

slow, combines delicacy with the most dazzling sort of bravura writing.

The second evening was a demonstration of theatre arts. The drama department of Colorado College produced a one-act play; all the rest belonged to the dancers. Hanya Holm was assisted by Martha Wilcox and her group, a small but expert organization which has developed a receptive dance audience and established professional performance standards here. The first dance was *For Our World*, a project of the Wilcox group for which I provided the score. We also saw the performance of Hanya Holm's new dance, *What Dreams May Come*. An interesting experiment in itself, it is an application of the stream of consciousness technic, a varied and subtle work, in which human and half human shapes all flow in the unquestionable, illogical order of the dream world. But the score, by Alex North, is disorderly — made up of jazz, impressionism, and the naturalistic stylization of street sounds. Weak as music, at times it has an evocative quality that is perhaps not bad in terms of the choreography.

On the last day there was an afternoon concert by the Second Air Force Headquarters Band. I will mention here only pieces that are in some sense new. Vaughan Williams' *Folk Song Suite* is a set of three movements in which good folk materials have been squared off and pounded into a harmonic straightjacket that would have done credit to Prout or Goetschius. Much better was Effinger's *Prelude and Fugue for Band*, which we have heard before and which still seems to be a strong piece on rehearing. There were also two versions of *Take the Sun* by Roy Harris, originally composed as the battle anthem of the Second Air Force. Keith Wright made an imaginative arrangement for a swing combination, and Harris composed a *Symphonic Fantasy for Piano and Band*. It contains much beautiful writing, but it is a smaller work than, for instance, the new *Concerto*, and by no means so startling in its content. The last event in the conference was a recital of Bach and Mozart sonatas by Alexander Schneider and Ralph Kirkpatrick, splendid in the musicianship of the players and the precise eloquence of the music itself. The purity of violin and harpsichord combination was a welcome contrast to the richness of the band.

Robert Evett

## LOS ANGELES TO HEAR RESIDENT COMPOSERS

**E**VERY year some new problem arises to make life difficult for the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Now it is being plagued by the defec-

tion of several of its best orchestra members who are deserting the symphonic field for the better pastures of the film studios. Simultaneously, there have been changes in the management of the orchestra. These are of course internal problems, but their solutions have been made manifest in an announcement of the abandonment of the progressive and friendly attitude toward contemporary repertory which Alfred Wallenstein inaugurated last year.

Emphasis this season will be placed upon the work of resident composers. We shall hear an overture by Richard Hageman, Jerome Moross' *First Symphony*, a *Concerto for Strings* by Miklos Rozsa, a piece by Schönberg (not yet selected) and a suite from one of Victor Young's film scores. The season's repertory will also include works by Barber, Bartok, Bliss, Chavez, Creston, Guarnieri, Mignone, Shostakovitch, Taylor and Vaughan Williams. Actually, then, we stand to hear just about as many contemporary composers as we heard last season, but two or three fewer major works. This in a sense represents a loss, since new music reverts to its previous inglorious position of providing the sauce for a program, rarely the main meal.

As usual at Hollywood Bowl, eight weeks of concerts offered very little that could not be prepared in minimum rehearsal time. One of the happy exceptions was the Mitropoulos conductor-soloist performance of Prokofiev's *Third Piano Concerto*. Already a quarter of a century old, the concerto has gathered no cobwebs, it still sounds fresh and cheerful. In its frank and joyful reliance upon easily recognizable tunes and bravura passage work, in its employment of countless stratagems to surprise and delight the listener, in its willingness to entertain rather than instruct, it gives what has come to be expected from a concerto and avoids what has come to be feared from some of the ponderous new ones. It is witty without being trivial, and it prefers the epigram to the discourse. Much in the same spirit was Milhaud's sunny *Suite Provençale*, in which the most loving care has been lavished upon the arrangement and orchestration of the folk-like melodies of Campra.

Where the tunes used by Milhaud have the attraction of far-away places, those used by Morton Gould in his *Cowboy Rhapsody* are perhaps too much with us: one can no longer listen to *Home on the Range* with equanimity. Otherwise the *Rhapsody* is a pleasant lusty piece, quite frankly intended to delight an audience. As with all the men who are practical working, commercial musicians, Gould has a complete knowledge of or-

chestral resources. No instrument seems to have any secrets from him; and if his use of this knowledge is slick, it is also highly professional, for it enables him to say things without the clumsiness that affects the speech of so many composers who are bookish with an orchestra.

