before setting out to compose "Eugene Oegin," Tchaikovsky wrote to his tireless listener, Madame von Meck:

"To refrain from writing operas is the act of a hero, and we have only one such hero in our time—Brahms. Such heroism is not for me. The stage, with all its glitter, attracts me irresistibly."

Despite this attraction the great melody manufacturer was never able to turn out a really good opera, though he finished eight. Effective opera calls for the calculating use of theatrical effects, and Tchaikovsky was too "sincere" to be calculating ("I spit on effects," he said).

GIVEN the handicap of such an attitude on the part of the composer, the Metropolitan Opera Company's opening-night performance of "Oegin" here Thursday night was fairly certain not to be a rousing triumph.

The only question to be decided was whether this company's staging, casting and performance would be able somehow to create a poetic atmosphere that the composer

INQUIRER Philadelphia, Pa. MAY 18 1958

Members Rally 'Round

Print Club Holds Exuberant Show

By HEDLEY H. RHYS

Fine Arts Department, Swarthmore College

The Print Club at 1614 Latimer st. is showing the work of its members until May 30. It is a non-juried, all media exhibition organized as a benefit for the club's Pension Fund. The widely dispersed members have rallied around loyally; their entries come not only from all over the United States but from several foreign countries as well.

Indeed, it is rather impressive that this disarmingly unpretentious little clubhouse on Latimer st. should have such far reaching influence. Another instance of the universality of art!

It is an enthusiastic kind of show. Set free from the restraining influence of a jury, it has become a sort of potpourri of picture making. There is everything there from the most traditional kind of etching to the most experimental kind of painting and vice versa.

The levels of competence are also almost infinitely various. It is not surprising that, with one or two exceptions, the quality of the prints is consistently higher than that of the paintings. The exhibitors are, after all, members of a print club.

WELL-KNOWN ARTISTS

There are a great many familiar names among the exhibitors, and a few familiar prints. Benton Spruance's poetic "Portrait of Mary" has been seen before, but it's youthful freshness is indestructible. An impressive woodcut by Jacob Landau presents Dimitri Mitropoulos to us as he would be seen by a member of his orchestra; impassioned, and commanding response. Landau's expressionist vocabulary is ideally suited to the subject. Quite the opposite mood is expressed in Marty Woodruff's witty little woodcut, "Slump," it's sagging curves are destructively relaxing.

From MAY 8 - 1958 NEWS Dallas, Texas

Met Opera 'Pit' Will Be in Good Hands Here

The orchestra for early 19th Century operas was called "the big guitar," for it did little more than supply harmonizing chords and rhythm. Any good time-beater would do as a conductor.

But this was not to continue after 1850. The symphonic machinery of Richard Wagner began to be heard from opera house pits and to be felt even by composers addicted to the vocal school.

Things don't happen overnight. It took another 30 years for opera audiences to grow conductor-conscious. But when they did, it was no longer a simple question of "Who's singing?" but also "Who's conducting?"

In the modern opera house the matter of the conductor is important even for the "guitar-operas." Audiences exact hair-trigger proficiency and the litting baroque style for Rossini, Donizetti and Bellini works once thought tickable with a metronome ticking the time.

GRAND OPERA production a century later tipped the balance THREE OF THE four operas

across the footlights into the pit. It almost has become a major question of "Who's conducting?" and a minor query of "Who's singing?" For the conductor became not only the artistic generator of the performance but usually the responsibility of preparing the opera along his own artistic designs.

The Metropolitan Opera had Gustav Mahler at the early part of the century and then Toscanini from 1908 to 1917. But both of these redoubtable perfectionists were primarily opera men in that day and symphonists later. Indeed, Mahler was the only one who had jobs in both the Metropolitan and the Philharmonic simultaneously before the present era of Dimitri Mitropoulos.

Late in the 1940's, the symphonist entered the Met pit and the era was distinguished by Bruno Walter, Fritz Reiner, Karl Boehm, Fritz Busch, Sir Thomas Beecham, Pierre Monteux and others.

Max Rudolf, who will conduct "Der Rosenkavalier" Saturday afternoon, was primarily a symphonic music specialist before coming to America in 1941. Opera sidetracked him in 1945 but he was to bring the symphonic touch to the pit even with a Verdi "Il

Trovatore," which he revealed to us in 1957.

THE SCORE OF "Rosenkavalier" is as symphonic as a Strauss tone poem and it is a matter of interest that Rudolf always has conducted it here, in the performance of 1946 and 1953 as well as 1958. Next season he will become the conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony.

The balding Greek conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos, was known in America chiefly as conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony and then the New York Philharmonic. His considerable operatic background was acquired in Athens, Florence and Milan.

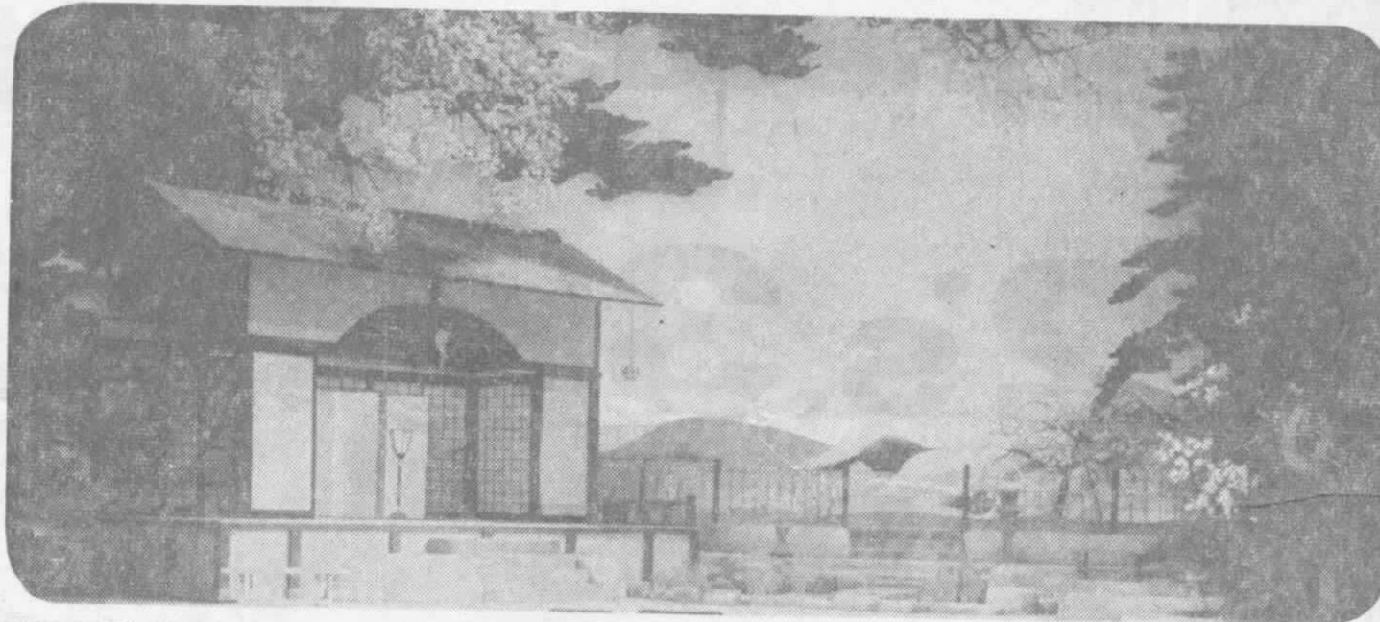
The Metropolitan has shared Mitropoulos with the Philharmonic since 1945. He was given musical direction of two major productions to be heard here, "Eugene Oegin" on Saturday night and "Madama Butterfly" Sunday afternoon. He had previous conducted "Tosca" here in 1956.

Japan Art Brings Authentic 'Butterfly'

By ELIZABETH MORGAN
Capturing the real flavor of 1904 Japan in a melodramatic opera composed by an Italian should be a staggering task for Americans. But this season the Metropolitan Opera imported two Japanese theater artists to revamp "Madame Butterfly," a production that had gone unchanged for 34 years. The artists, who speak no English, have spent months backstage at the Met, Yoshiro Aoyama as stage director and Motohiro Nagasaka as set designer.

As a result, the closing night audience of Atlanta's 1958 Met season will see a successful fusion of Eastern culture and Western music.

In restyling the production, the artists have changed some traditions that opera-goers associate with "Butterfly." As Mr. Aoyama explained, a gong



HOUSE IN NEW STAGE SETTING IS AUTHENTIC JAPANESE, HIGH-CEILINGED FOR WESTERNERS
Motohiro Nagasaka Did Paintings, Then Models for Brand New "Butterfly" Production

always has been sounded on stage during the wedding scene between Butterfly and Pinkerton. But in Japan a gong is used for a funeral, not a wedding. Hence, the gong is gone, except where Puccini wrote it into the orchestral score.

HOW WOMEN CRY

The actors do Japanese things, too, instead of what Westerners think are Japanese. The women cry by gently bowing their heads and shielding

their eyes instead of screwing up their faces and shaking in the time-honored Western manner. Though the Met actors are good at following directions, declared Mr. Aoyama, he had trouble explaining the Japanese lack of facial expression.

"It is difficult," he commented through an interpreter, "for an Italian to keep his expression simple."

Then, too, continued the stage director, Westerners believe

that Japanese take tiny, frequent steps, and he had a hard time getting rid of this misconception. "We are short and therefore our normal steps are short," he explained, "but the tiny, mincing steps come from China, not Japan."

JAPANESE, OF COURSE

Thus the authentic tone of the new production is set. In pure, airy style, Mr. Nagasaka first painted his conception of the

new sets and then constructed a model. The finished stage sets look much like his paintings... Japanese, of course.

The stage house, explained the designer, is just that. It is made of shoji screens typical of his country, but to live in it, a Japanese would put up wooden shutters for protection against the elements. The house is quite real, he added, complete with high ceilings to admit tall, Western opera singers. "With a few

changes," he commented, "Japanese could live comfortably in my 'Butterfly' house."

And somehow, though the Orientalists discussed these detailed surface changes, they have gone much deeper into the opera. Their success in putting across the Japanese character, as well as the gesture and costume, has helped the actors come alive on stage — no small feat in the performance of opera. And the audience comes alive with them.

There is fidelity to Puccini music and conception as well as to Japan. And, because Mr. Aoyama and Mr. Nagasaka are artists, they have discovered the elements of unity and integrity which transcend time and place and simply tell a poignant story of blind love betrayed.

PREPARED ARTFULLY

Antonietta Stella has prepared herself artfully to become Cio-Cio-San, Butterfly. Mario del Monaco stars as Pinkerton, Margaret Roggero sings Suzuki and Frank Guarrera plays Consul Sharpless. And conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos brings out the essence of the music.

And so, in the new production, the singer-actors get more out of Puccini. Puccini gets more out of Japan, and the audience gets a tremendous amount out of "Madame Butterfly."

On the Aisle

Mitropoulos' Tschaikowsky Strong Point of the Met's 'Onegin'

BY CLAUDIA CASSIDY

TSCHAIKOWSKY WORRIED about casting "Eugene Onegin" long before Rudolf Bing confronted the problem of the new production introduced to the Metropolitan repertoire when the season opened last October, and to Chicago when the company's brief spring visit began in the Civic Opera house Thursday night. How Tschaikowsky came out is anybody's guess at this distance, tho at least once he declared himself "enraptured." Mr. Bing had his stellar luck with Dimitri Mitropoulos, whose eloquence in the pit constantly revitalized what weakness on stage was constantly destroying, and with Giorgio Tozzi, whose brief appearance as Prince Gremin created a character, established a mood, and magnetized a focus of lyric drama with one aria superbly sung.

So it can be done, this elusive "Eugene Onegin," but it might take the actors of a Moscow Musical Art theater to do it. Just to present it as opera with a typical opera cast doesn't work, and one of the mysteries of the world of stage direction is how Peter Brook can do such interesting things in theater and then approach

opera with such disconcerting ineptitude. He not only permits the scene at the country house ball to be ridiculous, he encourages it.

Which is a pity, because for all the weaknesses of "Onegin" as an opera, these lyric scenes have their own inner strength, their special fragrance, and their lasting spell. The story is that of character rather than of incidents, and in attempting to set Pushkin to music—or rather to set Pushkin in his own aura—Tschaikowsky wrote some of his loveliest, most haunting music. To hear it in the orchestra is to be enriched. Not to hear it on stage is to be cheated.

Yet if you are to hear it "Onegin" must have at least three singing actors of the highest quality. There is no other way to settle with Tatiana, Onegin and the luckless Lenski. Richard Tucker brings that warm beautiful tenor to Lenski, and he sings the farewell beautifully in the dusk. In the light, alas, he is alarmingly convex, and as an actor he is a total loss. George London has the fine figure for Onegin, and once he had the voice. Now he sings in a kind of baritone mush, and he can't make up his mind whether Onegin should be a coldly selfish fop or a macabre fellow a la Dr. Miracle. Lucine Amara never knows quite what hit her as Tatiana—that marvelous role blessed with the flowering letter scene. She doesn't look the part, she has no idea how to act it, and she seldom sings it.

So it comes down to the

TRIBUNE
Chicago, Ill.

MAY 25 1958

TRAGIC STORY OF 'BUTTERFLY' STIRS HEARERS

Wins Full Respect of Opera Lovers

BY SEYMOUR RAVEN

This new production of "Madame Butterfly" wins the full respect of those who love the opera. But that is only the beginning. It goes on to enmesh the observer in the web of Puccini's throbbing tragedy and draws him to a new center—where lurks a hotly penetrating sting of Japanese fatalism.

Staging, settings and costumes are by Japanese craftsmen, Aoyama and Nagasaka, who were brought to the Metropolitan to do the production from the ground up this season. And if that ground is in part orchestral, they found ready a conductor, Dimitri Mitropoulos, who knows that the ground of Japan, like Italy's, is volcanic.

From MAY 29 1958

TIMES

New York, N. Y.

Opera Benefit For Foundation Planned at 'Met'

'La Traviata' on Nov. 8 Will Assist Work of Bagby Organization

For the second year the Bagby Music Lovers Foundation has chosen a Metropolitan Opera performance as its annual fund-raising event.

Proceeds from the Nov. 8 performance of "La Traviata" with Renata Tebaldi singing the role of Violetta and Fausto Cleva conducting, will augment the foundation's fund to aid needy opera and concert artists whose active careers have ended.

Lucrezia Bori, chairman of the 1958 benefit committee, is being assisted by Mrs. William Francis Gibbs, Mrs. Alexander H. McLanahan and Licia Albanese, vice chairman.

Those who have already made parterre box reservations include Mrs. August Belmont, Mrs. Clark Williams, Mr. and Mrs. Lowell Wadsworth, Mrs. Charles de Rham, Mrs. Draper Boncompagni, Mr. and Mrs. DeWitt TerHeun, Mrs. Diane Eristavi, Mrs. Rudolph Fluegge, Robert D. L. Gardiner, Lauder Greenway and Ivan Obolensky.

Among those interested in the benefit's success are Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor at the Met.

Bridges Two Cultures

Antonietta Stella is the most fascinating Butterfly in many a recent season. Just as the opera itself bridges two cultures, Miss Stella does, playing on the resonant traditions of Italian lyric drama and opening the door of her mind to the oriental implications of the new staging. When she plots her death you are carried past that dimly understood business of "honorable death" in the sense of alien social code to an acutely personal involvement with tragic inevitability. That, once again, is the magic of theater.

