

quartets is sometimes played, the superb development of the composer's resources through this series of works is hardly known to the general public.

Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* is a concentrated and magnificent example of what may now, I suppose, be called the composer's "middle period;" I include it rather than the *Symphonie de Psaumes* because it has greater diversity of dramatic treatment and musical resources. My other nomination from the choral repertory is Kodaly's *Budavari Te Deum*, a work surpassing the *Psalmus Hungaricus* and, for that matter, most other modern choral pieces, in the strength and sinew of its polyphony, the breadth of its vocal sonority and the logic of its organization.

All the songs of Poulenc, or at least all the good ones, should be included in this list, as a tribute to the one contemporary composer who has devoted his best energy to the exploration of the craft of song writing and who has attained singular felicity in the setting of texts.

As an opera entry I'll settle for Honegger's *Antigone*, because of its searching attempt to come to grips with the basic problems of prosody. These are largely untackled by composers like Berg and Hindemith, who have been preoccupied with other than the poetic factors.

. . . CARLOS CHAVEZ

I HAVE not found it easy to decide what the ten most neglected works of the modern repertory are. Yet I should like to deal somehow with the idea that inspired the question. I shall not speak of the ten *most* neglected works, but of two *very* neglected ones.

These scores—Copland's *Short Symphony* and Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps*—are completely different in their expressive content and form, yet they have more than one point in common.

Both are rhythmically complicated. This is probably the reason for their neglect, though certainly not the justification. Conductors can overcome these rhythmical difficulties; they simply do not want to take the trouble to study and practice them enough. The *Sacre*, of course, has probably been played by every good orchestra in the world, but not as often as it deserves. The *Short Symphony*, on the other hand, has been played by one or two orchestras at most.

There is probably one more consideration in the minds of conductors: these works are not attractive enough to the public. Obviously anything new, even if it is good, does not have instant appeal. But conductors must accept the consequences of this fact: they should give up all idea of immediate success and use all their power over the public to force it to listen to and eventually like these scores. They should not conclude too quickly that certain works are incomprehensible to audiences, when these

works might be enjoyed thoroughly if given a chance.

The *Short Symphony* and *Sacre du Printemps* are two works of supreme beauty. Their sense of movement is profound. A primitive and pagan but highly co-ordinated strength runs through the Russian score. In the American piece the strength is agile, a bit playful and jazzy, but tender and fully disciplined.

. . . ROBERT PALMER

CHARLES IVES naturally comes to mind when one thinks of neglected composers. One of his finest orchestral works, not as difficult as some, is the suite, *Three Places in New England*. The movement entitled *The Housatonic at Stockbridge* is particularly beautiful, with its gently undulating orchestral sounds. The splendid *Second Violin Sonata*, conceived on a large scale, contains some of Ives's best thoughts. Its barn dance movement is unequaled, even by any other of this composer's dynamic and indigenous examples.

One of the most shamefully neglected men is Bartok, whose greatest work in my opinion is the *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*. This score, of such depth, maturity and power, has been performed only rarely in America. The *First Piano Concerto*, another fine product of his maturity, is Bartok in his most intransigent and starkest phase.

It is ironic that much of the best modern music has been for chamber combinations, the most neglected medium of all. An interesting European score is the *String Sextet* by Martinu that Mrs. Coolidge commissioned. It has seldom been given since its early performances. Some of the best chamber music of Walter Piston is to be found in the *Second String Quartet*. From the moving canonic opening in the two violins to the vibrant dynamism of the finale, it is surely one of the best quartets written in America.

Roy Harris's music has been as widely performed as that of any contemporary, but two of his most significant works, the *Piano Trio* and the *Viola Quintet*, have been least often presented. The first is possibly the most substantial modern trio. Unfortunately the brilliant recording by the Casella Trio is withdrawn from the Columbia catalogue. The *Quintet* has strong lines and the grandeur of its conception is truly realized.

Edmund Rubbra has to his credit several symphonies of great power and structural unity. The *Third Symphony*, which has had only one radio performance here, should be done in concert. It would help to change the impression current in America that English music consists of Holst, Bax and the Dorian Mode.

One of the most gifted and mature of America's composers is Hunter