

Aryan and more specifically German, the problems of broadening the scope of the listeners and musicians alike is as difficult as it is important to the successful re-education of the German people. The Germans are quite satisfied with the music they know. And most of that music is indeed great.

During the intermission of one of the Radio Frankfurt Symphony Concerts, an American soldier was drawn into a discussion of music and war. The German woman with whom he was talking listened rather scornfully to his account of broad-minded musical America, where German music had been played throughout the war. Whereas, she would have to admit, no music by Allied composers was allowed to be played under Hitler.

At the end of the argument, the German woman laughed. "But, naturally," she explained with the air of a teacher speaking gently to a very stupid pupil, "you could not ban German music from even one concert program. If you did, there could be no concert."

Boris Kremenliev

UNDER THREE FLAGS

Berlin, August 1946

BERLIN has lost much of its international splendor as a city of music. Its best-known conductors, singers and virtuosi are gone and have as yet not been lured back. It is difficult to travel to Berlin today and even more difficult to leave. The two opera houses, Unter den Linden and the one in the Bismarkstrasse, once rebuilt at a cost of millions, are badly damaged; the home of the Philharmonic Orchestra in Bernburgerstrasse is completely destroyed. Hence opera and symphony have taken refuge in revue and movie theatres, but they play to sold-out houses. Despite hunger and cold, despite difficulties of obtaining housing or doing business, the Berliner's love of music remains unquenchable. Indeed the number of small concerts, of song and piano evenings, with programs frequently bolstered up by recitations of poetry, has grown to threatening proportions. Dilettantism and mediocrity abound. The various districts have been taking their musical activities under their own jurisdiction. In the western section, in Zehlendorf and Dahlen (both part of the American zone), the love of music seems focused on new works of merit; in others on treasured antiques and musical gold bricks.

In spite of this decentralization of musical life, there are naturally, as before, artistic events in which all Berlin is interested, such as the performances of the former Staatsoper (in the Russian sector), the Municipal Opera (British sector), the Philharmonic concerts (U. S. sector) and the concerts by the orchestras of the two above-mentioned opera houses.

What do the programs tell us? Contemporary music has appeared only at the orchestral concerts, for the operatic repertory in general consists of familiar works, especially Wagner. Ernst Legal, director of the Staatsoper, has at least one prominent conductor, Johannes Schüler. Of the former members of the company, only Erna Berger, Margaret Klose, Tiana Lemnitz, Erich Anders and Jaro Prohaska have remained. Schüler deserves credit for a very successful performance, from the musical standpoint, of Tchaikovsky's *Onegin* and Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffman*. And the scenic investiture, despite the lack of materials, had style. In the Municipal Theatre, Director Michael Bohnen busies himself mainly with Verdi. *Otello* and *Simon Boccanegra* were put on and the public was grateful, although critical of some details. Both opera organizations have promised modern works for the next season, among them Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler* and Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes*.

As far as recent Berlin concert programs are concerned, they don't differ much from those of the National Socialistic era. It is true that such outlawed composers as Mendelssohn and Mahler, Tchaikovsky and Stravinsky, Debussy and Ravel, have been restored to their rightful positions, but the interest displayed – except for Tchaikovsky – doesn't amount to much. As before, Bach, Beethoven, Brahms and Bruckner are masters of the field. Since the tragic death of Leo Borchardt last winter, the Philharmonic Orchestra has been under the direction of Sergiu Celibidache, a young Romanian, trained in the Berlin Musikhochschule. He is an earnest and diligent musician, with a fine feeling for style and understanding of form; he has developed rapidly. In addition to classical works, he presented a whole series of modern compositions, among them suites by Stravinsky and Gustav Holst. He acquainted Berliners – stupefied them, too – with an original four-part work by Nicholas Nabokov entitled *Parade*, dedicated to the Red Army.

Among the modern works that Schüler and the Staatskapelle presented may be mentioned Hindemith's *Schwanendreher* viola concerto and Boris Blacher's *Partita* for strings and percussion, a work clearly marked by a fresh creative impulse. It is oriented in atonality but strives, in a most individual rhythmic and melodic fashion, to attain a new classicism. Blacher stands with the more solid Konrad Friedrich Noetel in the vanguard of Berlin's composers, among whom are older men still rooted in the post-romantic tradition: Paul Höffer, Heinz Tiessen and Ernst Pepping. Höffer directs a newly-formed International Music Institute (in the U. S. sector of Berlin) which increasingly fosters modern music efforts and enjoys American favor.

One finds new works on chamber music programs more often than one does at the Berlin orchestral concerts. In their presentation Zehlendorf

(U. S. sector) is unquestionably the leader. The Charlottenburg Music Library (British sector) also eagerly promotes the contemporary. Little by little new Russian and French works have been doled out to Berliners. Also a few, unfortunately too few, English and American works have bobbed up, among them John Bitter's capricious *Quartet in 3/4 Time*, by turns perky and meditative. But it is Hindemith's name that most frequently appears at the chamber concerts. Berlin wants to atone for the unholy, art-hating National Socialist regime's crime against this composer.

Erwin Kroll

ISCM FESTIVAL; BRITTEN'S LUCRETIA

THERE was quite a party atmosphere about the twentieth ISCM Festival, held in London in the second week of July. It was pleasant to welcome back old friends who had not visited us since the 1938 Festival, though there were many sad gaps due to Nazi persecution. Above all there was a feeling that international contemporary music had at last been given a fresh organized basis in Europe.

But it is rather disappointing to admit that a good deal of the music played did not come up to our high expectations. The first orchestral concert, held in Covent Garden Opera House, began effectively enough with Richard Mohaupt's *Stadtppfeifermusik*, an agreeably brassy piece with an overlong middle section. Elizabeth Lutyens's *Three Symphonic Preludes* (England) were original and sincere and showed more enterprise than many of the works heard. But then followed an appallingly dull *Piano Concerto* by Robert de Roos (Holland), written in the worst academic tradition. More original was the *Second Symphony* by Elsa Barraine (France), the only new composer who can be said to have made a hit at the festival. Though more of a ballet suite than a real symphony, it was effective and could well take its place in the regular orchestral repertory. Prokofiev's *Ode to the End of the War*, scored for four pianos, four harps and military band, was a mere pièce d'occasion and consisted of a series of loud, empty tunes surrounded by bangs and crashes.

The three chamber concerts, held in the beautiful Goldsmiths' Hall in the City, produced more real music. The first began with the rather over-intellectualized *Fifth Quartet* by Jerzy Fitelberg and an agreeable *Sonatina* for clarinet and piano by Albert Moeschinger (Switzerland). The *Second Quartet* by Sten Broman (Sweden) was a machine-made piece of music which moved busily without appearing to get anywhere.

On the other hand, the *Songs from Captivity* by Luigi Dallapiccola, scored for chorus, two pianos and a large assortment of percussion, showed a genuine originality and produced some remarkable sonorities. Dallapiccola