As happens every so often with total performance, one loses the distinction between "vocal" and "histrionic." It is very difficult to recall Miss Stella's voice to the exclusion of her face or to say that the sob came from the throat or the heart.

All of a Piece

But then it was difficult to see Margaret Roggero's Suzuki as an independent piece of casting—so deeply did she identify herself with the shock of Butterfly at discovering that the pledge of marriage to a

new man from a strange world should be taken at less than its value to one of her own.

Because this performance was all of a piece, the matter of honorable pledge was carried clear thru to Cio-Cio-San's scene with the later suitor, Yamadori [a rich bit of detail by George Cehanovsky] and one was never permitted to lose sight of the doomed tone of that pledge.

The parts of Pinkerton and Sharpless naturally were not subject to much reorientation. Both singers functioned smoothly.

Lavish Settings, Costume

The settings and costumes were the products of lavish talents, so much so that it took me most of the first act to adjust. Seeing the players emerge with more realism than before and judging this against a setting inspired by classic Japanese prints, I wondered for awhile which would have to give in to the other. Actually neither had to. They met, as surely as night fell on the first act and the curtain opened on the interior of Cio-Cio-San's house. The cherry blossoms dwelled within as they did in the garden.

TRIBUNE
Chicago, Ill.

MAY 28 1958

On the Aisle

If Chicago Hopes to Have First Rate Opera, How About Audience to Match?

BY CLAUDIA CASSIDY

MOVING DOWN a few steps—physically, not musically—can make a world of difference to a conductor, as Dimitri Mitropoulos must have discovered to his sorrow when he came to town not as conductor of the New York Philharmonic, or as guest conductor of the Chicago Symphony, but as a prize feather in the conducting cap of Metropolitan Opera.

Especially at opening night's "Eugene Onegin" in the Civic Opera house, audience applause greeted the entrance of favorite singers, even when others were singing. Scenery was applauded, no matter what that applause did to the music. Applause broke into unfinished scenes, spoiling their ultimate effect, and, naturally, when the curtain fell these same hand clappers took it for granted that no one could possibly be interested in any orchestral comment.

Yet some of these people go to concerts, where their behavior is on quite another level. In the concert hall, no one would dream of interrupting music with applause, to chatter during performance is unthinkable, and those who applaud in the wrong places even during pauses are rank outsiders who would rate a look thru a lorgnette if women still wore them.

So why wreck the opera? Is it sheer ignorance? Sheer disregard of the rights of others who might actually have made a financial sacrifice in the vain hope of hearing uninterrupted performance? In the trigger-fingered applause department, is it a desire to seem to be "in the know," and so to give yourself away as an ignoramus? Or is it an "all we like sheep" following of the cues of the claqueur?

For don't fool yourself that there is no claque. It may have shrunk beyond official recognition, but it does exist in individual survival. Note that much of the ill-timed applause begins with one crackling hand clap, most often at the right rear of the opera house, less often at the left rear. To join in such applause is to be just a plain sucker. Your claqueur may be giving his money's worth, but he is spoiling yours. The difference is that you pay, and he gets paid. It is more to the point to shush him, violently if necessary.

Chicago once had as knowing an opera audience as the world could offer—but that was when it had a distinguished tradition in opera going on both sides of the footlights. Neither can exist in the better sense of the term without the other. If we are to have a civilized life in opera, sparked by the Lyric and enkindled by visiting performance, we must have an audience worthy of the trust. If your opera going is spoiled by bad mannered neighbors, tell them about it, and make it stick. It is your right—in fact, if you care about opera, it is more nearly your obligation.



Dimitri Mitropoulos



PLAN BENEFIT AT METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE: George L. Bagby, left, Mrs. William C. Breed and Dimitri Mitropoulos, the conductor, meet in Mr. Bagby's home to go over arrangements for benefit to be held at Nov. 8 evening performance of "La Traviata." Mr. Bagby is chairman of board of trustees of Bagby Music Lovers Foundation, beneficiary of event. Mrs. Breed is a committee member.

La Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York

EL TELEGRAFO
Guayaquil, Ecuador
May 2, 1958



DIMITRI MITROPOULIS, destacado director de la Orquesta Filarmónica de la ciudad de Nueva York, quien actuará en varios de los conciertos que la Orquesta ofrecerá en los países latinoamericanos durante la gira que realiza bajo los auspicios del Programa de Difusión Cultural de los Estados Unidos. Actúa, asimismo, como Co-Director de la Orquesta Leonard Bernstein, quien dirigirá la Orquesta en las presentaciones que ésta hará en mayo próximo en las ciudades de Guayaquil y Quito.

Por Jorge González-Rubio Vargas
La oficial regional del Departamento de Estado en Nueva York tuvo la gentileza de arreglar la visita a uno de los salones de conciertos de mayor fama mundial, Carnegie Hall, lugar de consagración de las más grandes virtuosas y orquestas sinfónicas.

Efectué mi recorrido para llegar a la casa de la Avenida Broadway, pasé por el Metropolitan Opera House en la calle 39 y al llegar a la 42 me encontré en Times Square, el sitio más intensamente frecuentado en Nueva York. Hay que tener en cuenta para tomar un subway en Times Square a las cinco de la tarde, llamada la "rush hour" cuando las calles están llenas de autos y de gente que camina, y copan los subways en la forma que si uno sale de la casa por la calle 50 y se dirige a Times Square, donde se encuentra la Avenida Broadway y la 42da Avenida es también el comienzo de la "Great White Way", la "Gran Vía Blanca" que se extiende hasta la calle 50 y se ilumina por la gran iluminación que existe durante la noche en el número de letreros luminosos de las casas, teatros, restaurantes, etc., concentrados en un espacio limitado. Recorrerla durante la noche es recibir la más gran de las emociones.

En Carnegie Hall, situado en la calle 57 y Séptima Avenida, he conocido por Mr. John J. Tolson, Vice-Presidente y Gerente de este santuario musical. Luego de intercambiar impresiones me invité al ensayo que en ese momento efectuaban los músicos. Me condujo hasta el salón sinfónico y al abrir la puerta fui recibido por las sublimes melodías de uno de los movimientos de la cuarta sinfónica de Beethoven. En el salón había un grupo de músicos que habían estado de estufo, asombrados, admirados, viendo los movimientos del conductor Leonard Bernstein frente a los integrantes de la Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York. Llegaba a las 10 y media de la noche y los músicos se estaban despidiendo poco a poco y arremeter con la batuta y gestos de la cabeza sobre la orquesta. Hechos momentos parecía delirar al seguir el desarrollo de la música con cánticos que el mismo efectuaba de las melodías. El final fue el punto culminante.

LA NACION
Guayaquil, Ecuador
May 11, 1958

Si el público de Guayaquil ha pagado tan caro por un asiento de luneta en la noche del estreno de esta Sinfónica, los organizadores deberían de haberlo tratado con más consideración, pues, hemos querido oír a los grandes clásicos y no música de pacotilla como la que tuvimos oportunamente que oír. Hay que darse cuenta de que es la segunda vez que escuchamos a una Sinfónica, y por esta causa deberían de haber seleccionado el programa para que los abonados no se vieran defraudados.

Con respecto al Conductor de esta Sinfónica, no es nada extraordinario, ya que todavía le falta la madurez y la experiencia a que todo conductor llega al través de los años. Y esto fue una nueva desilusión de los asistentes ya que hubiéramos querido que dirija a este grupo sinfónico su principal jefe griego Dimitri Mitropoulos.

JOSE DE LA ZETA

The Standard, Thursday, May 29, 1958

"One of the Six Top Conductors of Our Time..."

Dimitri Mitropoulos -- the Biography of a Pioneer

Director of the New York Philharmonic Symphony, He Also Is One Of the Foremost Advocates for the Cause of Contemporary Music

MENTIONING Dimitri Mitropoulos, is referring to the musician who has been called one of the six top conductors of our time by none less than Arturo Toscanini, who not only knew what he was talking about, but was never easy to convince. As always in his praise and approval, the maestro has been right: the director of the New York Philharmonic Symphony, who on Saturday will make his local debut in front of "his" orchestra is, indeed, one of the outstanding personalities of contemporary music and contemporary music life. The two are not exactly the same, because even in the midst of present-day musical activity, one can remain as conservative as one may wish. Not so Mitropoulos, who, at the head of one of the most distinguished and reputed orchestras in the world, not only maintains the tradition in performing the classic and romantic repertory, but also promotes the music of our time. There is hardly a representative work by a living composer which he has not interpreted at one time or another, and many of them he has given their first performance.

The truth of the matter is that this conductor for many, many years, has enjoyed the reputation of being probably the foremost promoter of the music of our time. There is hardly a representative work by a living composer which he has not interpreted at one time or another, and many of them he has given their first performance. Consequently, even at such a short visit as his present one, the programs of his concerts are equally divided between the "repertory" and modern music; and if a work such as Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony perhaps no longer belongs to the latter, but already to the former group, it may as well be included in the former group. Mitropoulos interpreted it, as so many others, when it still was not only contemporary but also modern music.

Mitropoulos was born in Athens in 1896. His father, a Greek leather merchant, was a son of a priest of the Greek Orthodox Church and the nephew of an Archbishop. Also two other of his

relatives were monks at Mount Athos, with his family tradition, and although as a boy Mitropoulos showed an exceptional talent for music and had early begun to study at the Odéon, the conservatory of Athens, it was his father's intention that he should eventually enter a monastic order. But when it came to the point of abandoning his music and becoming a monk, Mitropoulos was torn between two desires. After much mental conflict, he decided in favor of music.

At the Odéon, Mitropoulos studied piano and composition and played percussion instruments in the orchestra. At the age of 14, he composed incidental music for Sophocles and Euripides. After brief service in the Army as a drummer in the Balkan war, he returned to Athens and studied at the University. Here, in his last year, and at the age of 23, he wrote an opera based on Maeterlinck's "Soeur Béatrice." This was performed at the Odéon and praised by Saint-Saëns. Instead, however, of accepting this composer's offer of further study in Paris, Mitropoulos went to Brussels and worked at the organ and composition. He then proceeded, on a scholarship, to Berlin, where he met Ferruccio Busoni, who accepted him as one of his five-member class. The Sonata which he had written and submitted for entrance was criticized as having "too much passion."

Busoni was a compelling in-

fluence on Mitropoulos and persuaded him to give up composition as his chief aim. "From what Busoni told me," Mitropoulos said, "I lost all respect for myself as a composer. I listened to Busoni, absorbed his knowledge, and ended up as a re-creator instead of a creator."

After three years (1921-24) as assistant conductor at the Berlin Staatsoper, he became conductor of the Athens Symphony Orchestra and director of the Odéon. His European reputation was established in 1930 when, as guest conductor for the Berlin Philharmonic and Egon Petri being unable at the last moment to appear, he played the solo part in Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto and conducted the orchestra at the same time. This feat Mitropoulos repeated in Paris and subsequently in London and other capitals. For four consecutive years, beginning in 1933, he toured the principal Italian cities and from 1934 to 1937 conducted a three-months season at Monte Carlo. He also conducted at Moscow.

In 1936, Koussevitzky, then musical director of the Boston Symphony, invited him to Boston as a guest conductor for two weeks. His conducting on this occasion was rendered notable for an "illuminating" reading of Richard Strauss' Sinfonia Domestica, and as a result of this he appeared in 1937 as a guest conductor of the Cleveland and Minneapolis or-



Dimitri Mitropoulos, the eminent conductor, will appear with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra on Saturday and Monday at the Colon.

chestras. That same year he was invited to fill the vacant post of conductor of the Minneapolis Orchestra in succession to Eugene Ormandy. In the next twelve years Mitropoulos made this orchestra into "one of the most notable ensembles in the country," according to the New York Times.

At the outset he had announced a policy of allocating three programs every season to modern music by such composers as Mahler, Schoenberg and Hindemith. It is of interest that in 1940 he was awarded the American Mahler Medal of Honour in recognition of "his efforts to create greater interest in and appreciation of Mahler's music."

From 1947 until 1949, Mitropoulos repeatedly conducted, as a

Preséntase Esta Noche en el Colón la Famosa Orquesta Sinfo-Filarmónica de Nueva York

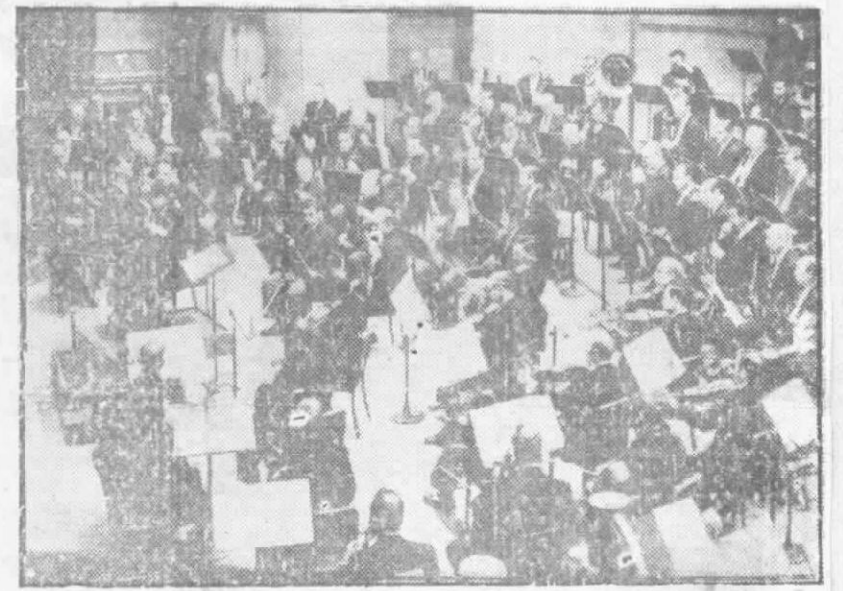
Actuarán los Directores
Bernstein y Mitropoulos

ESTA noche y después de diecisiete años, el público de Buenos Aires tendrá oportunidad de escuchar una orquesta sinfónica extranjera. La última vez que ocurrió este acontecimiento fue en 1941, cuando la Orquesta Sinfónica de la National Broadcasting Corporation, al mando de Arturo Toscanini, ofreció una serie de memorables conciertos en el teatro Colón. En esta oportunidad, la visita corre por cuenta de uno de los organismos orquestales de mayor arraigo en Estados Unidos y que como organización se cuenta entre las más antiguas del mundo: la Orquesta Sinfo-Filarmónica de Nueva York. En verdad, este famoso conjunto es el resultado de las fuerzas instrumentales de las tradicionales sociedades musicales neoyorquinas: la Sociedad Sinfónica y la Sociedad Filarmónica que se fusionaron en 1928. De ahí su nombre de Orquesta Sinfo-Filarmónica de Nueva York. Por su parte, la Sociedad Filarmónica tiene más de cien años de antigüedad y ha constituido una de las más poderosas influencias en el desarrollo cultural del país del norte.

Los directores

La Sinfo-Filarmónica es una orquesta estable que realiza varias series anuales de conciertos, la mayor parte de ellos en el Carnegie Hall que es su sede principal. En abril de este año la orquesta ofreció su concierto regular No. 6.000. Exhibe en su historia una brillante lista de directores titulares, muchos de los cuales han alcanzado a su frente durante muchos años. Es así que registra figuras como Gustav Mahler, Willen Menckberg, Otto Klemperer, Erich Kleiber, Felix Weingartner, Pierre Monteux, John Barbirolli y Arthur Schnabel. Durante varias temporadas actuó a las órdenes de Arturo Toscanini, que, como de costumbre, dejó en la orquesta las indecibles bellezas de su fenomenal personalidad.

