

alive — *musique du monde*, to paraphrase an epithet.

The music of Paul Hindemith has appeared with such consistent frequency upon Koussevitzky's programs that a great popular success for *Mathis der Maler*, on its third appearance at the symphony concerts, was not unexpected. The warm reception accorded the premiere of the *Violin Concerto*, expertly set forth by Richard Burgin and Koussevitzky's orchestra, seemed to indicate that Hindemith's music has at last caught the public fancy and projected itself into the general consciousness. Certainly this new score, completed in 1939, is a worthy successor to *Mathis, Nobilissima Visione* and the *Symphonic Dances*. It represents another high point in that aspect of Hindemith's art which, for want of a better term, I must call mystic. There has always been a duality in Hindemith's work. Until very recently whenever a stray work of his turned up on a program, the annotators would dust off their axiomatic reference to a viola virtuoso who composed his music to the rhythm of railway trains that accompanied him on his provincial tours. But familiarity with his work has shown that there is another and quite different Hindemith — the Hindemith of the *Marienleben*, the *Sonata for Flute and Piano*, the ballet *Nobilissima Visione* and the new *Concerto*, to name only a few works in a long development. The composer of these works is a man of spiritual insight, a man who has been able to mirror the mystical inner life of mankind in a significant music of great originality. Certain works of Hindemith only exemplify his inventive facility. They are all constructed by a master hand; that not all are masterpieces is but to be expected.

The *Concerto* is in three movements, and skillfully opposes orchestra and is never absorbed into the orchestra — as so frequently happens in works and soloist in the traditional manner. The violin is always the protagonist, employing the contemporary *concertant* style. To say that the work is complex without becoming complicated, that it is melodic but not tuneful, that its harmony is intricate and not involved is about as close as one can come in so brief a space to analyzing the mystical style of Paul Hindemith.

George Henry Lovett Smith

AMERICANS AT ROCHESTER

THE tenth annual Festival of American Music given by the Eastman School of Music opened with a retrospective evening. Hanson's *Fanfare* led into a pedantic eighteenth century *Sinfonia* by Johann Friedrich Peter. Followed Bernard Rogers' seventeen-year old *Soliloquy*, still a

sombre, effective piece, and Carpenter's noisy and dated *Skyscrapers* with all its bombastic trivialities and "super-corny" orchestration. Hanson's *Third Symphony* brought the program to an end. This undoubtedly is his biggest work and truly one of the best romantic pieces produced in this country.

A plethora of unfamiliar material – nine works for chamber orchestra – filled the second evening. The line-up was: Veterans – Jacobi, Diamond, Donovan; Post-Prize Winners – Read, Johnson, Kennan; Rookies – Haines. The moral is, don't win a prize! Diamond's *Variations on an Original Theme* was the largest and most important work. As always, his writing is sure but the technic here is more praiseworthy than the inner-organic growth of the composition. A theme (rather a motif), carefully devised, leads into twelve variations followed by a passacaglia and coda. The fast-paced variations sound athletically alike, but there is no mistaking the contours of each of the super-spun, slow ones, all of them good, especially the second, eighth and tenth, which are vaguely also quasi-Von Weberian. This opus should become known.

Three pieces by Kent Kennan – *Promenade*, *Nocturne* and *Il Campo di Fiori* – belong to the Respighi-Pizetti-Malipiero elementary school. Loud, bombastic with wide open noisy brasses distintegrating into zippy diatonic string ostinati. An inconsequential sample of the American influence on the American composer, vintage 1940! A *Symphony in Miniature* by Edmund Haines showed decided promise but the slow movement is scored too timidly for flute and strings to obtain contrast against two fast, fairly full-blooded movements. He should learn that "bite" in music means more than accentuation with down bows; the notes need intestines and outer skins.

Jacobi's *Ave Rota* is splendid, solid whimsy. It brought down the house with its Bach-Concerto-Grosso-Jam combine. Kostalanetz and Raymond Paige still can't imitate a symphony as well as some of our boys (Jacobi et al) can imitate a dance crew. Three other works were played – Johnson's *Andante for Flute and Strings*, a langsam, attenuated bit with considerable lack of movement, Donovan's *Adagio from a Symphony for Chamber Orchestra* which was too thick in scoring to make clear the contrapuntal web, and Read's *Prelude and Toccata*, for which see remarks above concerning works by Kennan.

