

retto, for a pack of cards is a pack of cards and gives little chance for contrast. Balanchine invented a choreography that had to be followed carefully to be appreciated, as all its effects were microscopic. He interpreted the cards as a comic perverse society and avoided any of the serious implications of the gaming house with its atmosphere of tension and of suicidal anxiety, a suggestion of which might have added body to the work. In the dancing itself there was many a reference to jazz which is certainly a good way of revivifying ballet technic and skillfully added to the general grotesquerie and cuteness of the ballet.

Apollon Musagète, seen by a few early comers, was Balanchine's masterpiece. Though in part a reprise of his former choreography for Diaghileff, it was less static and had greatly gained in feeling since its Parisian performance. The jerks from one statuesque pose to another were no longer in evidence and in their place was a very beautiful plasticity having both nobility and repose.

No one has ever worked out flow in dancing as well as Balanchine. In *Apollon*, as in his *Serenade*, there was a constant line of movement which bound all the steps together and never ceased until the curtain fell. There was something magical and stirring about this drawing of the invisible lines in the air. The solo variations were very fine creations especially those of the three muses, showing a highly creative imagination at work in every small detail. Balanchine's greatest successes have been in this lyric and poetic vein, as in *Errante* and *Orpheus*.

FILMS SEEN IN NEW YORK

VIRGIL THOMSON

A COUPLE OF NICE MOVIES

FOR *The Wave*, Mexican proletarian picture by Paul Strand (with screen treatment, whatever that may be, by Henwar Rodakiewicz and music by Silvestre Revueitas) fancy is the

word. The score has all the charm and the facile sumptuousness that are its author's most characteristic, and I think best, qualities. *Revueltas* is not a phoney. It is just that the core of his inspiration is a trifle soft, pretty pink candy that it is.

The picture-story is that one about the handsome young strike-leader whose baby dies and then he gets shot down himself among some very fine scenery. A routine number, if you like, but not unmoving; and the social truth behind it is grim. I should not say, however, that a grimmer music than *Revueltas'* were necessarily indicated. His ornate espagnolisms are not in appropriate either scenically or humanly. Perhaps they are more racially suggestive and more accurately proletarian than a ruder and nobler music might have been. Their fault is in being not quite pink-candy enough to really tear open the heart.

The photography is the consistently whitest and clearest I have ever seen in a film. The cutting is spectacular. On the whole, the elaborateness of the photography, of the music, and of the *montage*, plus the choice of such photogenic humanity and landscape, give to the film somewhat the air and finish of a luxury-product. That safe-and-sane little proletarian story is a pretext, a minimum of leftist respectability, to cover a pretty straight Dunhill esthetic. I stick to my word. The whole thing is a bit fancy. By which I mean impure. It's a swell movie just the same.



Jean Wiener's music for *Knock, ou le Triomphe de la Médecine* (from the play of Jules Romains and admirably acted by Jouvet) is everything *Revueltas'* music is not. It is as intense and as brief as Paul Bowles' *Dr. Faustus* music, which it resembles not a little. Wiener doesn't seem to have diluted his musical values for the movie medium, nor has he tried to hog the show. What music is needed is there and what is there is tops. Register gratitude.