En la actualidad, la Sinfo-Filarmónica cuenta como directores titulares al griego Dimitri Mitropoulos y al americano Leonard Bernstein. Este último, el primer director de origen norteamericano que llega a este alto cargo, fue nombrado a principios de es-



UNA DE LAS MEJORES DEL MUNDO



LEONARD BERNSTEIN

te año para suceder a Mitropoulos que se retirará de la Sinfo-Filarmónica a fines de esta temporada.

La Sinfo-Filarmónica es una orquesta privada. Es financiada con los ingresos de taquilla, con los derechos por grabación de discos, transmisiones de radio y venta de simpatías, extendidos por todo el terri-

torio de los Estados Unidos. Su presupuesto para el ciclo anual de conciertos en Nueva York alcanza la cifra de un millón y medio de dólares. Su personal incluye famosos instrumentistas, gran parte de ellos de origen europeo, puesto que para formar parte de esta orquesta, lo que se exige es ser buen ejecutante y no necesariamente razones de raza o nacionalidad en la selección de los mismos.

La temporada regular de la Sinfo-Filarmónica se extiende entre los meses de octubre a abril en un total de 24 a 30 semanas que comprenden alrededor de 120 conciertos. De vez en cuando realiza giras por el interior de los Estados Unidos o va al exterior (en una de ellas realizada en Europa en 1930 fue dirigida por Toscanini), como en el caso actual en que actúa en un extenso viaje por muchas de las repúblicas americanas. Fue asimismo la primera orquesta americana que actuó en los Festivales de Edimburgo (1951). Esta gira por América latina es la primera que realiza y para poder llevarla a



DIMITRI MITROPOULOS

cabo debido a los enormes gastos que plantea la movilización de sus 120 integrantes ha contado con la cooperación del Programa Internacional del Presidente para Presentar las Artes y las Letras, tra la Academia y Teatro Nacionales Culturales que administran con la sigla ANTA, dependiente del Departamento de Estado de los Estados Unidos.

"LA PRENSA"

31 de mayo de 1958

Segundo Concierto
De la Orquesta
Filarmónica de N. York

Hoy, a las 18, se realizará en el teatro Colón el segundo concierto de la Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York, con la dirección del maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos.

El programa es el siguiente: "Obertura para el Fausto criollo", de Ginastera; Segunda Sinfonía de Beethoven; "Noche trasfigurada", de Schoenberg y Meditación y Danza de la Venganza, de "Medea", de Samuel Barber.

El maestro Mitropoulos, que hará su presentación ante nuestro público, es uno de los directores de mayor fama internacional. Griego de origen, se graduó en Atenas, estudió en Berlín con Busoni y Mahler; después dirigió en Londres y París y en 1935 fue invitado a dar conciertos con la Sinfónica de Boston, radicándose de entonces en los Estados Unidos. En 1937, fue designado director de la Orquesta Sinfónica de Minneapolis; en 1949, fue llamado a Filadelfia para actuar junto con Stokowsky en la orquesta de dicha ciudad y al año siguiente llegó a titular de la misma. Actualmente dirige la orquesta neoyorquina que nos visita en este momento.

Mitropoulos es ampliamente conocido a través de sus numerosas grabaciones, cuyos méritos artísticos han sido unanimemente apreciados por todos los aficionados del mundo.

quest, the New York Philharmonic Symphony. In 1949 he shared the rostrum with Stokowski, after Artur Rodzinski withdrew after seven years, but in 1950 Mitropoulos became sole musical director. Last season he suggested that Leonard Bernstein should become his co-director, a wish which the Board of Directors of the N. Y. Philharmonic Society gladly complied with.

In the very first year of his regime in New York, he took his orchestra to the Roxy Theatre for two weeks, during which they gave four performances daily, these sandwiched between the showing of a feature film. Mitropoulos remarked that it was "the music that counts, the time of place doesn't matter." But the experiment was successful, and was repeated.

His foible for the unorthodox is indicated in the concert repertory of such operas as Strauss' "Elektra," Milhaud's "Les Choeurs," Ravel's "L'Heure Espagnole," Busoni's "Arlecchino," Schoenberg's "Erwartung" and last but not least -- Alban Berg's "Wozzeck."

He conducts without a score and often without a baton. When he conducts his whole body seems to vibrate to the musical emotion. He has a passion for climbing mountains and he is said to live modestly in the back room of a hotel. He is a hard worker and eats sparingly of simple dishes. Much of his leisure is spent in reading Plato, Socrates, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard and the Greek dramatists. His ascetic life has often been remarked upon, and he is known for his generous aid to college students and struggling composers. Discussing modernistic music he once said that he considered Vaughan Williams' Fourth Symphony an outstanding contribution and that he could not understand the neglect of such a significant composer as John Holbrooke.

Like Bernstein and the N. Y. Philharmonic Symphony, he is under exclusive contract to Columbia Records, for which he has recorded almost a hundred works. Nineteen long-play records have been issued so far, locally.



LA FILARMONICA

Dimitri Mitropoulos

Griego de nacimiento, norteamericano por adopción, ya tenía una brillante reputación europea como director antes de su presentación en los Estados Unidos, en 1936, frente a la Sinfónica de Boston. En la temporada 1940-1941 condujo por primera vez la Filarmónica de Nueva York.

Inició su carrera como pianista virtuoso y compositor de gran talento; pero tras su primera experiencia como director de orquesta quedó encasada su verdadera vocación.

Fue nombrado director de la Filarmónica de Nueva York en la temporada 1950-1951 y director musical desde 1951 hasta 1957. En la temporada 1957-1958 comparte con Leonard Bernstein los deberes inherentes a director en propiedad de la Filarmónica.

Fue Dimitri Mitropoulos quien llevó por primera vez una orquesta de los Estados Unidos al Festival Internacional de Edimburgo. Allí, en agosto de 1951, la Filarmónica de Nueva York alcanzó uno más de sus tantos triunfos artísticos. En 1955 volvió con la Filarmónica a intervenir en el Festival de Edimburgo y la condujo en una extensa gira por Europa.

Entre los planes del presente año, D. Mitropoulos llevará a la Filarmónica de Viena en una gira por varias ciudades europeas, dirigirá la Sinfónica de Israel y se hará presente conduciendo en el Festival de Salzburgo.

1º de junio de 1958

Defendiendo al Público

Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York, dirigida por Dimitri Mitropoulos

El cronista que se ocupa de cuestiones musicales en un importante diario matutino de esta ciudad ha escrito, a raíz de la presentación de la Filarmónica de Nueva York, que la visita de este organismo "permite valorar a otros conjuntos de músicos que poseen una mayor riqueza sonora, de matices, pocos apreciados por nuestro público, que aparentemente es materia impensable cuando se trata de juzgar lo extranjero (sic). Por supuesto, toda persona tiene el derecho de decir y escribir lo que piensa. Y, junto con el derecho, asume la responsabilidad de la opinión. No voy a referirme, en consecuencia, a los aspectos de juicio que pueden esbozarse, tras esa tan notable reflexión. Pero me siento un poco obligado a defender al público, sobre el que se ha dejado caer la sospecha de que su entusiasmo por la actividad de la Filarmónica está basado en una falsa presunción: la de que no es una orquesta tan extraordinaria como se afirma. Y que ese entusiasmo responde a un estímulo ajeno a la música, el de que es extranjera.

Debo, señalar, para aclarar la cuestión desde el comienzo, que personalmente nunca me ha impresionado de manera singular lo extranjero por el hecho de ser extranjero. Ni lo nacional, por el hecho de ser nacional. Un planteo crítico de esta naturaleza es demasiado simplista y parece innecesario en arte, si se desea tener criterio propio, uno se interesa con lo que es bueno, sin pensar en concepciones geográficas, raciales, religiosas, políticas, profesionales o amistosas. Si escucho a un violinista o un cantante excelente, por lo general no indago sobre su nacionalidad o país de adopción. Porque cuando escucho música, me interesa el problema estético, no la libreta de enclavamiento del ejecutante. Y cuando un violinista desafina, desafina igual si ha nacido en París o en Buenos Aires; si es amigo mío o un extraño; si es mahometano o católico, si es comunista o conservador; si es blanco o negro. Hay un hecho concreto, desafiante. Y este hecho concreto se produce en todas las nacionalidades, en todas las religiones y en todas las posiciones políticas. Y ninguna de tales circunstancias lo puede alterar.

Así, una orquesta sinfónica es un hecho concreto y definido, venga de donde venga. He tenido oportunidad de escuchar en el exterior del país orquestas peores que la peor argentina. También he podido escuchar orquestas sideralmente mejores que las que tenemos aquí. En ambos casos eran extranjeras. La diferencia entre una y otra era de calidad, no de origen. No siempre estoy de acuerdo con las reacciones del público en los conciertos, mis lectores y ellos lo saben bien. Pero jamás se me ocurrió la peregrina idea de achacar la intensidad de la reacción del público al hecho de que algo no es local. En esta ciudad han fracasado intérpretes musicales que venían precedidos de enorme fama en el extranjero. No digo que fuera con justicia. Simplemente, que el hecho de ser extranjero no es una carta de bondad profesional en nuestro medio. Afortunadamente, tampoco la da el ser argentino. También afortunadamente. Porque, volviendo al tema de este sermón, en arte no cuenta la nacionalidad. Es una de las pocas cosas que el espectador no puede donde el pasaporte es el último que se mira.

Resumiendo, pues. Admito, aunque no lo acompaño en la creencia, de que alguien opine que en el país hay organismos sinfónicos de mayor riqueza sonora y de matices que la Filarmónica de Nueva York. Admito que eso se imprima si el que lo escribe llega a pensarlo. No admito en cambio que, por esta vez, se le haga al público el cargo de impresionarse cuando se trata de juzgar lo extranjero. Porque, según mi opinión, el entusiasmo del público por la acción de la Filarmónica de Nueva York no sólo no es exagerado sino que es normal. Y esta opinión, aunque pueda parecer descabellada al que escribió aquellas líneas, debe admitirse.

Si yo no fuera un crítico profesional y en consecuencia obligado a no demostrar mis reacciones en público hasta tanto le dé a mi diario la primicia de mi opinión, anoche hubiera aplaudido como pocas veces en mi vida. No hubiera aplaudido todo el programa que dirigió Dimitri Mitropoulos en su presentación en esta Filarmónica. Por ejemplo, hubiera aplaudido después de la Segunda Sinfonía de Beethoven porque si bien y como es de esperar con esta orquesta, la ejecución fue casi impecable, la versión que ofreció Mitropoulos distaba mucho de convenirme en cuanto a estilo. No es que me moleste, por ejemplo, que un movimiento "Allegro molto" se tome como "presto". El carácter del final de la obra admite cierta elasticidad en ese sentido, sobre todo cuando se tiene al frente una orquesta que es capaz de ejecutar cualquier figuración rítmica, a cualquier velocidad, con el máximo de nitidez. Pero me molesta, en cambio, que en medio del movimiento se intercale un "allegretto" para destacar un motivo. Eso no lo pensó ni lo deseó jamás Beethoven. De haberlo querido no tenía que realizarlo. Pero no lo marcó Mitropoulos es un músico de excepcional personalidad y admirable en muchísimos sentidos, pero ni aun



DIMITRI MITROPOULOS

que tuviera la estatura de un gigante, está autorizado a recomendarle la plana a un creador. Porque su deber, cuando dirige orquesta, vale decir, cuando interpreta, es en primera instancia reproducir un texto lo más fielmente que sea capaz. A partir de ese compromiso si le reconoce la libertad de valorar la forma personal las mil posibilidades que ningún texto musical puede prever. Pero después. No antes.

Tampoco hubiera aplaudido la Danza Final de "El sombrero de tres picos" de Manuel de Falla, que concedió como bis, pese a que pocas veces he escuchado sonar una orquesta con tal majestuosidad y ajuste. Pero eso no era versión en cinerama capaz de excitar todos los centros nerviosos de cualquier físico, pero ninguno de los intelectuales.

En cambio hubiera aplaudido y mucho la "Obertura para el Fausto criollo" de Ginastera, porque nunca la he escuchado con tal ímpetu y densidad de intención. También hubiera batido fuertemente mis palmas en honor a la "Meditación y Danza de la Venganza de Medea" de Samuel Barber, que es fragmento realmente interesante de uno de los mejores músicos norteamericanos.

Pero donde hubiese reaccionado con todo el entusiasmo que disgustó al cronista mencionado al comienzo de estas líneas, era con la inolvidable versión de "Noche transfigurada" de Schoenberg. Aquí mostró Mitropoulos que, con justicia, se lo tiene por uno de los más eximios directores de la hora actual en determinado repertorio. Fue una concepción de extraordinaria pasión, ternura y drama. La obra, originalmente dedicada a un sexteto de cuerdas, fue ejecutada por la cuerda de la Filarmónica con una pureza de sonido, variedad de color y riqueza de acentos que será memorable entre la mayor parte de lo que tuvieron el privilegio de escucharla. Digo la mayor parte y no la totalidad porque bien pudiera ocurrir que alguien atribuyera estos elogios a que la Filarmónica es de Nueva York y no de Buenos Aires.

1º de junio de 1958

DIMITRI MITROPOULOS Y LA ORQUESTA DE N. YORK

Ayer por la tarde tuvo efecto en el Teatro Colón el segundo concierto de la Orquesta Filarmónica-Sinfónica de Nueva York, que en esta oportunidad actuó bajo la dirección del maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos, quien se presentó ante el público de Buenos Aires. Con motivo del concierto precedente, se hizo amplia referencia en estas columnas a la significación de esta visita del organismo sinfónico estadounidense, así como a la extraordinaria jerarquía musical y profesional puesta en evidencia por el mismo a través de su labor. Tales valores, realmente impresionantes, volvieron a ponerse de manifiesto, esta vez en proporciones aun mayores, a lo largo de la sesión que nos ocupa. En su transcurso, y a través de un programa muy propio para la cabal exposición de sus posibilidades, la Filarmónica-Sinfónica se impuso nuevamente como un organismo orquestal de la más alta calidad, tanto en lo técnico como en lo artístico, superando en el que cada una de sus secciones puede ser presentada como modelo de

homogeneidad y eficiencia sin fallos y en el que cada uno de sus integrantes merece ser considerado como exponente ejemplar de capacidad instrumental —lindante no pocas veces con el mejor virtuosismo— y de responsabilidad consecuente de un claro concepto acerca de la trascendencia de su misión, de un firme espíritu de equipo, de respeto por el arte y del sentido de la disciplina indispensable para la obtención de resultados verdaderamente sólidos y perdurables. Todo lo cual se traduce en un maravilloso instrumento sinfónico en el que la virtual perfección se halla animada por una vibración humana, que impide toda posibilidad de caída en ese tipo de fría precisión mecánica, bajo la cual quedan ahogados los elementos esenciales del arte; el instrumento en el que, para bien de la música, se combinan admirablemente una sensibilidad viviente y una perfección técnica prácticamente absoluta.

