

as did the humorous sonata for clarinet and bassoon of Francis Poulenc, full of a refreshing grotesquery.

Three string groupings—a trio for violin, viola and violoncello by Paul Hindemith (1924), *Four Pieces for String Quartet* by Erwin Schulhoff and the Malipiero quartet, *Stornelli e Ballate* (1923), each in its way offered a vitality that will considerably enrich their national literatures.

The much vaunted *Socrate* of Erik Satie seemed, despite an unusually fine reading by Marya Freund, rather too trivial for the stark simplicity of the text, and savoured of self-conscious naïveté. But in lighter vein the French fared better with the charmingly fresh songs of Georges Auric, a group of seven settings to quatrains by Raymond Rodriguet under the somewhat cryptic title of *Alphabette pour Chant et Piano*.

A *Kleine Suite* for seven instruments by Egon Wellesz and a song cycle of Othmar Schoek, with orchestral accompaniment, showed some new sonorities in chamber ensembles, while to Igor Stravinsky, as usual, belong the laurels for brilliantly ending the festival with his *Octuor* for wind instruments.

As a whole, however, there were not many works of outstanding interest. Many of the compositions took on that drab, dejected hue so noticeable in the post-war music of Europe. But, as in all art, the few grains are worth the chaff. At no period were only masterpieces produced, and those great works that have come down to us have long since been culled from a host of mediocrities. If the music of today is suffering the growing pains of evolution, we may confidently hope for greater art tomorrow.

*By Richard Hammond*

## NEW MUSIC IN VIENNA

THE process of bringing modern music before the public in Vienna is painfully slow. Owing to the prevailing conservative musical taste, new works are presented almost entirely outside the range of conventional concerts. Within the last twelve months, however, several advanced programs have been offered the Viennese, which, while not meeting with great popular suc-

cess, have afforded the greatest artistic satisfaction both in the nature of the works produced and the quality of their performance.

During the week's cycle of modern music arranged last fall by the general secretary of the art society, Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*, the ballet *Der Holzerne Prinz* by Bela Bartok and *L'Homme et son Desir* by Milhaud, were played under the direction of Paul von Klenan. Ernest Bloch, Bela Bartok, Gustav Holst, Manuel de Falla, Castelnuovo-Tedesco and Egon Wellesz were also represented on the program.

This outburst was followed by an extended hiatus in production. Only one new operatic work made its appearance, the much commented upon *Schlagobers* of Richard Strauss. Not having seen this ballet I can render no judgment. It may be interesting to suggest, however, that a new development of the dance can now be observed in Germany, which has its origin in Labon and Mary Wigman, and which to many of us seems to interpret more truly than the Russian ballet, the spirit of our time.

The Austrian group of the International Society for Contemporary Music eventually organized a series of concerts at which works by Berg, Honegger, Homer, Horwitz, Milhaud, Poulenc, Pisk, Prokofieff, Réti, Stravinsky, Webern, and Wellesz were played. Besides, there were two evenings at the Secession, one of which was devoted to Russian music, the other to the Viennese composers.

On May 2nd the first presentation of the *Serenade* by Arnold Schoenberg took place in a private house, after countless rehearsals directed by the composer himself. It represents the highest development of his technique and is of an enchanting grace and lightness. In this work intellect and feeling are happily united. And one feels its firm architecture as forcefully as that of his chamber symphony. *Pierrot Lunaire* followed the *Serenade* with Maria Gutheil-Schoder singing.

The official premiere of the *Serenade* took place at Donaueschingen during the music-festivals which were organized by the Prince of Fuerstenberg. And again the impression was extraordinary. This work, like *Pierrot Lunaire*, will win friends and admirers for Schoenberg, because of such passages as the *Lied ohne Worte* which is of a penetrating beauty and warmth bound to

affect every hearer, and the first and last number of such dash as to be electrifying. The dance is a stilted valse written in Schoenberg's inimitable manner.

His *Bagatelles* for string-quartet were also played at Donaueschingen, as well as his songs for chamber orchestra, which again demonstrated the delicate artistry of the composer.

To hear a new work by Alton Berg we were obliged to leave Vienna: scenes of his opera *Wozzeck*, played at the Tonkuenstlerfest in Frankfurt made a deep impression.

The greatest sensation of the season was of course, the performance of Verdi's *Aida* under the leadership of Pietro Mascagni, played by an Italian company and Italian soloists, in an open air theatre which holds twenty-five thousand. It was a real theatre performance, and provoked the greatest enthusiasm.

But the coming season is expected to bring sensations for the living artists. A large music-festival in the city of Vienna was planned for the fall, and, in addition to several concerts of modern music, we are promised the premiere of Schoenberg's *Glueckliche Hand*.

*By Egon Wellesz*

## A FORECAST FROM PARIS

THE musical world of Paris is on the eve of a new "season". There is something in the atmosphere that portends change and induces a feeling that the strains of yesteryear's music are passing, to give place to others perhaps more startling, perhaps less so.

During the months of 1923-1924 which were devoted to the cultivation of music, Paris witnessed more tonal eruptions than, it is safe to say, she ever did before. Stuff and more of it was crammed into an overfed public, against which a natural reaction appears to have set in, whose manifestations will be felt within a few weeks. Exactly how these new mysteries will be revealed to the eye or mind, I cannot predict; the veil still hangs before the new season. But what is clear is that Paris has wearied of the product of men who do not differentiate between the idea and the