

Wood-Hill, Mr. Henry Hadley, Mr. Bernard Wagenaar, and Miss Marion Bauer, you would have read new life into it. This music ranged from late nineteenth century whimsicalities to the contemporary idiom. Dr. Hadley, as we all know, moves in the delightful atmosphere of classic Greece, which needs no comment from us. To the lover of the humorous, Mrs. Wood-Hill's concert must remain an ever-vivid experience. For those chiefly concerned with musical values, first honors go to Marion Bauer and Bernard Wagenaar, who exist in a less restrained tonal world than do the other two.

Miss Bauer was represented by works written between 1924 and 1935. Listening to her music, one was grateful for the stability of a composition like the *Viola Sonata*, Opus 22, structurally impressive as well as harmonically interesting. Her settings for the four poems of John Gould Fletcher, though eminently suited to the words, fell short of emotional excitement. This was also somewhat the case with the *Fantasia Quasi una Sonata for Violin and Piano*, which went on at some length. However, the *String Quartet*, Opus 20, marked a return to the interesting methods of the *Viola Sonata*.

Of Mr. Wagenaar's music I enjoyed the *Sonatina for Cello and Piano* and the *Second String Quartet*. The *Sonatina* was given excellent performance by one Miss Ana Drittell who brought to the work a necessary fluidity. One feels in this composition a direct and frank appeal to the listener. It is less suave than other works of Mr. Wagenaar and for that reason, I believe, more valuable. The *Second String Quartet* has, similarly, a directness and suppleness that are wholly admirable. The slow movement is no less sensuous and lovely than the other movements are skillfully precise. In all, Mr. Wagenaar's evening was one of the most "listenable" concerts that we have had from the Composers' Forum for some time.

Goddard Lieberson

## MODERNS ON THE PACIFIC COAST

**M**AYBE it's the movies that bring so many important musicians to Los Angeles. Maybe it's the climate. Anyhow Schönberg, Toch, Achron, and a number of the younger Ameri-

can composers are here, and Klemperer is their prophet. This season, first performances have been blossoming like the fabulous Pasadena roses.

On September 23rd, in a program for the American Guild for German Cultural Freedom, Klemperer and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra gave the first American performance of Ernst Toch's *Music for Orchestra and Baritone*. This work, to a text by Rainer Maria Rilke, made an excellent impression in spite of an inferior performance of the vocal part. It possesses great sincerity, rising in places to passion, and the superb clarity of the scoring is a thing of joy. Some felt that the structure was a bit loose, that the musical ideas were inadequately developed. But these are quibbles. Without introducing innovations of style or materials, it is an important and valuable addition to the composer's work.

The *Pinocchio Overture*, also by Toch, given its first performance anywhere on December 10th, is much slighter. Based on the familiar children's story, it is light, pleasant and whimsical, without being distinguished in comparison with other Toch compositions.

This reviewer unfortunately missed the world premiere of Joseph Achron's *Second Concerto* for violin and orchestra, played by Mr. Achron and the Philharmonic on December 19th. However, judging from the score and the comments of those who heard the work, it must be placed among his most noteworthy compositions. The phenomenally difficult violin part does not interfere with a pervasive and delightful humor. It will undoubtedly be heard elsewhere and interpreted by other virtuosos.

Achron's *Concerto for String Quartet*, introduced by the Pro-Arte Quartet last spring, proved somewhat less convincing on a first hearing than the score suggested. The complex polyphony of the opening movement was baffling to the ear, perhaps because of inadequate rhythmic differentiation of the parts. However, the last two movements were more effective. Although the excellence of the individual string parts could not be denied, one felt that the whole would have gained through greater economy—there were just too many notes.

Arnold Schönberg's new *Fourth Quartet*, written last sum-

mer for Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, will be introduced by the Kolisch Quartet at the University of California at Los Angeles this month. This work (in the twelve-tone idiom, like the *Third*) promises to stand as a fitting climax to the Meister's chamber music. The score suggests that it will prove somewhat less formidable to the lay ear than the enigmatic *Third*.

Herr Schönberg will conduct the Federal Music Project Orchestra for two performances in February. He plans to present several American works in addition to his own. While the programs are not yet available, one may expect the American works chosen to be of quite another calibre than the ones as yet presented by this orchestra.

Apart from the unimportant music given by the Project, younger composers have not received so much attention. William Grant Still and George Gershwin both appeared in familiar works at the Hollywood Bowl last summer. The only new compositions by Americans were *Arizona Sketches* by Victor Young and *Perpetuum Mobile* by Gregory Stone, both given at a benefit program in August sponsored by Paramount. Even the six grand pianos, added to the orchestra for Mr. Stone's opus, couldn't stir the audience of 25,000 to more than lukewarm applause. The less said about such music the better.

*Gerald Strang*

#### WORKS BY JACOBI, DIAMOND, McBRIDE

THE forty-third in the series of American Composers' Concerts, given in the Eastman Theatre, December 10th, was highly varied in content. Dr. Howard Hanson, leading the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, opened the program with MacDowell's *Suite*, Opus 42, in tribute to the seventy-fifth anniversary of the composer's birth. Unsubstantial though it be, there are bursts of orchestral and harmonic brilliance in this work.

Frederick Jacobi's *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*, with Irene Jacobi as the very capable soloist, was introduced to Rochester on this occasion. It impresses at first hearing with its directness and almost neo-classic harmonic unity. There is charming use of dialog between the piano and woodwinds in the second