Pero, conocida ya la orquesta, la gran atracción del concierto radicaba en su director, Dimitri Mitropoulos, una de las grandes figuras de la actualidad. Nacido en Grecia, en 1896, y tras de haber completado su formación en Berlín, con Ferruccio Busoni, este intérprete inició su carrera en su ciudad natal, prosiguiéndola en otros centros europeos, desde donde pasó a los Estados Unidos, radicándose, desde 1936, en el país del Norte. Durante algo más de diez años fue director titular de la Sinfónica de Minneapolis, pasando, en 1949, a asumir idénticas funciones en Nueva York, permaneciendo en ellas hasta hoy.

Clarín ★ El Diario Para Toda la Familia

Presentóse Dimitri Mitropoulos con la O. Filarmónica de N. York

Evidentemente, los conciertos deparan a veces sorpresas insólitas. Si el maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos hubiera terminado su actuación al frente de la Filarmónica de Nueva York con la última de las obras inscriptas en el programa de presentación en el Teatro Colón, este comentario crítico sería muy diferente al que es. Porque hasta allí, luego de una obertura de Ginastera, la Segunda Sinfonía de Beethoven, la Noche Transfigurada de Schoenberg y dos piezas sinfónicas de Barber, la cosa marchó espléndidamente bien: la orquesta tocó con su ya comentada perfección y el director logró momentos de insuperable jerarquía artística.

Pero el público forzó sin quererlo el fiel de la balanza y se movió hacia la vanidad del maestro, hasta obligarlo —cosa insólita en estos casos— a ofrecer un bis fuera de programa. Para ello eligió la danza final del Tricorno de Falla. Si Mitropoulos no hubiera dirigido la pieza de Schoenberg con tanta maestría, ni las cuerdas de la Filarmónica hubieran sonado tan límbicamente, el atentado contra Falla en persona que se cometió fuera de programa, hubiera sido considerado como la consecuencia de la falta de talento del director. Mas no fue así, porque Mitropoulos demostró que es un verdadero virtuoso de la batuta, como muy pocos hay hoy en día en el mundo, y un músico veraz y auténtico. ¿Cómo es posible entonces que se adulterara a esos extremos el pensamiento escrito de un músico como Falla, al sólo efecto de arrebatarse de las manos del público una ovación que sólo satisface la vanidad de quien la provoca?

La Jota final del Sombrero de Tres Picos ni es tan rápida como se pretendió demostrar aquí ni tan vulgar como se la hizo, adulterando incluso lo dispuesto en la partitura no sólo en materia de ritmos y tiempos (expresamente señalados), sino también en materia instrumental, ya que el autor pide sólo un par de castañuelas para marcar un ritmo determinado y el director las aumentó a tres, creyendo que así acrecentaba el colorido hispano de la misma. Es inadmisibles que esto ocurra con un director de este fuste. Como músico que es, Mitropoulos tiene el supremo deber de hacer las cosas tal como fueron escritas, le guste o no al público que acude a oírlo. Es un deber que impone la honestidad del artista, cuya misión es la de llevar al oído humano el pensamiento escrito por el compositor; misión que, por lo visto, el maestro Mitropoulos supedita al propio placer de verse aplaudido por una multitud a la que tampoco le interesa la música en sí, sino que busca en esa ceremonia, el halago de sensaciones que nada tienen que ver con el arte.

3 de junio de 1958

Con Entusiasmo Despidióse Anoche a la Orquesta Filarmónica de N. York

Las interminables ovaciones con que nuestro público despidió a la orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York y a su director Dimitri Mitropoulos, tradujeron con elocuencia el sentimiento que las provocaba. Desde la visita del conjunto de la National Broadcasting, con Arturo Toscanini —que no teníamos oportunidad de escuchar— al sinfónico de la disciplina, el ajuste, la calidad sonora y la conexión del que ha sido huesped de Buenos Aires durante breves días. De ahí que las entusiastas demostraciones expresaran no solamente la satisfacción y el deleite artístico con que se ha asistido a sus conciertos, sino también el reconocimiento a quienes pusieron una nota de singular jerarquía en las actividades musicales de nuestra ciudad. Ya es conocida la predilección de Dimitri Mitropoulos por las obras de Richard Strauss, que su temperamento halla ocasión de expresarse en su potencia expresiva y su seductor lirismo. Lo demostró en forma magnífica al animar la obertura del "Freischütz", de Weber, cuyo lenguaje alternativo bueño, tradujo con exultante dinamismo y vivo colorido. Data de 1888 el poema sinfónico de Richard Strauss, "Don Juan", que se hallan en potencia —y en que forma— las dotes magistrales de sinfonista del heredero de Liszt y Berlioz: el torrente

de puros metales. Con posterioridad a 1945 volvió, asimismo, a ponerse en contacto con las actividades musicales europeas, a las que continúa estrechamente vinculada. Sus actuaciones en ambos continentes, como director de ópera y de conciertos, le han granjeado la alta reputación de que goza y que una intensa labor en la fonografía, también muy celebrada, ha contribuido a difundir. En este primer concierto, Mitropoulos refinó de manera terminante cuanto de bueno se había adelantado a su respecto; en el colíndente una formidable naturaleza musical, con esplendidos dones de director de orquesta afirmados en un dominio completo de los medios expresivos, en una maestría para la que no parecieran existir límites, en un magnetismo irresistible y en un conocimiento exhaustivo de las obras que interpretó. En sus manos, bajo su mirada penetrante y su minuciosa tan expresiva, dominada por el talento poderoso y su rotundo don de mando, la orquesta se convirtió en el vehículo de un sentimiento musical receptivo y absoluto, seguro de sus ideas y de sus objetivos; y de tal manera, cada autor, cada obra, apareció expuesta conforme a los conceptos "inequívocamente claros de una individualidad vigorosa, cuya posición como intérprete marcadamente personal por momentos mantenidos en el límite de un poder de convicción, una fuerza persuasiva, un goce, diríase inabarcable de la lógica y de verdad, frente a los que resulta imposible no rendirse. En sus verdaderos se percibe la presencia inquebrantable de un músico que, al ser un arte, singular e indefinible, de la "re-creación", que constituye el distintivo de los intérpretes realmente grandes. De los cuales, y sin duda alguna, es Dimitri Mitropoulos uno de los más doctos y brillantes de nuestro tiempo.

Una obra argentina, la "Obertura del Fausto Criollo", de Ginastera, inició este concierto que presiguió con la "Sinfonía No. 2 en Re mayor, op. 36", de Beethoven. De esta última Mitropoulos una traducción profunda e inspirada, en donde la autenticidad del mensaje beethoveniano, más allá de un arte, singular e indefinible, de la "re-creación", que constituye el distintivo de los intérpretes realmente grandes. De los cuales, y sin duda alguna, es Dimitri Mitropoulos uno de los más doctos y brillantes de nuestro tiempo.

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La belleza de la cuerda de la orquesta permitió revelar todos los matices, y la intensa emotividad de esta lírica y exaltada obra, y la labor del director señalando su desarrollo demostró la perfecta comprensión a que se llega cuando orquesta y director lucen tanta categoría. La "Meditación y danza de la Venganza de Medea", fue la última composición del programa. Su autor, Samuel Barber, uno de los más conocidos y estimados compositores estadounidenses, dice de ella que "es un continuo movimiento y está basada en material del ballet, a su vez directamente relacionado con la protagonista principal: Medea. La instrumentación, al principio a cargo de vientos y luego de

Dimitri Mitropoulos en el Teatro Colón
Dirigió la Filarmónica de Nueva York

El renombre que el maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos ha conquistado en todo el mundo se convirtió en admiración en el teatro Colón, cuando al frente de la Orquesta Sinfónica de Nueva York comenzó su concierto, dirigiendo la obertura para el "Fausto criollo" del compositor argentino Alberto Ginastera. Cada uno de los detalles de colorido, los efectos de timbre orquestal, tuvieron esa claridad excepcional que únicamente se puede imaginar leyendo la partitura si no se hubiera escuchado antes su magnífica versión. El cuidado del detalle, aun en sus menores inflexiones de acentos, no rompe la línea general, la unidad que debe previr en toda exposición musical. La agilidad de los instrumentos de viento, que destacaron juntamente con las cuerdas los ritmos característicos de esta página, revelan al intérprete preocupado en la fiel realización. El aplauso caído de la sala, fue hecho extensivo al autor que saludó desde el escenario.

Con aire de vigorosa afirmación fue el "Allegro con brio", de la "Sinfonía No. 2", en re mayor, op. 36, de Beethoven, después del "Adagio molto", que es una especie de introducción. La sonoridad plena y generosa del conjunto nunca pasó del límite que impone la calidad, mérito de ejecución al cual se suma la noble elegancia, especialmente en el "Larghetto", que recuerda los movimientos lentos de los cuartetos del autor. A veces un "ralentando" acentuado, por efecto de contraposición la continuidad del movimiento orquestal. La suavidad de la flauta, emergiendo entre las cuerdas resaca el acento a veces melancólico juntamente con las trompas, de un bello sonido y de una seguridad excepcional. El final de esta sinfonía, tuvo una expresión vigorosa donde el director supo hacer resaltar los efectos de acordes repentinos, dentro de un dibujo de fraseo muy detallado. Una fina distinción presidió todo el transcurso de esta interpretación, y es indudable que tuvo el valor de las mejores interpretaciones que se han escuchado en Buenos Aires.

Arnold Schoenberg, el famoso compositor nacido en Viena en 1874, jefe de una de las escuelas modernas que aún sigue siendo discutida, cuyo representante con "Noche transfigurada", escrita originalmente para sexteto de cuerdas, sobre un poema del poeta alemán Richard Dehmel. La belleza de la cuerda de la orquesta permitió revelar todos los matices, y la intensa emotividad de esta lírica y exaltada obra, y la labor del director señalando su desarrollo demostró la perfecta comprensión a que se llega cuando orquesta y director lucen tanta categoría. La "Meditación y danza de la Venganza de Medea", fue la última composición del programa. Su autor, Samuel Barber, uno de los más conocidos y estimados compositores estadounidenses, dice de ella que "es un continuo movimiento y está basada en material del ballet, a su vez directamente relacionado con la protagonista principal: Medea. La instrumentación, al principio a cargo de vientos y luego de

los otros grupos, que van dialogando entre sí, además de la inclusión de elementos tímbricos, se va haciendo cada vez más densa hasta llegar a una explosión de toda la orquesta, que culmina en un "fortísimo" que entusiasma por su esplendor. El maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos debió agregar a esta obra "Danza del sombrero de tres picos", de Manuel de Falla, que fue una demostración del poder de la orquesta por su claridad y ajuste, dando a esta página todo el violento color y el sentimiento que la animan.

El público prodigó a la actuación de Dimitri Mitropoulos una larga ovación que fue compartida por la orquesta.

El Mundo 2 junio 58
BA
DIARIO INDEPENDIENTE, SERIO Y NOTICIOSO

DIRIGE MITROPOULOS LA FILARMONICA DE N. YORK

Una función extraordinaria, fuera de abono, ofreció la Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York con la dirección de Dimitri Mitropoulos en el Teatro Colón. El programa, concebido al efecto se inició con la versión de la Obertura para el "Fausto criollo" de nuestro compatriota Alberto Ginastera, tan ajustada como todo lo que se hace en este conjunto de excepcional disciplina, donde prima el más absoluto respeto por las intenciones, calculadas y realizadas con perfecta cronometría. Los "fuerzas", "pianos" y las transiciones tienen las características de la perfección. De la "Sinfonía No. 2 en Re mayor" op. 36 de Beethoven, el maestro Mitropoulos brindó una traducción muy correcta, pero sus valores aminoraron en la poesía de "Noche transfigurada" de Schoenberg, obra en la que el patetismo Wagneriano y la ortodoxa y deslumbrante orquesta de Strauss, otorgan personalidad a la riqueza imaginativa del creador del dodecafonismo. Con "Meditación y Danza de la Venganza de Medea", op. 23 de Barber, terminó el concierto. La Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York obtuvo bajo la batuta de Dimitri Mitropoulos, una sonoridad madura en consonancia con su prestigio y fama, que con Bernstein, director a quien hemos reconocido condiciones estimables, pero de quien debemos puntualizar su juventud para poder lograr la tan ansiada interpretación sinfónica que exige un cúmulo imponderable de musicalidad. Mitropoulos, al ser un esencialmente músico, supo dar a cada tiempo su propia fisonomía y diseñó con autoridad, las distintas frases expresivas del discurso, exponiéndolo con claridad evolutiva. Su fama que dio consagrada en este magnífico concierto.

From
JUN 5 1958
New York, N. Y.

PHILHARMONIC HAILED

Mitropoulos Leads Orchestra in Buenos Aires Concert

BUENOS AIRES, June 1 (AP)—The New York Philharmonic, after its second appearance in Buenos Aires last night, received enthusiastic reviews today.

Dimitri Mitropoulos, the conductor, won an ovation and led an encore, although it is against the policy of the Colón Theatre to have encores.

Leonard Bernstein has been conducting the orchestra on the tour until now. He left for a skiing vacation with his wife in Chile but will return next week to give two concerts with the Buenos Aires Wagner Society and rejoin the Philharmonic in Brazil.

La Nación said last night's performance "proved that Mitropoulos is one of the most brilliant conductors of our time." The newspaper said the orchestra "is a model of teamwork and efficiency without faults. Each one of its sections seems to be filled with expert musicians who rise to great virtuosity in occasion."

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LA PRENSA
B. A. IRES

2 JUN 1958

Ultimo Concierto de La Filarmónica de Nueva York

La concurrencia que asistió al teatro Colón, a la función de despedida de la Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York, y las demostraciones que se le hicieron a este conjunto en el curso de la audición, y al finalizar la misma pusieron de manifiesto la profunda significación que ha tenido para nosotros la visita de una orquesta de esta categoría, visita que ha constituido una de las notas más sobresalientes en lo que va de la presente temporada.

Con la dirección de Dimitri Mitropoulos, acreza de cuyas sobresalientes cualidades ya dimos noticia con motivo de su primer concierto, la orquesta neoyorquina dio comienzo a su labor con la obertura del "Freischütz" de Weber. La suavidad del pasaje inicial de

las trompas, y la seguridad con que se desempeñaron, dieron inmediatamente a los oyentes la medida de la calidad de los ejecutantes de este conjunto, que tiene una perfección igual en cualesquiera de sus grupos instrumentales. Esta obertura fue vertida con toda su poesía y, al mismo tiempo, con el arrebatado ritmo que requiere.

A continuación, se escuchó, en primera audición, el poema sinfónico titulado "Encounter", del compositor norteamericano Charles Turner.

Es una página de un lirismo agradable, de un acento bucólico, muy bien orquestada, que no revela en su autor una personalidad muy acusada pero sí un fino sentido poético.

En el "Don Juan" de Strauss, que la siguió, la orquesta de Nueva York mostró, nuevamente, hasta dónde alcanzan sus posibilidades de ejecución. Esta partitura, de un virtuosismo orquestal, permitió a

cada uno de los ejecutantes lucir la perfección de su técnica, dando en conjunto una versión brillante, de extrema claridad y bien ajustada al significado literario de la obra.

Finalizó el concierto con la Quinta Sinfonía de Prokofiev, nueva ocasión para que el conjunto mostrara su justa rítmica, su amplia sonoridad, y la filigrana de sus detalles instrumentales.

Ante la ovación que, al finalizar el concierto, tributó el público a los músicos de Nueva York y a su director, Dimitri Mitropoulos, éste agradeció a la orquesta para ejecutar, a manera de regalo, la obertura de "La fuerza del destino", de Verdi.

