

Andantino separated two too similar *valse fantasques*. Of the remaining orchestral works, Arthur Benjamin gave us a cheerful if somewhat repetitious *Prelude to a Holiday*, David Diamond a *Concerto for Chamber Orchestra* which seemed long and arid, Marcel Poot an *Allegro Symphonique*, Godfrey Turner an interesting *Fanfare, Chorale and Finale* for brass instruments, Vittorio Rieti a *Concerto du Loup*, and Pedro Sanjuan his *Folk Tunes of Castile*.

An admirably pianistic *Toccata* of Jacques de Menasce, using the twelve-tone system in an effective and original way, and superbly performed by Bernhard Ambramowitsch, startled the audience from the lethargy produced by Luis Gianneo's *Music for Children* (moronic children), and *Seven Miniatures on Brazilian Folk Themes* by Fructuoso Vianna, the latter consisting of simple, nice tunes in the wrong dress. In spite of the really fine thematic material of Charles Jones' *Sonatina for Violin and Piano*, the work as a whole was not completely satisfying.

Illuminating and delightful was Darius Milhaud's lecture at Mills College, on the *Groupe des Six*, with illustrations from his own *Le Boeuf sur le toit* and Poulenc's *Concerto for Two Pianos*.

The absence of works by America's most prominent composers would have been keenly regretted if this exclusion had not permitted the introduction of music by newer and less well-known men. On request of the jury, Ernest Bloch and Arnold Schönberg, as the Pacific Coast's "foremost figures in modern music," were honored by performances; the former's *Poems of the Sea* and *Sonata for Piano*, and the latter's *Six Short Piano Pieces*, Opus 19. Yet the influence, for better or for worse, which, during the festival, was so often sensed, was that of a third figure who was not represented: Igor Stravinsky.

Charles Cushing

COMPOSERS DEDICATE WORKS TO THE BAND

WITH the Silver Jubilee concerts of the Goldman Band this summer one sensed that an important and neglected medium had finally come of age. The occasion had inspired a dozen-odd American composers to write for band with a breadth of concept and dignity of utterance hitherto reserved almost entirely for the orchestral medium. For the most part it was as though men who had previously worked only in oils were now essaying for the first time tempera or gouache, with corresponding pleasure

in the limitations and advantages as well as in the novelty of the medium. The results were impressive.

Memorable for sheer spontaneity was the *Canto Yorubá* of Pedro Sanjuan. Here was no trace of effort to write effectively; Sanjuan, for some time bandmaster of the Guardia Civil in Madrid, wrote as though incapable of conceiving an ineffective phrase or ill-calculated measure. Here was likewise no straining to paint or to point an impression; the primitive Afro-Cuban ritual dances and songs glowed so bright in the composer's memory that he had only to pour them full-blown out of a deep well of images. And with what compelling rhythmic vigor and resource! The percussion parts were masterly, the melodic outlines simple and direct but not conventional. The one possible flaw is the rather over-liberal use of *coplas* or repetitions; yet the effect of monotony which ensues can be accepted as essential to a musical impression of ritual dances, repetition being of the essence of ritual itself.

Fully as effective and ear-shattering, in a pleasurable sense, was the *Jericho* of Morton Gould. A tour de force of broadly delineated descriptive writing, its several sections bearing the subtitles Prologue, Roll Call, Chant, Dance, March and Battle, Joshua's Trumpets, The Walls Came Tumblin' Down, and Hallelujah, the piece suffers from its cleverness. As in certain of his other works, Gould might have written more impressive and enduring music if more concerned with straightforward expression and less with virtuosity of effect.

William Schuman revealed himself as a musical humorist of rare gifts in his suite, *News-Reel*, of which the second piece, *Fashion Show*, is a gem of sly tongue-in-cheek vulgarity. *Horse Race* is also irresistibly crass and cinematic – hence urban-American, familiar, and indigenous. The other three pieces are less distinctive, and the last, *Parade*, is definitely weak, especially by comparison with its companions.

Aaron Copland's arrangement for band of his *Outdoor Overture* is in many ways to be preferred to the original orchestral version. It is of a vintage both native and mellow, but never over-ripe, the mellowness by no means precluding a feeling of freshness and tartness. As music pure and simple it had the distinction of being the best piece in the entire group of premieres and near-premieres. The trumpet solo which was a memorable feature of the orchestral version is retained intact in all its late-adolescent dignity, as unmistakably United States as a high-school athletic field or the radio voice of Elmer Davis. Considered alongside the composer's

Quiet City and *Billy the Kid*, the piece tempts one to the conclusion that Copland is never in more felicitous vein than when writing *Gebrauchsmusik* or something close to it.

The most intellectual, one might say the most cerebral, of these new works was Wallingford Riegger's *Finale* from *New Dance*. Conceived primarily in terms of rhythm, its melodic contours give a certain impression of dryness, almost of over-conciseness; it seems to suffer by being detached from the suite for which it was originally designed. But there is no denying the mature and articulate voice which speaks through the pages of this distinguished score, a voice one is eager to hear again, and at the first opportunity.

Percy Grainger's *Lads of Wampbray* suite is one of the best efforts of this master-hand at band writing, fully living up to the standards set by its predecessors. The *Festive Occasion* of Henry Cowell is a dignified and unassuming contribution, but scarcely bears out the composer's reputation for originality of idiom, being far less distinctive than his evocative and folkish impression of sleep, *Shoonthree*, which was repeated from the previous season. Curiously uncontemporary, almost pre-Raphaelite, was Paul Creston's sonorous *Legend*. As with most of his other works, one is torn between vague annoyance at the ambient flavor of anachronism and admiration for the manifest courage of Creston's musical impulses. The *Spring Overture* of Leo Sowerby and William Grant Still's *Old California* are effective but undistinguished, while the *Song of Freedom* of John Alden Carpenter, the *Festal March* of Philip James, and the *Grand March Victory* of Nathaniel Shilkret are definitely minor efforts of their respective composers.

Mention should be made also of Hershy Kay's admirable new arrangement of Handel's *Water-Music*, and of Richard Franko Goldman's canny and at the same time engagingly candid musical primitives, *Sentimental Journey* and *A Curtain-Raiser and Country Dance*, repeated from previous seasons, as well as of the latter's arrangements of Bach's *Overture in B \flat major*, of *Two Marches from Revolutionary America*, and of Jaromir Weinberger's *Czech Rhapsody*. Felicitations are due the Goldman Band and its founder Dr. Edwin Franko Goldman for a memorable season. Major tribute must go to Richard Goldman, who conceived the idea of presenting the series of new works and conducted the greater part of them with characteristic insight into their content. This one enterprise alone has put generations of American music and musicians in his debt.

Carl Buchman