

else let there be a high tariff. If music *must* be exchanged, through the mutual agreement of certain composers, it must be done with more discrimination and less politics.

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There is not a great deal I can add to the review of Aaron Copland's *Hear Ye, Hear Ye!* which appeared before in this magazine. But after seeing this ballet presented recently for the first time in New York, by Ruth Page, one cannot rest without alluding (repeating what is already well known) to its vitality, exhilaration and pungent orchestration, particularly in the jazz parts. Not the least of Copland's many gifts is the ability to write the most exciting jazz I know, a jazz whose nervous energy could only be felt by a New Yorker, and by one who was thoroughly aware of his city's night life from Minsky's Burlesque to Harlem. This superb mastery of the jazz idiom was emphasized once more at the theatre the other night, in spite of the indifferent choreography.

Colin McPhee

THE NOBLEST ROMAN OF THEM ALL

THE current Italian season may be said to have begun under the sign of Malipiero. During the month of December we heard, at the Augusteo in Rome, his latest concert composition, *La Passione*, for soloists, chorus, and orchestra; in January the poem for baritone and orchestra, *Il Commiato*; and in February, at the Carlo Felice Theater in Genoa, the premiere of his opera, *Giulio Cesare*. What is more, the three works, and particularly the first and third, received the warmest approbation thus far given Malipiero in Italy.

This is a sign that the times have changed, but also that the composer has succeeded in playing upon the most sensitive chord in the public—sentiment. By this we do not mean that Malipiero has gone back on any of the "points" of his program, and even less that he has made concessions to the taste of the gallery. No one who has followed his creative activity for twenty years, can for a moment doubt his complete fidelity to the canons of his esthetic, already fixed in the first significant pages of his youth. But, by abandoning certain subjects steeped in an atmosphere of

nightmarish unreality, he has deepened the essential human value of his protagonists. No longer are they lunar phantoms or symbols but clothed in flesh like ourselves, suffering pains like ours and knowing our kinds of happiness. Such are the feelings expressed in *La Passione*, written on a text of the fourteenth century Castellani; such those which move the heroes of *Giulio Cesare*, based on Shakespeare; such, finally, the evocative pathos of *Il Commiato*, a setting of the short but intense poem by Giacomo Leopardi. To this deepening of the human values, to this closer and more persuasive participation in men's emotions (accompanied by an always greater maturity and mastery of expressive means) is due the feeling of cordiality and greater vitality emanating from Malipiero's recent works and, consequently, the more immediate and open approval of the public.

The manner of composition has not changed. Both in *La Passione* and in *Giulio Cesare*, there is Malipiero's predilection for brief pictures, quick illuminations, daring syntheses, and, on the other hand, his avoidance of conventional development and his horror of academic elaboration. A character is presented and characterized in that first appearance; the life of his feeling is not evolved step by step, but is given in a series of spiritual states related only by their reference to the same individual. This is not art of subtle and delicate suggestion, but of vigorous and sometimes brutal "sections" of the spirit. Thus, a theme or a fragment of a theme expresses what it is meant to express, but does not develop by revolving about itself as yarn is made from strands. The movement of the exposition is not circular but rectilinear; it proceeds by additions or repetitions, not by variations. Everything is of equal importance, nor is it possible to pick out a generative center, a germinal seed-nucleus. There is of course the constant danger—which Malipiero is not always able to avoid—of failure of perspective, of errors of proportion, which we find even in *Giulio Cesare*; the choral finale, for example, lacking in sonorous balance, is not adequate to crown so heroic and exalted a work.

Following such a principle of composition, Malipiero has chosen from Shakespeare's tragedy three moments which seemed to him essential for a musical representation of the drama of

Julius Caesar: the preparation of the conspiracy; the slaying of Caesar and the resulting dismay in Brutus (a Hamlet-like dreamer), in Cassius, his spiritual antithesis, and in the people; and, finally, the victory of the partisans and successors of Caesar. The selection is, like all choices, open to discussion (as are the Italian translation of the Shakespearean text and certain expressions which are neither Elizabethan nor Roman). But second thought reveals the selection as inevitable. Malipiero could not have given greater space to the episodes of the two women, Calpurnia and Portia, and thus have abandoned himself to the pathos of their farewells, which in themselves are among the best things in the work; nor could he entirely suppress or more radically cut certain elements which make the last act heavy and slow. For everything should build to the conclusion which the English tragedy (and Malipiero, consequently) must "logically" attain.

But no artist, be he the greatest of all, is able to draw emotions and artistic images from verbal rhetoric; only feeling, in the widest but most precise sense of that word, can constitute material for art. This also is demonstrated by *Giulio Cesare*, in most of the third act: the speech of Marc Antony to the people, more grandiloquent than moving; the meeting of the leaders of the two groups in camp; the useless episode, before the closed curtain, of the poet Cinna mistaken for a conspirator and pursued by the mob; not to mention certain passages in the first two acts. Thus, after the exciting dialog between Brutus and Cassius, above the noises of the invisible chorus, punctuated by the percussion instruments (one of the most beautiful pages in the score, and perhaps one of the most beautiful, suggestive, and dramatic in all contemporary opera) how disappointing is the indifferent short dialog between Caesar and Marc Antony (including the talk of "fat men") while the orchestra amuses itself with a kind of seventeenth century recitative accompaniment.

Nevertheless, considered as a whole, this last opera of Malipiero's, by virtue of its structure and powerful synthesis takes its place in the first rank of the music theater of our day. The feeling of a world distant and legendary rather than historical, is conveyed by the stature of the figures, the rigor of their thinking, the nobility of their feeling; the language of Malipiero, so elevated,

sensitive, and incisive, heard above the consistently appropriate use of the orchestra, places their will to action in high relief. Tragic atmosphere is created by sparse and linear means of representation, going directly to the point without uncertainty or dalliance. It is clear that the musical style of Malipiero is now fully realized and is used with that absolute assurance which characterizes the most distinguished artistic personalities.

Guido Gatti

RUBIN GOLDMARK: A TRIBUTE

THE death of Rubin Goldmark has dealt a serious blow to American music. His compositions testify to his high honesty of purpose, to the seriousness of his conception of art and to an order of musicianship altogether rare. Perhaps since Mac Dowell we have had no other composer whose technical equipment has stood in such perfect relationship to the message it was to convey. Like all works of solid and firm construction, his *Samson*, his *Gettysburg Requiem* and his *Negro Rhapsody* remain squarely where they were implanted. They will appear little different to the generations which are to come than they do to us. The tinsel and glitter of much of our contemporary music will inevitably fade and the dust which fills our eyes will eventually be laid: our children will smile at much that has won temporary acclaim. But in the works of Rubin Goldmark they will sense a man who had the courage to go his way, irrespective of momentary modes and moods; a composer whose "will" and whose "can" were at one with each other.

But if Goldmark had done nothing else than to teach he would still have left a large imprint on the face of American music. During the past thirty years, so much of which he devoted to pedagogy, a great number of American composers of the younger generations have passed through his hands; others of his pupils have become teachers and performers and the "Goldmark tradition," like that of Kneisel, will be a force for good, a recognizable element in our musical heritage, for many years to come. To his students he brought the keenness of his intelligence, the clarity of his analytical powers and the ordered processes of a pedagogical thought which were entirely his own. His devotion to