NOTICIAS GRAFICAS
B. A. IRES

Profunda Expresividad en la Batuta de Mitropoulos

CUMPLIENDO su segunda presentación en el Teatro Colón, durante esta breve estadía en Buenos Aires, la Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York fue dirigida por el eminente maestro griego —estadounidense ciudadanizado— Dimitri Mitropoulos.

El programa preparado puso a prueba, bajo aspectos más profundos, la calidad de su labor, cuya magnificencia tuvimos oportunidad de conocer en un edición anterior con motivo de su debut al frente de su titular Leonard Bernstein. Ahora, luego de haberlo visto y oído actuar con una batuta de temperamento distinto a la de Bernstein, no podemos más que señalar que, en lo que atañe a valores técnicos y sonoros de primera instancia, el conjunto reacciona con la invariable idoneidad que consignáramos. Sólo que, en ciertos aspectos estilísticos —que responden a estilos de comunicación armónica— la agrupación no comprende por completo los ideales interpretativos de Mitropoulos.

Así, luego de la Obertura para el "Fausto Criollo", de Ginastera, vertida con bastante inseguridad de lectura (sin duda, no es una "obra de repertorio" para esta orquesta), pudo apreciarse una Segunda Sinfonía, de Beethoven, mejor dirigida que ejecutada: es evidente que a la Filarmónica le cuesta abandonar su habitual diáfana, que es su sello característico y no siempre aprovechable cuando la obra requiere otros "colores". En realidad, la mejor conjunción de director y orquesta se estableció en "Noche transfigurada" de Schoenberg, y a partir de ella, además de ajustarse al temperamento de Mitropoulos, fue ejecutada con una extraordinaria solvencia artística. Es Mitropoulos un continuador de una tendencia directorial poco practicada en la actualidad, momento en que —cada vez con mayor insistencia— el quehacer musical es encarado como un problema mecánico más que como un milagro del espíritu.

"BUENOS AIRES HERALD"

1º de junio de 1958



Maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos, Director of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, who arrived early yesterday morning at Ezeiza Airport on a PA plane. He conducted last night's programme at the Colón Theatre.

BRILLANTE TRAYECTORIA TIENE DIMITRI MITROPOULOS DIRECTOR DE LA SINFONIA-FILARMONICA DE NUEVA YORK

Dimitri Mitropoulos, director de la Orquesta Sinfonía-Filarmónica de Nueva York que, bajo los auspicios del SODRE nos visitará los días 26 y 27 de mayo y 1º de junio, realizando en esas fechas sendos conciertos, es griego de nacimiento y actualmente ciudadano de los Estados Unidos. Una reputación brillante en Europa precedió su debut en los Estados Unidos en 1936 con la Sinfonía de Boston. Desde 1937 hasta la primavera de 1949, sus actividades se concentraron en el Medio Oeste, donde era director musical de la Sinfonía de Minneapolis, pero sus jiras con esta orquesta y sus frecuentes actuaciones con otras orquestas importantes pronto le aseguró el favor de un público devoto de costa a costa.

Durante la temporada de 1940-41 se presentó por primera vez con la Sinfonía-Filarmónica de Nueva York. En los años subsiguientes, aumentó su reputación musical y popularidad presentándose regularmente con la Orquesta. Fue nombrado director de la misma en la temporada de 1951-52 hasta la de 1956-57. En la temporada de 1957-58 compartió con Leonard Bernstein los deberes inherentes al director en propiedad de la Sinfonía-Filarmónica.

Dimitri Mitropoulos nació en Atenas el 18 de febrero de 1896; hizo sus primeros estudios en el Conservatorio de su ciudad natal, estudiando con Ferruccio Busoni en Berlín. Durante cierto número de años estuvo a cargo de la Sinfonía de Atenas como director en propiedad. Teniendo grandes dotes de pianista virtuoso y compositor de gran talento, al comienzo de su carrera le resultaba difícil entregarse por entero a una sola actividad. Pero con su primera experiencia como director de orquesta, se dio cuenta de que había dado con su verdadera vocación.

Dimitri Mitropoulos es bien conocido como un gran intérprete de los clásicos, además de ser un convencido paladín de los compositores modernos. Gracias a su interés y devoción muchas obras modernas importantes, han sido presentadas por primera vez. Sus obras en concierto con la Sinfonía-Filarmónica, incluyendo la "Elektra" de Strauss, "L'Heure Espagnole" de Ravel, "Wozzeck" de Berg y "Christophe Colomb" de Milhaud, han resultado grandes acontecimientos musicales. En los últimos años, introdujo en Nueva York, la Décima Sinfonía y Concierto para violín de Shostakovich, el debatido Concierto para Orquesta y Banda de Jazz de Liebermann, así como obras de un gran número de compositores norteamericanos. En reconocimiento de su empeño en favor de la música moderna, recibió una citación del Consejo Nacional de Música en octubre de 1958 por sus actuaciones admirables en favor de la música norteamericana, por medio de sus conciertos con la Sinfonía-Filarmónica.

Los amantes de la ópera en EE.UU. tuvieron su primera oportunidad de oír a Mitropoulos en el Metropolitan Opera House de Nueva York cuando hizo su debut en la temporada de 1954-55. Entre las óperas que ha dirigido se encuentran "Sa-



Dimitri Mitropoulos

lomé". "Un baile de máscaras", "Tosca", "Boris Godunov", "Carmen", "Madame Butterfly", "Manon Lescaut" y "Les Walkyries". Dirigió "Eugene Onegin" en la función inaugural de esta temporada y más tarde, la premiere mundial de "Vanessa" de Samuel Barber. En Italia, donde está en demanda constante tanto para ópera como para conciertos, fue una sensa-

ción musical con sus presentaciones de "Elektra", "Wozzeck", "La Fuerza del Destino" y "La muchacha del lejano Oeste". Durante el verano de 1954 dirigió en Alemania y en Austria por primera vez desde 1932, con un éxito grandioso en Munich, Colonia y Salzburgo. En el verano y otoño de 1956 dirigió operas por primera vez en Salzburgo y Viena, "Don Giovanni" en Salzburgo y "Manon Lescaut" en Viena. También dirigió un grupo de conciertos de la Filarmónica de Viena en Salzburgo, Viena y Venecia. En el verano pasado (1957), dirigió "Elektra" en el Festival de Salzburgo, "Ernani" en Florencia y "Madame Butterfly" en Viena, además de varios conciertos en Viena, Milán, Salzburgo, Lucerna y Colonia.

En octubre de 1955, Mitropoulos regresó a su tierra natal por primera vez después de una ausencia de 17 años, en el itinerario de la primera gira de la Sinfonía-Filarmónica en 1930. La estrepitosa bienvenida que le dieron sus compatriotas impulsó la necesidad de ofrecer otro concierto, para poder complacer a los atenienses que no pudieron comprar localidades para los dos conciertos anunciados previamente.

Además de la gira actual de la Sinfonía-Filarmónica, Mitropoulos acaba de terminar varias semanas de gira en los Estados Unidos y el Canadá, con la Filarmónica de Nueva York y la Filarmónica de Viena en una gira por varias ciudades europeas. También dirigirá la Sinfonía de Israel en varias ciudades israelíes, y dirigirá otra vez en el Festival de Salzburgo.

ACCION
MAY 29, 1958

Cultor de los Clásicos y Amigo de los Modernos: Dimitri Mitropoulos

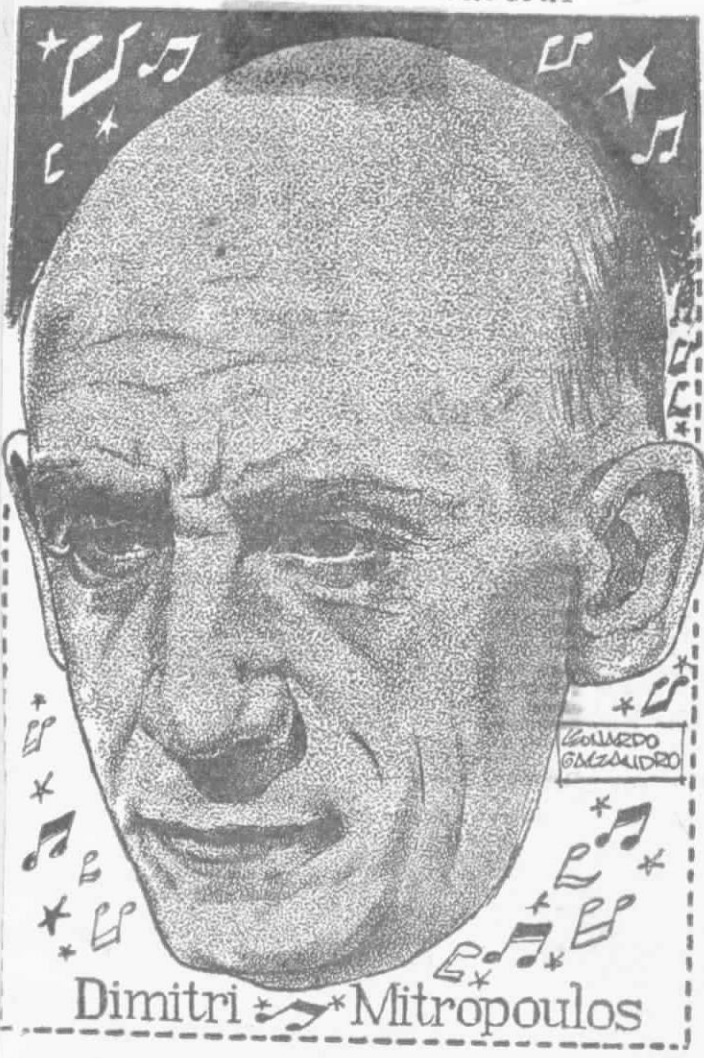
Dimitri Mitropoulos nació en Atenas el 18 de febrero de 1896; hizo sus primeros estudios en el Conservatorio de la capital helena y estudió en Berlín con Ferruccio Busoni. Durante algunos años estuvo a cargo de la Sinfonía de Atenas como Director en propiedad. Teniendo grandes dotes de pianista virtuoso y compositor de talento, al comienzo de su



Dirigirá el domingo la Filarmónica

En los últimos años Mitropoulos introdujo en Nueva York la décima Sinfonía y el Concierto para violín de Shostakovich, el debatido "Concierto para Orquesta y Banda de Jazz" de Liebermann, así como obras de compositores norteamericanos. Una reputación brillante en Europa precedió el debut de este maestro en los EE. UU. en 1936 con la Sinfonía de Boston. Desde 1937 hasta 1949 sus actividades se concentraron en el Medio Oeste donde era Director musical de la Sinfonía de Minneapolis, pero sus jiras con esta orquesta y sus frecuentes actuaciones con otras sinfónicas importantes, pronto le aseguraron el favor del público. Durante la temporada 1940-41 se presentó por primera vez con la Filarmónica de Nueva York. En los años siguientes aumentó su reputación musical y popularidad presentándose regularmente con esa orquesta. Fue nombrado director de la misma en la temporada 1950-51 y director musical desde la temporada 1951 hasta la de 1957. En la última compartió con Leonard Bernstein los deberes inherentes al director estable de la Filarmónica.

Aparte del interés lógico que promueve la nueva actuación de la Filarmónica en nuestra principal sala de conciertos, tras sus dos brillantes actuaciones precedentes y su presentación en el Colón de Buenos Aires, unida a la presencia de tan ilustre y mundialmente famoso director, el programa a ofrecerse incluye tres primeras audiciones: la Obertura Académica-Festiva, de Brahms, que la OSSODRE sólo realizó en un concierto radial; Noche transfigurada, Opus 4, de Schönberg; y Danza de Venganza, del ballet "Medea", de Samuel Barber, que se ejecutará conjuntamente con otro fragmento de la misma obra, "La meditación de Medea", ya conocido por nuestro público. Completa el atrayente programa la Sinfonía Nº 2, en Re-Mayor, Opus 36, de Beethoven.



Dimitri Mitropoulos
El maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos que, al frente de la Filarmónica de Nueva York, proporcionará mañana una nueva dimensión de esa orquesta

EL BIEN PUBLICO
MAY 31, 1958

MONTEVIDEO - URUGUAY

DIMITRI MITROPOULOS CON LA FILARMONICA DE NUEVA YORK

Clausurará el domingo a las 18 y 30, en el Estudio Auditorio sus actuaciones en Montevideo la Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York, dirigida esta vez por Dimitri Mitropoulos.

Este distinguido músico, de fama universal, nació en Atenas el 18 de febrero de 1896; hizo sus primeros estudios en el Conservatorio de la Capital helena y estudió en Berlín con Ferruccio Busoni. Durante algunos años estuvo a cargo de la Sinfonía de Atenas.

Es bien conocido como intérprete de los clásicos, además de ser un convencido paladín de los compositores modernos. Gracias a su interés y devoción, muchas obras modernas importantes han sido presentadas por primera vez. Sus obras en concierto con la Filarmónica, incluyendo la "Elektra" de Strauss, la "Hora Española" de Ravel, "Wozzeck" de Berg y "Christophe Colomb" de Milhaud han resultado grandes acontecimientos musicales. En los últimos años Mitropoulos introdujo en Nueva York la décima Sinfonía y el Concierto para violín de Shostakovich, el debatido "Concierto para Orquesta y Banda de Jazz" de Liebermann, así como obras de un gran número de compositores norteamericanos. Una reputación brillante en Europa precedió el debut de este maestro en los EE. UU. en 1936 con la Sinfonía de Boston. Desde 1937 hasta 1949 sus actividades se concentraron en el Medio Oeste donde era Director musical de la Sinfonía de Minneapolis.

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El programa de este último concierto de la gran orquesta visitante está integrado en la siguiente forma: 1º Parte: Brahms: Obertura académica - festiva, op. 80, Brahms Sinfonía Nº 2, en Re-Mayor, Op. 36, segunda Parte: Schönberg Noche transfigurada, Op. 4 y Barber "Medea", Poema Sinfónico.

DIMITRI MITROPOULOS Y LA FILARMONICA EN EL SODRE

Prácticamente están agotadas las localidades con que cuenta el Estudio Auditorio del SODRE para el tercer y último concierto sinfónico que realizará en Montevideo la Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York, el próximo domingo, a la hora 18.30, esta vez bajo la dirección del maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos que por primera vez actúa en América del Sur. —con motivo de esta importante gira continental que lleva a cabo la mencionada orquesta, con cooperación con el Programa Cultural de EE.UU. provisto por la American National Theatre and Academy.

Aparte del interés lógico que promueve la nueva actuación de la Filarmónica en nuestra principal sala de conciertos, tras sus dos brillantes audiciones precedentes y su presentación en el Colón de Buenos Aires, unida a la presencia de tan ilustre y mundialmente famoso director, el programa a ofrecerse incluye tres primeras audiciones: la Obertura Académica-Festiva, de Brahms, que la OSSODRE sólo realizó en un concierto radial; Noche transfigurada Opus 4, de Schönberg; y Danza de Venganza de ballet "Medea" de Samuel Barber, que se ejecutará conjuntamente con otro fragmento de la misma obra, "La Meditación de Medea" ya conocido por nuestro público. Completa el atrayente programa la Sinfonía Nº 2, en Re-Mayor Opus 36, de Beethoven.

