

and Jerome Moross' *Guns and Castanets* which provided Ruth Page's federal ballet with a modernization of Bizet's *Carmen*. This might have been a thoroughly good theatre score had he been willing to finish the orchestration himself. If the progress made this year is continued, there is still hope that the city may become a vital and progressive musical center.

Cecil Michener Smith

JACOBI'S CONCERTO

Early in March the Chicago Symphony gave the premiere of Frederick Jacobi's *Violin Concerto*, with the distinguished aid of Albert Spalding. The work made a decidedly fine impression. It is divided into three movements, *Allegro con spirito*, *Andante sostenuto*, and *Rondo, Allegretto giocoso* which are played without pause. It has a well sustained feeling of continuity and a spirited melodiousness rare in these days. Three well conceived themes, the principal motifs, are linked together in closely woven harmonic patterns. (Spalding has written a final cadenza which skillfully matches Jacobi's idiom.) As a whole the *Concerto* is most impressive for the solidity of its construction and the well rounded exposition of its material. The effect of clarity is not however the result of facile simplicity. The work presents some difficulties for performers and the composer was indebted, on this occasion, to a splendid interpretation.

René Devries

NEW MUSIC FOR PHILADELPHIA

THE last three weeks gave Philadelphia more contemporary music than all the rest of the season. The contemporary crop had consisted chiefly of the belated first Philadelphia performance of Samuel Barber's *Symphony in One Movement*, and the *St. Francis* ballet of Hindemith. During February, Mr. Enesco arrived with his own *Symphony in E \flat* and minor works by Dragoi and Lipatti which he had introduced previously in other cities on his itinerary. Then Mlle. Boulanger brought along the Franaix *Concerto* and the Szalowski overture which seem to have been a regular part of her tour repertory. Things began

to look up with the arrival of Mr. Stokowski in the middle of March. His first program was built around the Philadelphia premiere of Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 5*, and subsequent concerts produced the world premiere of Gretchaninoff's *Fifth Symphony* and the first local performance of Leo Ornstein's *Tribal Dance*. When Mr. Ormandy returned at the beginning of April he brought with him Paul Hindemith who conducted the suite from *St. Francis*. At the next to the last concert of the season the orchestra was assisted by the Coolidge Quartet in the first Philadelphia performance of Nicolai Berezowsky's *Toccata, Variations and Finale*.

The most distinctive of the novelties was Mr. Berezowsky's piece. It was also the most interesting, not only because of the curiosity one naturally feels about a new work by so obviously gifted a composer, but also because of the nice academic point involved in the attempted union of string quartet and orchestra. Mr. Berezowsky has made it plain that such a union, rather than anything approaching a concerto grosso, was intended.

"It was fascinating," the composer has said, "for me to deal with this combination of instruments—with the most intellectual and the most dramatic of musical organisms. I had worked before with the two independent forms, and here I tried to produce the type of work which unifies them." It was likewise fascinating to observe not the manner in which Mr. Berezowsky achieved a successful solution of his problems, but rather the way in which their very nature made his ultimate failure inevitable. It is true that the two instrumental combinations are respectively the most intellectual and the most dramatic of musical organisms, but it is equally true that they are also the most intimate and the most formal; and the clash between intimacy and formality makes the *Toccata, Variations and Finale* at best a *succès d'estime*.

The attention to purely technical problems necessary in an experimental piece of this kind may account for the occasional conflicts of style, not apparent in Mr. Berezowsky's earlier *Sinfonietta*. A certain lack of structural firmness possibly due to the anomalous instrumental combination, may on the other hand be responsible for an impression of stylistic insecurity not borne out by a closer acquaintance with the score.

The composition, at any rate, bears all the indications of a first-class talent and a discerning musical mentality. That there are mixtures of Russian, American and other influences is hardly a matter for anxiety or blame. It is rather a reflection of the manifold influences inevitably at work in the contemporary music of every American composer capable of articulate expression.

A mixture of styles reflecting no such healthy creative process was to be observed in the elderly Gretchaninoff's *Symphony No. 5*. Mr. Gretchaninoff's earlier symphonies—hardly any one was aware there were more than two—are scarcely fixtures in the repertory, and it is unlikely that this newest symphony will occasion any break with precedent. Rimsky-Korsakoff, Moussorgsky, Wagner, Brahms, Strauss and the whole fraternity of end-of-the-century composers are represented in the course of four long and rambling movements. It is all an imitative rather than a creative conglomeration of styles and influences, and it adds up to less than nothing.

Ornstein's *Tribal Dance* turned out to be an agreeable work without special distinction. Purportedly a tone picture inspired by Harold Lamb's *Genghis Khan*, it achieves the conventional effects of Oriental color and atmosphere in a manner more notable for skill and discrimination than for originality. Shostakovich's symphony and Hindemith's suite are discussed elsewhere in these pages.

Henry Pleasants

BOWDOIN COLLEGE SERIES

FOR Bowdoin College to dignify the art of music with an Institute this spring, as it had previously recognized social and political science, belles lettres and so forth, establishes almost a precedent in the history of American music and education. More remarkable still was the fact that the series of lectures and concerts given April 10 to 22, and offering a survey of the art of music during the past several centuries, should have found place for a lecture on contemporary works and a complete program of chamber music by contemporary American composers. The fussiness with which many leading colleges and universities avoid