

he seems always to fall short of giving us an idea which is full, universal or even nearly complete. Among the things he discusses are "interpreters" and the "interpretation" of music; the so-called "expressiveness" of music; and the differences of our attitudes toward a "spectacle of art" and a "religious ritual"—this latter apropos a performance of Parsifal which he attended in Bayreuth as a young man. Throughout, his language is most carefully and deliberately chosen: he seems to take a pride in his excellent French!

Though the book gives us little that is factually new, it does elucidate and define certain points in Stravinsky's character and it dispels the legendary and anecdotal atmosphere which has surrounded certain episodes of his life. We are struck by the intensity of his intellectual passions and the enthusiasm with which he has attached himself to different things at different periods of his life. At one moment he is "emballé" for Russian folk-poetry, at another he is fascinated by the Hungarian cymbalom and later we see him keenly amused in the selection of paper, prints and designs for the publication of one of his works. His sensitiveness to the various things and, in particular, to the special atmosphere of cities and countries with which he has come into contact is delightful and his descriptions of these, though slight, are extraordinarily apt. It goes without saying that his comments on the personalities of the people with whom he has been closely associated, and in particular those of Diaghileff and Nijinsky are illuminating and amusing. He seems, in regard to Nijinsky, particularly eager to dispel some current misconceptions. In regard to himself and his personal sufferings both moral and physical he is inclined at times to become somewhat tearful and self-pitying. But, on the whole, one feels his desire to be tempered and just; he appears to us a man of enormous emotional and nervous energy, making a constant effort to keep in balance the finely adjusted mechanism of his personality.

Frederick Jacobi

DANCERS IN NEW YORK, AUTUMN, 1935

IF the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo had presented nothing but the revival of Fokine's *Scheherazade*, its brief season in New

York would have been more than justified. Even today the tempo of the Fokine-Bakst drama is exciting and new. The scenery and costumes of Bakst contributed greatly to the feeling of novelty. What was impressive was the artistic authenticity of the entire collaboration. In Fokine's choreography there is logical shape which is rarely dependent upon literary paraphernalia. The virtuoso is not considered *per se*. Group dancing is integrated into the work as a whole. Rimsky-Korsakoff's lovely score remains a model of ballet music, and although the version of the dance recently presented did not coincide with the composer's program, the spirit of the score was not tampered with. Massine and Tchernicheva contributed materially to the brilliance of the presentation.

Le Mariage d'Aurore is important because it allows twentieth century audiences a view of Petipas' choreography. Although the director has chosen wisely from Tchaikovsky's music he has gained nothing from Bakst's scenery. *Le Mariage d'Aurore* contains the famous "Blue-Bird" dance which Lichine and Riabouchinska performed well enough. In *Les Femmes de Bonne Humeur* the relation between each accent of toes and every single note of Scarlatti's florid music recalled the first species of counterpoint where one longed for a broad free phrase which the choreography never made possible. Since we are familiar with Scarlatti's sonatas we can say with certainty that in this case Massine's dance arrangements created the fetters. Why single out Massine's choreography for comment? The selection of Goldoni's complicated play as a basis was unfortunate in the first place. The observer is not given sufficient opportunity to familiarize himself with the characters when presto! their identities are masked. Confusion! Confusion on the stage and confusion in the orchestra because Scarlatti's sonatas are for the clavier. Any attempt to present them in an arrangement for orchestra either makes them too big or deprives them of their "bite."

Nijinska's ballet *Les Cent Baisers* which demonstrates that "some things that do not glitter are gold" is very pert. It is also immoral. It is also delightful. The reviewer is tempted a little to believe that the points on which he would heap praise were unin-

tentional. The chances are that Mme Nijinska, like the lady who wrote "The Tavern", believes she composed a delicate tragedy.

Soleil de Nuit is not as good as the Igor dances which it resembles in style. And "Choreatium"! This is its case: Every movement is derived directly out of some phrase in Brahms' *Fourth Symphony*. Without the symphony it would collapse. With the symphony it is overthrown at every point. Yet as a ballet composition dished out to eyes without ears, it is original, dashing and logical. Toumanova on her toes being stern to Brahms' themes is a little incongruous. Yet there it is, and a waste of colossal proportions it is too.

Through much messiness one remembered the simple directness of *Scheherazade*.

The October recital of Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman with their concert groups marked a new level of achievement for these artists. Miss Humphrey's large opus called *New Dance*, with music by Wallingford Riegger, is a work of extreme beauty and importance. It has no "literary" content but consists rather of the direct statements of three themes preceded by a *Prelude* and followed by a *Processional* and *Celebration*, several variations and a closing section. The work is full of the materials of "dance" and in one of the principal roles Miss Humphrey gives a performance of unusual clarity and brilliance. The composition always satisfies the eye with its conscientious position and juxtaposition of groups and in this regard the gradual choreographic integration and crescendo in the use of an increasing number of people near the end of the work is one of the most exciting and beautiful moments in the entire ballet.

Mr. Weidman's *American Saga* based on the Paul Bunyan legend and with the music by Jerome Moross is less complete than the *New Dance*. Weidman's ability to infuse choreography with humorous movement is well known. In *American Saga* he employs an even broader style of comedy and imbues the work as a whole with an admirable heroic quality. The trouble lies with the length which is of fabulous proportions. Certainly Messrs. Limon's, Maton's, and Weidman's performances are all that could have been desired of them.