EL PLATA
JUNE 1, 1958
MONTEVIDEO - URUGUAY



ARRIBO A CARRANCO MITROPOULOS. — Llegaron esta mañana procedentes de la ciudad de Buenos Aires los componentes de la Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York y con ellos el director Dimitri Mitropoulos, luego de realizar en el país hermano una serie de aplaudidos conciertos. Entrevistado el Director, nos expresó entre otras cosas que la música es un verdadero y maravilloso embajador y que aquellos que gustan de este arte forman una legión afortunadamente más numerosa. Preguntado si tenía preferencia sobre alguna música especial, contestó que le agradaba aquella que dirigía y... "ejecutar es maravilloso". En el aeropuerto estaban aguardando el señor Héctor M. Laborde, Gerente Gral. del SODRE y el señor Alfredo Ferrari Administrador del Departamento de Espectáculos. La Filarmónica de Nueva York, cumplirá hoy entre nosotros su última actuación. La foto muestra al Sr. Laborde recibiendo y saludando al Director Mitropoulos.

EL DIA
JUNE 1, 1958
MONTEVIDEO - URUGUAY

Conciertos

D. MITROPOULOS EN EL SODRE

De acuerdo con lo anunciado, se realizará hoy, a las 18.30, en el SODRE, el último concierto a cargo de la Filarmónica de Nueva York, corporación que, en sus 2 anteriores presentaciones en la misma sala, fue conducida por el joven maestro estadounidense Leonard Bernstein. Hoy, hará su presentación ante el público uruguayo, uno de los más eminentes directores orquestales contemporáneos.



DIMITRI MITROPOULOS, director griego que hoy conduce en el SODRE, el último concierto de la Filarmónica de Nueva York.

DIMITRI MITROPOULOS LLEGA EL DOMINGO A ESTA



La Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York, que anoche se presentó en el teatro Colón de Buenos Aires dirigida por el maestro Leonard Bernstein (con el mismo programa cumplido en el SODRE, el lunes, en su triunfal debut) realizará mañana de noche su segundo concierto en el mismo teatro, conducida por el ilustre maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos.

LA TRIBUNA POPULAR
MAY 30, 1958
MONTEVIDEO - URUGUAY

Vuelve a Actuar la Filarmónica

Prácticamente están agotadas las localidades con que cuenta el Estudio Auditorio del SODRE para el tercer y último concierto sinfónico que realizará en Montevideo la Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York, el próximo domingo, a la hora 18.30, esta vez bajo la dirección del maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos, que por primera vez actúa en América del Sur, con motivo de esta importante gira continental que lleva a cabo la mencionada orquesta, en cooperación con el Programa Cultural de EE. UU. provisto por la American National Theatre and Academy.

Aparte del interés lógico que promueve la nueva actuación de la Filarmónica en nuestra principal sala de conciertos, tras sus dos brillantes actuaciones precedentes y su presentación en el Colón de Buenos Aires, unida a la presencia de tan ilustre y mundialmente famoso director, el programa a ofrecerse incluye tres primeras audiciones: la Obertura Académica-Festiva, de Brahms, que la OSSODRE sólo realizó en un concierto radial; Noche transfigurada, Opus 4, de Schönberg; y Danza de Venganza, del ballet "Medea", de Samuel Barber, que se ejecutará conjuntamente con otro fragmento de la misma obra, "La meditación de Medea", ya conocido por nuestro público. Completa el atrayente programa la Sinfonía Nº 2, en Re-Mayor, Opus 36, de Beethoven.

MARCHA
MAY 30, 1958
MONTEVIDEO - URUGUAY

MITROPOULOS EL DOMINGO

TERMINANDO su actuación en Montevideo, la Filarmónica de Nueva York ofrecerá mañana un concierto dirigido por Dimitri Mitropoulos, que es griego y nació en 1896. Se graduó en el Conservatorio de Atenas (1919) y pasó luego a estudiar en Alemania con Busoni. Pronto fue designado repertorio de la Ópera del Estado de Berlín, cargo que guardó hasta 1925. En 1932 dirigió la Orquesta Sinfónica de París. Poco antes de la Guerra se presentó como director invitado al frente de la Orquesta de Boston, quedándose en los Estados Unidos desde entonces. En 1937 fue puesto al frente de la Orquesta de Minneapolis, que tenía ya

especial renombre en los Estados Unidos. Había sido fundada en 1903 y conducida por personalidades como Oberholfer, Coates, Damrosch, Bruno Walter, Ormandy y José Iturbi, que precisamente la dejó en 1936, al pasar a dirigirla Mitropoulos. Este estuvo a su frente hasta 1949, en que entró en su lugar Antal Dorati. En 1950 fue nombrado Director de la Filarmónica de Nueva York, con la cual ha hecho algunas giras. En 1951 y 1955 la dirigió en el Festival de Salzburgo.

Mitropoulos es de esos inquietos de la música tan propicios de la vida musical cosmopolita de los Estados Unidos. Pianista, pedagogo, virtuoso de

la dirección orquestal, compositor (sus obras, entre las cuales algunas para cámara y numerosas partituras para orquesta y la voz se hallan en general inéditas) y hombre de abarcar todos los géneros y estilos, ha llegado últimamente a ocupar un lugar de primera importancia en su país de adopción y también en el resto del mundo. En 1955, de vuelta de Edimburgo, dirigió su orquesta en París, dando en primera audición la Décima Sinfonía de Shostakovich con crítica en general muy favorable. Tiene una memoria extraordinaria y una penetrante intuición para acortar la actitud exacta a tomar ante cada compositor. Pero es especialmente como líder de la creación contemporánea que Mitropoulos ha merecido mayo-

res elogios. Durante años ha entrenado un número muy elevado de obras nuevas e introdujo la idea de dar en oratorio muchas obras líricas de difícil representación escénica. Actualmente su valor como intérprete parece haber menguado ligeramente, sin embargo. Con todo, será bueno tener presente que la crítica norteamericana tiende a veces a simplificar excesivamente sus juicios, lo cual es tal vez causa de que se hayan censurado en ciertas ocasiones sus interpretaciones de obras líricas (La Walkiria en el Metropolitan en febrero del año pasado) y aún sinfónicas del repertorio tradicional. Actualmente viaja prácticamente de continuo, presentándose en muchos festivales europeos estadounidenses y del Ca-

nadá. Su carácter fundamental parece ser, —a través de sus discos y de la crítica en general—, una preocupación por hacer revivir el clasicismo presentándolo de manera atrayente y de buscar el contacto, tan problemático, entre el creador moderno y el público. Los románticos, él lo sabe tal vez mejor que nadie, no precisan ayuda. — P. M. G.

Opera y Sinfonismo: Dos Amores de D. Mitropoulos

Una conversación con el director grieco - americano

De nuevo están en Montevideo, los "filarmonicos" neoyorquinos. A su frente pisa por primera vez, tierra y faros uruguayos. Dimitri Mitropoulos, cuyo prestigio, cuyos discos, cuyo característico rostro ya son bien familiares a todos nosotros. Enseguida se establece el contacto. Mitropoulos es afable, accesible, sencillo en su conducta: de óptimos modales. Apenas llegado al hotel nos lleva a su apartamento. Se entabla la conversación, alternativamente en inglés y alemán.

JIRAS

Cuéntanos el prominente director, que jiras son ahora un estado permanente para él. Acaba de terminar la tradicional tournée primaveral de la Opera Metropolitana de Nueva York, que llegó hasta Toronto. Debido a ella, recién ayer, en Buenos Aires, cuyo Teatro Colón admira, pudo tomar las riendas de la Filarmonica. Después de esta gira sudamericana, a Tel Aviv: 18 conciertos en un mes, viajando con la Filarmonica de Israel. Agosto: Festival de Salzburgo. Conciertos con las Orquestas "Concertgebouw" de Amsterdam y "Filarmonica de Viena". En la patria griega, "Vassilissa", la ópera Samuel Barber con libreto y puesta en escena de Menotti. Luego, con la Filarmonica de Viena, a la patria griega. Seis conciertos en Viena: Con la Filarmonica y la Sinfonica. Operas: "Ballo in Maschera" y "Butterfly" y Hanes Lescart en la Opera de Estado de Viena.

No, las jiras no me cansan. Al contrario: Me incitan. Uno no debe quedar siempre en el mismo lugar. Salir es reanimarse. Resulta tan interesante ir de lugar a lugar, de público a público, de gusto a gusto, conociendo las reacciones de los auditores. Las condiciones climatológicas y mentales producen diferencias sorprendentes. Los efectos no se pueden predecir. El director necesita esa reacción. En Alemania, por ejemplo, pueden darse espectáculos largos de obras de Wagner. En EE. UU., cortes son inevitables. El público norteamericano no está acostumbrado de ir, como el alemán, a un teatro como a una expedición. Y en viajes, plantean siempre nuevos problemas, los espacios, las dimensiones de las salas.

LAS DOS AMADAS

Mitropoulos nos explica por qué deja, con esta temporada expirante, su puesto de director estable de la Orquesta Filarmonica de Nueva York, con la que, desde luego, seguirá trabajando en calidad de huésped.

Dirige mucho en la Metropolitana, y en el futuro dirigirá más aún con contrato fijo.

Tuvo recientemente hasta nueve actuaciones públicas por semana. De mañana ensayo, de tarde ópera en la "Met", de noche concierto en Carnegie Hall. Demasiado. Es una especial satisfacción poder haber puesto como mi sucesor, a Leonard Bernstein, el primer hombre a quien encontré en EE. UU., en el año 1936. Le pude apoyar en aquel entonces. Y hoy ocupa un puesto que merecen su talento y facilidad enormes.

Es el primer jefe de la Filarmonica, nacido y criado en Nueva América. Y que no hablen de falta de madurez. Bernstein se desempeña como corresponde a su edad. Todos nos tomamos mejores, o tratamos de tomarnos mejores, con el avanzar



No soy organizador... soy músico



Una memoria extraordinaria

de los años. Y si dejásemos de progresar y de movernos, esto sería el escabote.

Pero usted me pregunta si, o por qué, ahora dedico más esfuerzos a la ópera que a los conciertos. Me

inicié como director en la Opera de Estado de Berlín, ayudante de Blech, Kleiber, Stiedry. Luego las circunstancias me llevaron a los conciertos. Pero nunca perdí mi amor a la ópera. Soy el hombre dichoso quien tiene dos amadas a la vez: La ópera y la música sinfónica. (Entonces la ópera sería la amada, quien le hace una escena).

En la Metropolitana dirigí en la temporada venidera, "Eugen Onegin", "Boris Godunov" y "Macbeth" de Verdi. Las demás óperas del repertorio.

POR LA MUSICA CONTEMPORANEA

No soy organizador. Soy músico. Claro está que debe organizarse lo que concierne a una programación racional. En cuanto a ésta, siento el deber de cultivar la música contemporánea. Tengo devoción a los grandes clásicos; pero es con lo nuevo que en particular se puede hacer obra como director. Interpreto obras de compositores de cada país que visito. En Israel, por ejemplo, de Ben-Haim y Starer; en Viena, la Sinfonia del extinto Franz Schmidt, cuyo poco conocido fuera de Austria. Creo que a la larga, todos los valores auténticos también se impondrán internacionalmente. Esto puede todavía pasar con el compositor de óperas alemanas Franz Schreker, y sucederá seguramente con Max Reger. Con Rudolf Serkin ejecutamos recién el Concierto de Piano de Reger, que es gran obra. Tomo muy en alto a Reger. Hace diez años, nuestro primer intento de imponer esta creación fracasó; esta vez tuvimos éxito. Por largo tiempo fue la familia Busch solitaria en el cumplimiento de una misión regeriana.

Nos atrevemos a preguntar a Dimitri Mitropoulos por el funcionamiento de su mentada memoria fabulosa. Si es automática, natural o fruto de entrenamiento.

Desde mi niñez, dice Mitropoulos, siempre he buscado el cambio más difícil. Me atraen los obstáculos. Considero la memoria exigencia imperiosa para mi tarea. Estando en contacto visible, uno inevitablemente se torna, de cierto modo, actor. Tampoco se concebía a Hamlet en el teatro, dice, con su parte con el libro en la mano. Recién dirigiendo de memoria, uno tiene libertad y dominio plenos. Yo siento el placer de tocar la orquesta como un órgano. Además, se recomienda el prescindir de la partitura colocada en el atril por el ahorro del tiempo, que es oro en los ensayos. Estas cuestiones mucho dinero. Si eludió la memoria causada por el contar compases según las letras, que dirigen una partitura, si se exactamente en cualquier momento, donde paramos, ubicando el compás que debe repetirse, ahorro hasta media hora en un ensayo de tres horas. Y el mismo ensayo se intensifica muchísimo.

Un lunes empecé los ensayos de "Wozzeck" de Alban Berg. Gracias a mi método, pudimos representar la obra ya el jueves. No, mi memoria no es visual. Veo, eso sí, una imagen. Pero es la que me he formado de la música, en mi mente. Y ésta es consecuencia de una matemática elemental. Analizo la partitura minuciosamente. Así, vez a vez, cualquier detalle, resorte, línea de dibujo y partitura de construcción. Indiqué a los editores que reemplacen el uso habitual de letras por una simple numeración de los compases. En "Wozzeck" son más de dos mil. Los sé exactamente. Di, ensayando, el número de compás, y todo marchó, también las óperas las dirijo de memoria.

RECUERDOS BERLINESSES

Usted me pregunta sobre la influencia que puedo haber experimentado en mis años tempranos en Berlín. Puedo decir que lo más importante lo he aprendido solo, más bien autodidácticamente. Estudié con el gran Ferruccio Busoni. Soy pianista, pero no estudié con él, el piano, sino la composición. La primera vez llegué a su casa a la hora 11 para tocarle mis obras. Me fui a medianoche. Fui uno de los cinco alumnos aceptados por el maestro. Estudiaron conmigo, Kurt Weill y Hindemith Vogel. En ese primer encuentro, Busoni me advirtió que mi música fuera demasiado apasionada y sentimental. Según su doctrina, la música nada tiene que ver con pasión. Aún hoy, como director, siento la dualidad de intelecto y pasión. Busoni es responsable por el abandono de la composición. Mis composiciones posteriores fueron tan progresistas que no tendrían comunicación con el público. Mas esta comunicación es la primera necesidad y la esencia de nuestro arte.

Cerró el programa, "Meditación y danza de Medea", del contemporáneo Barber, música primeramente escrita para ballet y reestructurada para gran orquesta. Está dentro del gusto actual del gran público: melodías cortas, frenético y de gran brillo.

Su interpretación fue impecable y de gran precisión y justeza, al igual que todo lo escuchado ayer y en los dos conciertos anteriores. Pero en este último hubo un director: Dimitri Mitropoulos, colocado por encima de la crítica, en la plenitud de su prestigio, que supo dar más brillo aún a la Orquesta Sinfónica-Filarmonica a sus órdenes.

Ante una sala desbordante, la ovación fue inmensa y sostenida. Fuera de programa se brindó, respondiendo al insistente aplauso, la "Danza final del Sombrero de tres picos", de Manuel de Falla.

Este toque gitano, así como el poema de Schöenberg, constituyeron tal vez los momentos más grandiosos de la exposición artística de la orquesta visitante.

Debe destacarse, antes de cerrar esta crónica, el homenaje que por intermedio de uno de sus ejemplares, tributó la Orquesta al conjunto estadounidense, entregando a su director un pergamino y una ofrenda floral, en medio de los prolongados aplausos del auditorio.

Tales maneras de interpretar tienen su eco en el gusto del público. Son mutuas reacciones que el tiempo —mejor dicho, los tiempos— imponen, aun cuando todavía son muchos los que prefieren el colín muelle y blando de los músicos vinteneses.