For the first time this year's festival included an evening of songs. Fifteen of the seventeen items were by Ives. The range of his dates, 1899-

1921, belied the title of the evening: "Modern American Songs." They out-gamut the orchestral tonal range; from twaddle to superb tonal art, nothingness in ideas to great inspiration, magnificent vocal lines to irrelevancies. The text, did likewise. Pre-Cowell clusters flavored the semi-proletarian *Majority*. Declamation, more solid than Schönbergian sprechstimme, appeared in *Walking*. At the end of *Requiem* there is rare sensitive writing. For comic relief add *Ann Street* and *The Greatest Man*. The audience, perplexed, showed enthusiasm only for Ives' humor. Now that the piano pieces and songs are being performed, let's hope for a daring young conductor to climb on and perform the flying poly-orchestral works. . . . Two non-Ives songs were most effective – Hanson's *Beat! Beat! Drums* and a plangently stirring *Song of Martha* by Bernard Rogers. This excerpt from *The Rising of Lazarus* makes us hope the entire work will be given soon. Its final measures alone indicate the work of a secure, sensitive musician.

Star-studded with the names of Harris, Copland and Rogers came the fourth night. Copland's flavory *Music for the Theatre* led off as a sort of warm-up. Two works for solo winds and strings followed – Wayne Barlow's *The Winter's Past* (solo oboe) and a *Concert Piece* (solo bassoon) by Burrill Phillips. The former is a folk-tuney thing, suave "schmaltz" backed up modally; the Phillips piece proved his weakest work so far. Then came one of the best scores of the festival, a brilliant tour-de-force, Rogers' *Dance of Salome* which grips, pulsates, dances, and draws frenzy out of every orchestral timbre. This is no Oriental belly dance, but an inner exploration of sensuality, at once realistic and psychological. Rogers can teach many what the orchestra still holds in store for us. The final three chords are a landmark in contemporary orchestral literature.

And now folks, the *Folksong Symphony* of Roy Harris! This is a new Harris, foreshadowed perhaps in his recent *Viola Quintet*, a Harris destined to be prophetically popular. It is music for the masses, from the masses. Only five of the seven movements were played – four for chorus and orchestra, separated by an orchestral interlude. The folk melodies are not patchy, spasmodic fragments developed à la textbook, but full and complete, spun out healthily and organically. From a single hearing this symphony seems based on a grand verse-and-chorus idea; the orchestra simulates and develops the "refrain" while the choral group projects the running narrative "verse" lines, but the component forces rarely separate into two distinct units. *Johnny Comes Marching Home* is back with us

again, this time a very grown-up virile Johnny. All the folksongs are authentic, but rich in harmonic tapestry and held up exactly by the structural underpinning demanded. The orchestral painting is sound, folksy. It's been a big year for Harris with the production of this work and the *Viola Quintet*; the audience gave him an ovation.

Most disappointing were the ballet scores. Cheap and a little like hotel dinner-hour music was *Theatre Street* by Robert Braine. Woltmann's *Incantation* (with mixed voices) sounded suspiciously like the *Sirènes* of Debussy. Rogers' *The Colors of War* loses its concentrated force when mimed. Light, satisfactory and balletish were Wayne Barlow's *Three Moods*, Burrill Phillips' *Dance* and Skilton's very old *War Dance*. A repeat – and a highly effective one – was Piston's *Incredible Flutist*.

Arthur Cohn

MUSIC, DANCE, THEATRE IN ENGLAND

London, April 20

SEVERAL new developments have given variety to the London season. The Vic-Wells ballet, now back after a successful provincial tour, has brought out a *Dante Sonata*, to Liszt's *Fantasia après une lecture du Dante*, arranged by Constant Lambert for piano and orchestra. (This version was recently recorded, with the Hungarian pianist Louis Kestner.) The choreography is violent and orgiastic but effective, and Frederick Ashton, wisely avoiding a "story," has arranged the dances in the form of a struggle between two opposing groups. The Vic-Wells ballet is optimistically planning a visit to Holland and Belgium, under the auspices of the British Council, and also to the troops in France. Their forthcoming productions include *The Wise and Foolish Virgins*, to Bach chorale preludes (orchestration by William Walton), and a ballet to the eighteenth century music of William Boyce.

The other notable theatrical event has been the Glyndebourne production of the *Beggar's Opera*, also running in London after a provincial tour. It is performed partly by members of the Glyndebourne Opera company – Roy Henderson and Audrey Mildmay – and partly by well-known actors such as Michael Redgrave and John Gielgud, who have both taken the part of Macheath. The production, which is in John Gielgud's charge, takes the play out of its mid-eighteenth century period and puts it into the more