Not so much can be said for the movement which was extracted from the Soviet composer Lev Knipper's *Symphony Number 4* as vehicle for an excellent chorus of war industry workers assembled for a special concert by conductor Franz Waxman. Outside of the popular choral song, *Meadowlands*, which is the core of the movement, there is nothing but bombast and the banality of diluted Delius. Jerome Moross' *Biguine* is too wholeheartedly given over to intervals of the second, and even its spicy harmonies and rhythms become monotonous. Leonard Bernstein's flamboyant *Fancy Free* was as humorous and good-natured as the dancing. If anything, it fitted the stage action too snugly, like a cartoon score.

Werner Janssen opened his season with a Russian program, repeating from last year the overture to *Colas Brugnon* which Kabalevsky tailored to the standard pattern, and giving first local hearings to three bits from *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk* and Stravinsky's *Dumbarton Oaks*. The Shostakovitch excerpts were *The Burial of the Corpse*, *The Ghost Disappears* and *The Drunks at the Wedding*, all of them characteristic of the composer's manner but none of them having any real interest beyond demonstrating that before, as after the famous *Pravda* incident, the composer was marvelous at depicting the grotesque.

*Dumbarton Oaks* is at the very opposite pole. Of the three movements, the two outer ones have the rhythmic drive and busy-ness of the *concerto grosso* form, while the middle movement is full of a tender and fragile grace. All three are genial and optimistic and not adequately described either by the stock adjectives of Stravinsky's detractors – frigid, uninspired, mechanical, contrived – nor by the equally extravagant panegyrics of his admirers. Caught up in the argument as to whether he is god or devil, many of us have forgotten to take his measure in his music, where he is, after all, a man like the rest of us. *Dumbarton Oaks* may not be all things to all men, but it does reflect certain attitudes of our thinking and feeling, whether we be musicians or philosophers. It is in this sense that Stravinsky is contemporary, even when he is going back to Bach for ideas, even when he transforms those ideas with his own original notions about dissonant counterpoint, fragmentary melodies, non-symmetrical rhythms, and spatial arrangements. Behind these devices and behind the

legends about him the spirit of the man is not at all lacking in geniality and warmth and humor.

Music in the smaller forms has been having its innings almost constantly. The Festival of Modern Music which Arthur Leslie Jacobs produces annually at the First Congregational Church always introduces us to something new. This year we heard Aaron Copland's *Violin Sonata*, Leonard Bernstein's *Sonata for Clarinet*, and a *Suite for Piano* by Lou Harrison. Of special interest and special worth was Ingolf Dahl's *Music for Five Brass Instruments*. It is in three movements, the first of which is a fantasy on the chorale, *Christ Lay in the Bonds of Death*. The tune appears in a harmonized version only at the end of the movement, but previously it has served the function of a diatonic "row," that is, almost every phrase in every voice is derived from the chorale by direct quotation, inversion, augmentation, diminution, and so on. Harmonically it is indebted to Stravinsky, but it also has the full flavor of the modality of the chorale. The second movement is thoroughly motorized but not at all angular; and very "American" without being jazzy or folksy. The third is a fugue on a theme associated with Gail Kubik, to whom the piece is dedicated. The score is by far the most distinguished yet produced by any of the younger California composers.

The society, "Evenings on the Roof," will concentrate upon music of the twentieth century this season, with special observances of the seventieth anniversaries of Ives and Schönberg. *The Concord Sonata* and *Children's Day at the Camp Meeting*, together with a group of songs, have already been played, and there will be more later. *Pierrot Lunaire* and other chamber works are in preparation. Adolph Weiss' *Concerto for Bassoon and String Quartet*, which I have reviewed before, has had its third local hearing. Other composers to be heard are Bartok, Bloch, Casella, Harris, Harrison, Hindemith, Juon, Kubik, Milhaud, Pond, Prokofiev, Schuman, Sowerby, Stravinsky, Thomson.

Lawrence Morton

## CALIFORNIA'S VITAL MUSIC CONGRESS

LAST September, musicians of every kind and followers interested in music came together in the University of California at Los Angeles for a conference on Music in Contemporary Life, sponsored jointly by the Musicians' Congress, headed by Lawrence Morton, and by a Uni-