Comenzó el programa de ayer con la ejecución de los himnos uruguayo y estadounidense, donde la orquesta —de pie— dejó señalada, una vez más, su justeza, uniformidad, ambiente sonoro y acabada disciplina. Se entró al detalle con la Obertura académica-festiva, Opus 80 de Brahms, en primera audición, compuesta con motivos estudiantiles, alemanes, y escrita en oportunidad de recibir Brahms su título de Doctor Honoris Causa en la Universidad de Breslau.

Discografía de Mitropoulos

En el correr de los veintidós años que Dimitri Mitropoulos lleva de residencia en los Estados Unidos, ha hecho ininidad de registros con diversas orquestas: la de Minneapolis, la Columbia, la Filarmonica-Sinfonica de Nueva York y diversos grupos ocasionales, como el Brass Ensemble of the Jazz and Classical Music Society, el ISCM Concert Group, el de la Metropolitan Opera Association, el New York Ensemble of the Philharmonic Scholarship Winners, etc.

Al frente de la Filarmonica pueden citarse como especialmente interesantes El Mar de Debussy, de asombrosa justeza y particularmente cuidado desde el punto de vista estilístico (Mitropoulos frecuentemente estrechamente los círculos post-debussystas durante su prolongada estadía en Francia), Petrouchka de Stravinsky, rico en contrastes, de mucha variedad timbrica; la Segunda Sinfonia de Borodin, de agobiante pesadez pero fogosa y clara; el Concierto para Violín de Tchaikovsky (solista Francescatti) en el violín no llega a conformar totalmente su homenaje de Mendelssohn con el mismo Francescatti que acá sí, muestra su mejor aspecto; la Suite Nº 1 de Tchaikovsky (con Borodin) el Concierto para Violín y Orquesta de Schostakovich (solista Oistrak) que es sin duda el mejor registro de esta obra, con su extraño moderato admirablemente expresado por Oistrak y un segundo movimiento de carácter religioso que Mitropoulos carga de intenso fervor; la Quinta Sinfonia de Tchaikovsky, donde apuntan extraños errores de diversa índole en la orquesta; las Sinfonías 3 y 5 de Mendelssohn, en disco que personalmente desconocemos; la Danza Macabra y la Marcha de Onifalia de Saint Saens; la Procesión Nocturna de Ravel, grabación que ha servido para llamar la atención sobre este compañero de Mitropoulos, cuya labor creadora es casi desconocida fuera de Francia.

Particularmente interesante es la grabación del Concierto Nº 5 de Beethoven, con Casadesus como solista, quien toca su parte con un cuidado, un rigor infinitos. Pero el juicio dependerá en gran parte del carácter de la obra porque puede pensarse válidamente que en ella, como en muchas otras del último periodo beethoveniano, una afirmación sistemática de carácter predominantemente intelectual prima a menudo sobre la calidad estética de la inspiración. En tal caso, un poderoso aliento heroico y algo así como un peso del sonido, casi exclusivo de los pianistas alemanes, podría parecer indispensable. Casadesus toca en cambio preocupado especialmente por el equilibrio del conjunto y por la calidad del timbre. Por su parte Mitropoulos parece guiar su conducta de acuerdo a una concepción más germana.

Otro disco (destinado éste a los grandes públicos) lleva las Danzas de Polovetz y En las Estepas del Asia Central de Borodin y Bosquejos Caucásicos de Ippolitov-Ivanov. A pesar de que se trata de un prensaaje nacional, no conocemos esta grabación, que sin duda ofrece interés, porque Mitropoulos siempre se ha destacado en obras cargadas de color.

En cuanto a las Noches en los Jardines de España de Falla, habría que acudir a la versión de Gonzalo Soriano para encontrar un rival de importancia a Casadesus, que es quien desempeña la parte solista. Se trata sin duda de uno de los mejores discos del pianista francés, a quien, con motivo de su exitosa interpretación viva de esta obra en el Carnegie Hall recientemente, se le preguntó qué vinculaciones tenía con España para lograr tal acierto interpretativo. Casadesus reveló entonces que su verdadero apellido es Casa de Jesús y que su abuelo era español. El padre del pianista francés poseía un nombre de nombre.

Para terminar con obras instrumentales cabe referirse al Concierto para violín y orquesta Nº 3 de Saint Saens, con Francescatti como solista. Del revés se inscribe el Primer Concierto de Paganini con el mismo solista, pero con la orquesta dirigida por Ormandy. Mitropoulos es un intérprete experto de la música francesa; pero esta versión es toda de una sobriedad que no se adapta quizás totalmente al estilo impulsivo y ornamental, que caracteriza al sinfonismo de Saint Saens.

En cuanto a registros operísticos, los de Mitropoulos se hallan dominados por dos realizaciones especia-

luculares y tal vez imperecederas: el Wozzeck, de Alban Berg y la Electra de Ricardo Strauss. El primero fue grabado con la Filarmonica y estos solistas: Mack Harrell, un Wozzeck patético aunque la pastosidad de su voz pueda disgustar a quien aprecia ante todo el canto; Eileen Farrell, Marie, que penetra inteligentemente dentro de un personaje rico en posibilidades; Frederick Jagel, Tambor Mayor, y Ralph Herbert, doctor. El coro de niños fue tomado de la "High School of Music and Art" y de la Schola Cantorum. Su dirección se confió a Hugh Ross. Es la única versión disponible de esta obra maestra del expresionismo semidodecafonico y no es probable que otra venga pronto a entablar competencia, porque, aparte de méritos artísticos que sería largo enumerar, suena con una presencia sorprendente para sus años.

En cuanto a la Electra, fue tomada de una audición pública en el Mayo Florentino de 1950. El registro se hizo el día 18 de ese mes y año. La Clitemnestra de Martha Modl es de un acierto absoluto, como también las intervenciones de Konetzny (Electra) y de Ilitsch (Crisotemis). En menor escala también lo es el Orestes de Hans

Braun. Pero, tratándose de una obra que en buena medida tiene un carácter especulativo, los cantantes son víctimas de la experimentación. En cuanto a la labor de Mitropoulos, es de admirar en primer término el ardor con que empuja la batuta para atravesar el proceloso mar de esta obra temible. Así logra una palpación vital que aumenta con los ruidos diversos de la toma directa en teatro, exteriorizados al final en una salva de aplausos y ovaciones. La cuota que cabe a Mitropoulos en ellos es grande, naturalmente. — P.M.G.

El Concierto de Hoy

DE NUEVO LA FILARMONICA

En su tercera presentación en Montevideo, y luego de dos conciertos a cargo del director y pianista Leonard Bernstein, la Orquesta Filarmonica de Nueva York será dirigida hoy por Dimitri Mitropoulos, que es su director estable desde hace muchos años, aunque actualmente comparte ese puesto con aquel.

CARRERA DE MITROPOULOS.— Es griego de nacimiento y actualmente ciudadano de los Estados Unidos. Conquistó reputación brillante en Europa, antes de su debut en los Estados Unidos en 1936 con la Sinfonica de Boston. Desde 1937 hasta la primavera de 1949, sus actividades se concentraron en el Medio Oeste, donde era director musical de la Sinfonica de Minneapolis, pero sus jiras con esta orquesta y sus frecuentes actuaciones con otras orquestas importantes pronto le aseguraron el favor de un público devoto de costa a costa.

Durante la temporada de 1940-41 se presentó por primera vez con la Sinfonica-Filarmonica de Nueva York. En los años subsiguientes aumentó su reputación musical y popularidad presentándose regularmente con la Orquesta. Fue nombrado director de la misma en la temporada de 1950-51 siendo director musical desde la temporada de 1951-52 hasta la de 1956-57. En la temporada de 1957-58 compartió con Leonard Bernstein la dirección de la Sinfonica-Filarmonica.

Mitropoulos nació en Atenas el 18 de febrero de 1896; hizo sus primeros estudios en el Conservatorio de su ciudad natal, estudiando con Ferruccio Busoni en Berlín. Durante algunos años estuvo a cargo de la Sinfonica de Atenas como director en propiedad, teniendo grandes dotes de pianista virtuoso y compositor de gran talento, al comienzo de su carrera le resultaba difícil entregarse por entero a una sola actividad. Pero con su primera experiencia como director de orquesta, se dio cuenta de que había dado con su verdadera vocación.

Mitropoulos es bien conocido como un gran intérprete de los clásicos, además de ser un convencido partidario de los compositores modernos. Gracias a su interés y devoción muchas obras modernas importantes han sido presentadas por primera vez. Sus óperas en concierto con la Sinfonica-Filarmonica, incluyendo la "Elektra" de Strauss, "L'Heure Espagnole" de Ravel, "Wozzeck" de Berg y "Christophe Colomb" de Milhaud, han resultado grandes acontecimientos musicales. En los últimos años introdujo en Nueva York la Décima Sinfonia y Concierto para Violín de Shostakovich, el debatido Concierto para Orquesta y Banda de Jazz de Liebermann, así como obras de un gran número de compositores norteamericanos. En reconocimiento de su empeño en favor de la música moderna, recibió una citación del Consejo Nacional de las Artes en octubre de 1957 por su actuación admirable en favor de la música norteamericana, por medio de sus conciertos con la Sinfonica-Filarmonica.

Los amantes de la ópera en EE.UU. tuvieron su primera oportunidad de oír a Mitropoulos en el Metropolitan Opera House de Nueva York cuando hizo su debut en la temporada de 1954-55. Entre las óperas que ha dirigido se encuentran "Salomé", "Un baile de máscaras", "Tosca", "Boris Godunov", "Carmen", "Madame Butterfly", "Manon Lescaut" y "Las Walkirias". Dirigió "Eugen Onegin" en la función inaugural de esta temporada y más tarde, la premiere mundial de "Vanessa" de Samuel Barber.

En agosto de 1951, Mitropoulos dirigió una serie de conciertos con la Sinfonica-Filarmonica en el Festival de Edimburgo, siendo la primera vez que una orquesta de EE.UU. se presentara en dicho festival internacional. En 1955 volvió con la Sinfonica-Filarmonica para ofrecer más conciertos en este festival.

En Italia, donde está en demanda constante tanto para ópera como para conciertos, fue una sensación musical con sus presentaciones de "Elektra", "Wozzeck", "La Fuerza del Destino" y "La muchacha del Dorado Oeste". Durante el verano de 1954 dirigió en Alemania y en Austria por primera vez desde 1932, con un éxito



grandioso en Munich, Colonia y Salzburgo. En el verano y otoño de 1956 dirigió óperas por primera vez en Salzburgo y Viena, "Don Giovanni" en Salzburgo y "Manon Lescaut" en Viena. También dirigió un grupo de conciertos de la Filarmonica de Viena en Salzburgo, Viena y Venecia. En el verano pasado (1957) dirigió "Elektra" en el Festival de Salzburgo, "Ernani" en Florencia y "Madama Butterfly" en Viena, además de varios conciertos en Viena, Milán, Salzburgo, Lucerna y Colonia.

En los Estados Unidos ha sido oído también por un público siempre creciente, habiendo llevado a la Sinfonica-Filarmonica al sur en una gira de dos semanas en 1954. Hizo otra gira de cinco semanas en la primavera de 1955, que compartió con el fallecido Guido Cantelli, llevando la orquesta a través del continente a la costa del Pacífico y Nordeste por primera vez desde 1921. En abril de 1957, Mitropoulos llevó la Sinfonica-Filarmonica en una gira de una semana por el estado de Nueva York, terminando con un concierto en Toronto.

En octubre de 1955, Mitropoulos regresó a su tierra natal por primera vez después de una ausencia de 17 años, en el itinerario de la primera gira de la Sinfonica-Filarmonica en 1930. La estrepitosa bienvenida que le dieron sus compatriotas impuso la necesidad de ofrecer otro concierto, para poder complacer a los atenienses que no pudieron comprar localidades para los dos conciertos anunciados previamente.

Además de la gira actual de la Sinfonica-Filarmonica, Mitropoulos acaba de terminar varias semanas de gira en los Estados Unidos y el Canadá, con el Metropolitan y más tarde llevará a la Filarmonica de Viena en una gira por varias ciudades europeas. También dirigirá la Sinfonica de Israel en varias ciudades israelíes, y dirigirá otra vez en el Festival de Salzburgo.

PROGRAMA DE HOY.— Obertura Académico-Festiva, opus 80, de Brahms; Segunda Sinfonia, opus 36, de Beethoven; Noche transfigurada de Arnold Schoenberg; Meditación y Danza de Venganza, de "Medea" de Samuel Barber. Comienza a las 18.30 horas. El Estudio Auditorio ha comunicado que se agotaron las localidades.

OFRECE SU ULTIMO CONCIERTO LA FILARMONICA DE NUEVA YORK

La Filarmonica de Nueva York realizará hoy domingo, a la hora 18.30, en el Estudio Auditorio del SODRE, su última actuación en nuestro medio, dirigida por el eminente maestro Dimitri Mitropoulos.

El programa seleccionado para esta audición de despedida de la Filarmonica posee indudable interés, estando integrado en su primera parte por la Obertura Académico-Festiva, opus 80, de Brahms, y la Sinfonia Nº 2, en Re-mayor, opus 36, de Beethoven.

Brahms escribió la Obertura Académico-Festiva con motivo de haber sido designado Doctor Honoris Causa por la Universidad de Breslau. En esta obra elaboró un número de temas pertenecientes a canciones de estudiantes alemanes. Si bien es cierto que se trata de una obra ocasional, no cabe duda que encierra reales valores, siendo incluida frecuentemente en los programas de conciertos sinfónicos.

La Segunda Sinfonia de Beethoven, es superior a la primera, y ya podría competir dignamente con las mejores de los grandes sinfonistas que precedieron al genio de Bonn. Puede ser considerada como obra de transición entre el estilo de aquellos maestros y el del autor. Concluida poco después del célebre y desesperado "testamento de Heiligenstadt", refleja, sin embargo, luminoso optimismo y alegría de vivir, en virtud de aquellas extraordinarias reacciones que se producen en el espíritu de Beethoven.

En su segunda parte el programa estará constituido por Noche Transfigurada, de Arnold Schoenberg, Meditación y Danza de Venganza, de "Medea", de Samuel Barber,

Noche Transfigurada es la primera gran obra de Schoenberg que está inspirada en un poema del mismo nombre de Ricardo Demel, poeta y filósofo alemán. La obra cuenta la historia del perdón que otorga un hombre a su esposa que le ha sido infiel. Caminando a la luz de la luna, en medio del silencio del bosque, ambos creen asistir a la transfiguración de las cosas que los rodean.

Medea, de Barber, fue escrita primeramente para ballet; luego se hizo una segunda versión con el mismo material, pero reestructurada en su totalidad. En la nueva forma de poema sinfónico fue dado a conocer obteniendo gran éxito en las salas de concierto. Barber ha tomado para su poema sinfónico, que se caracteriza por su ritmo melódico y frenético a la vez, dos episodios del ballet: la meditación de Medea, y Danza de Venganza.

Las localidades para este concierto, último de la Filarmonica de Nueva York, se han agotado totalmente.

Miren Quién... Dimitri Mitropoulos

May 30, 1958

Por DAVID R. CABAÑAS. ZOCALO

Dimitri Mitropoulos nació en Grecia y es ciudadano norteamericano. Una reputación brillante en Europa precedió su debut en los Estados Unidos en 1936 con la Sinfónica de Boston. Desde 1937 hasta la primavera de 1949, sus actividades se concretaron en la región del Medio Oeste, siendo Director Musical de la Sinfónica de Minneapolis, pero sus giras con esta orquesta y sus frecuentes actuaciones con otras orquestas importantes pronto le aseguraron el favor de un público devoto que se extendió de costa a costa.

Durante la temporada de 1940-1941 se presentó por primera vez con la Filarmónica de Nueva York. En los años subsiguientes, aumentó su reputación musical y su popularidad al presentarse regularmente con la Orquesta. Fue nombrado Director de la Orquesta en la temporada de 1950-1951, y Director Musical desde la temporada de 1951-1952 hasta la de 1956-1957. En la de 1957-1958 compartió con Leonard Bernstein los deberes inherentes al Director en Propiedad.

Dimitri Mitropoulos nació en Atenas el 18 de febrero de 1896; hizo sus primeros estudios en el Conservatorio de su ciudad natal, estudiando después con Ferruccio Busoni en Berlín. Durante algunos años estuvo al frente de la Sinfónica de Atenas como Director en Propiedad. Teniendo grandes dotes de pianista virtuoso y siendo compositor de gran talento, le resultaba difícil al comienzo de su carrera entregarse por entero a una sola actividad. Pero con su primera experiencia como director de orquesta, se dio cuenta que había dado con su verdadera vocación.

Dimitri Mitropoulos es bien conocido como un gran intérprete de los clásicos, además de ser un convencido paladín de los compositores modernos. Gracias a su interés y devoción, muchas obras modernas importantes han encontrado acogida. Sus óperas presentadas en conciertos con la Filarmónica, e incluyendo la "Elektra" de Strauss, "L'Heure Espagnole" de Ravel, "Wozzeck" de Berg y "Christophe Colomb" de Milhaud, han resultado grandes acontecimientos musicales. En los últimos años, presentó por primera vez en Nueva York la Décima Sinfonía y Concierto para violín de Shostakovich, el debatido Concierto para Orquesta y Banda de Jazz de Lieberman, así como obras de un gran número de compositores norteamericanos. En reconocimiento de su empeño en favor de la música moderna, recibió en octubre de 1957 una mención honorífica del Consejo Nacional de Música.



Los amantes de la ópera en EE. UU., tuvieron su primera oportunidad de oír a Mitropoulos en el Metropolitan Opera House de Nueva York, cuando hizo su debut en la temporada de 1954-55. Entre las óperas que ha dirigido se cuentan "Salomé", "Un Baile de Máscaras", "Tosca", "Boris Godunov", "Carmen", "Madame Butterfly", "Manon Lescaut" y "Las Walkirias". Dirigió "Eugene Onegin" en la función inaugural de esta temporada, y más tarde, la premiere mundial de "Vanessa", de Samuel Barber.

En agosto de 1951, Mitropoulos dirigió una serie de conciertos con la Filarmónica en el Festival de Edimburgo, siendo la primera vez que una orquesta de EE. UU. se presentara en dicho festival internacional. En 1955, volvió con la Filarmónica para dirigir otros conciertos en ese festival.

En Italia, donde está en demanda constante tanto para ópera como para conciertos, fue una sensación musical con sus presentaciones de "Elektra", "Wozzeck", "La Fuerza del Destino" y "La Muchacha del Dorado Oeste". Durante el verano de 1954 dirigió en Alemania y en Austria por primera vez desde 1932, con un éxito grandioso en Munich, Colonia y Salzburgo. En el verano y otoño de 1956 dirigió óperas por primera vez en Salzburgo y Viena: "Don Giovanni" en Salzburgo, y "Manon Lescaut" en Viena. También dirigió una serie de conciertos de la Filarmónica de Viena en Salzburgo, Viena y Venecia. En el verano pasado (1957), dirigió "Elektra" en el Festival de Salzburgo, "Ernani" en Florencia, y "Madame Butterfly" en Viena, además de varios conciertos en Viena, Milán, Salzburgo, Lucerna y Colonia.

En los Estados Unidos le escucha un público siempre en aumento. En 1954 llevó la Filarmónica al sur del país en una gira de dos semanas. En la primavera de 1955, hizo otra gira de cinco semanas, que compartió con el fallecido Guido Cantelli, llevando la orquesta a través del continente a la costa del Pacífico, y al Nordeste por primera vez desde 1921. En abril de 1957, Mitropoulos llevó la Filarmónica en una gira de una semana por el estado de Nueva York, terminando con un concierto en Toronto.

En octubre de 1955, dentro del itinerario de la primera gira de la Filarmónica, desde 1930, Mitropoulos regresó a su tierra natal después de una ausencia de diez y siete años. La estrepitosa bienvenida que le dieron sus compatriotas impulsó la necesidad de ofrecer otro concierto para poder complacer a los atenienses que no lograron obtener localidades para los dos conciertos anunciados previamente.

Además de la gira de la Filarmónica, Mitropoulos acaba de terminar varias semanas de gira en los Estados Unidos y el Canadá con el Metropolitan. En el curso del verano llevará la Filarmónica de Viena en una gira por varias ciudades europeas. También dirigirá la Sinfónica de Israel en algunas ciudades israelíes, y dirigirá otra vez en el Festival de Salzburgo.

VISITARA O BRASIL. NO PROXIMO MES. A ORQUESTRA FILARMONICA DE NOVA IORQUE

É dirigida pelos maestros Dimitri Mitropoulos e Leonard Bernstein — Completou 6.000 concertos, antes de iniciar a excursão pela America Latina — Estará nesta capital nos dias 5, 6 e 7 de junho

Folha da Tarde 5-10-58

A Orquestra Filarmônica de Nova Iorque, que visitará o Brasil em junho, como parte de uma excursão que realiza pela América Latina, sob os auspícios do programa do presidente dos Estados Unidos para apresentações culturais, tem como regentes dois músicos famosos: Dimitri Mitropoulos e Leonard Bernstein. Mitropoulos, que tem atualmente 62 anos, pretende retirar-se em fins deste ano, sendo substituído por Bernstein no cargo de diretor musical da Filarmônica. A famosa orquestra norteamericana estará em Porto Alegre no dia 3 de junho, em São Paulo nos dias 5, 6 e 7, e no Rio de Janeiro nos dias 9, 10 e 11.

MITROPOULOS

Dimitri Mitropoulos nasceu na Grécia, em Atenas, e é atualmente cidadão norteamericano. Regeu a Filarmônica pela primeira vez, como convidado, em 1940. Dois anos depois, aceitou o cargo de regente permanente, e desde 1951 é o diretor musical da Filarmônica.

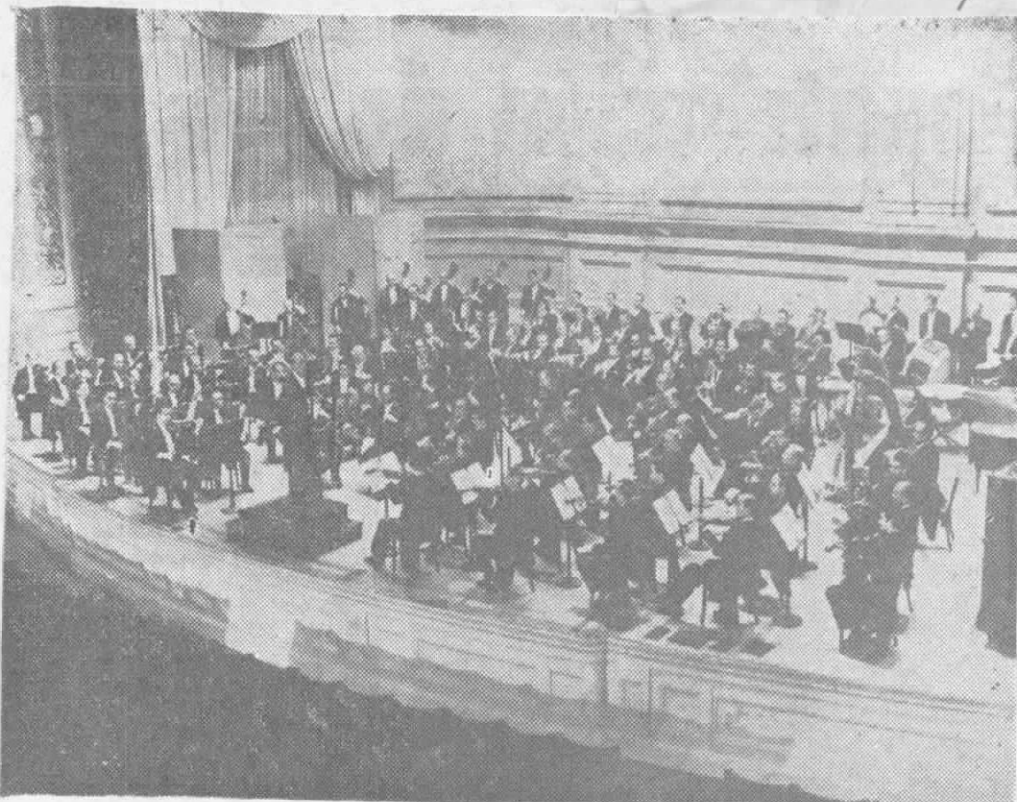
Mitropoulos é famoso como conhecedor e intérprete dos clássicos e admirador dos com-

positores modernos. Muitas são as obras contemporâneas que lhe devem suas primeiras audições. As execuções por ele dirigidas, com a Filarmônica, de óperas como "Elektra" de Strauss, "A Hora Espanhola" de Ravel e "Cristóvão Colombo", de Darius Milhaud, constituíram verdadeiro acontecimento no mundo musical norteamericano. Recentemente, Mitropoulos teve seus serviços em prol da música contemporânea reconhecidos, quando o Conselho Nacional de Música dos Estados Unidos lhe conferiu uma menção, em outubro de 1957.



No clichê, Mitropoulos regendo a Orquestra Filarmônica de Nova Iorque numa de suas audições pelo rádio

ULTIMAS NOTICIAS 5-27-



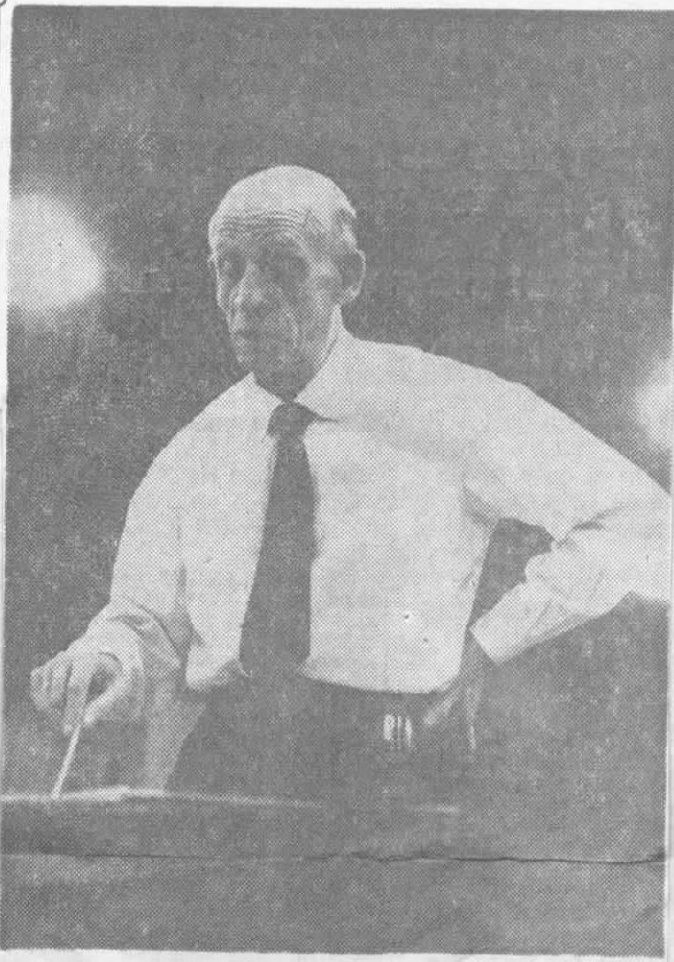
UNO DE LOS CONJUNTOS más famosos del orbe lo constituye la Orquesta Sinfónica de Nueva York, que deberá arribar a esta capital el próximo 13 de junio. Por primera vez el público mexicano podrá admirar a este conjunto que conoce simplemente por sus grabaciones.

Ningún Agravio Recibió la Filarmónica de Nueva York, Dijo el Agregado de E. U.

Todos Viajan con Pasaporte Especial, Dice

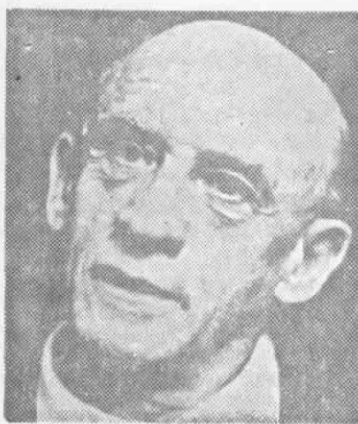
Ningún agravio ha recibido la Orquesta Filarmónica de Nueva York durante su gira por América y nuestras autoridades han otorgado las máximas facilidades migratorias a este conjunto que arribarán en junio.

Según declaró esta mañana el agregado cultural a la em-



DIMITRI METROPOULOS, uno de los directores operísticos y sinfónicos más destacados del mundo y que tendrá a su cargo la dirección del segundo concierto de la Filarmónica de Nueva York y que se llevará a cabo en el Auditorio Municipal.

J. P. J. PEREIRA 5-18



Dimitri Mitropoulos

Com a próxima temporada entre nós da Filarmônica de Nova York, as gravações do prestigioso conjunto, dirigido pelo conhecido regente, vão, certamente, merecer atenção mais acentuada por parte do público amante da música de classe.

Folha da Noite 5-7-58

Essa mudança, aliás como todas as iniciativas dessa entidade, foi determinada por resolução da sua Junta de Diretores, composta de 36 mem-



Dimitri Mitropoulos

bro, todos eles personalidades destacadas na vida cultural, comercial e civil da cidade de Nova Iorque. É presidente da Junta de Diretores da Orquestra Filarmônica de Nova Iorque o sr. Floyd G. Blair, e vice-presidente o senhor Arthur A. Houghton. O presidente da sociedade é o senhor David M. Kaiser.

Dimitri Mitropoulos, regente de orquestra famoso, nasceu na Grécia, em 1896. Preparava-se como seu jovem companheiro de excursão artística para a carreira de pianista, quando ao completar vinte anos de idade, descobriu o dom da direção de orquestra. Após estudos de especialização sob a orientação de atimos professores, ocupou diversos e elevados postos em Berlim, Atenas, Paris e Moscou. Sergei Kussewitsky levou-o para os Estados Unidos onde ocupou o cargo de diretor da Orquestra Sinfônica de Minneapolis de 1937 a 1949. Em 1950 foi convidado para dirigir a Orquestra Filarmônica de Nova Iorque e no ano seguinte foi nomeado regente efetivo da mesma.

Dimitri Mitropoulos é um dos mais renomados intérpretes da música sinfônica moderna e um dos mais completos da atualidade.

Esse são os maestros que dirigirão os concertos da Orquestra Filarmônica de Nova Iorque em São Paulo.



Mitropoulos, famoso director, que ha tenido un éxito notable en las ciudades Latinoamericanas, en las que se ha presentado. En la foto aparece en la grabación de un disco con la Filarmónica de Nueva York.