classical mime which is not taught in American ballet schools. Alonso and Eglevsky danced Act II cleanly but showed no signs of having been asked to study the psychological problems of their roles; consequently the ballet became a series of unconnected concert solos and adagios which pleased the eye without touching the heart. Such mime as there was, particularly that of Hilarion, was ham melodrama. A further point for which I would like to have had space is a comparison of Tudor's original versions of *Lilac Garden* and *Gala Performance* as done by the Ballet Rambert and Ballet Theatre. They are better danced by the Americans but they have lost greatly in human interest. But London loved Ballet Theatre's Americana and Tudoriana and acclaimed its soloists.

Pasuka's African Negro Ballet tried to use African dancing as a medium for a story in the European ballet convention; the attempt failed but the African dances were strange, grim, exciting and well done – unfortunately they were too few and far between.

The International Ballet's dancing of classical work defies criticism this side the laws of libel. Personally I rather enjoyed a gloomy gymnastic display which they call *Sylphides* and attribute to a Mr. Fokine; their ideas of elevation in this made me wonder how far below ground their *terre à terre* goes. It is also now clear to me that Tudor's *Gala Performance* is sheer plagiarism of this company's version of the *Sleeping Beauty,* Act II. But their leading dancer, Mona Ingoldsby, is an interesting choreographer whose *Everyman* and *Comus* (Milton's masque) show imagination and fine grouping; if she gave up dancing and concentrated on choreography, both arts would gain.

And now to round out our season we will soon have four weeks of the Anglo-Russian Company – the ninth ballet group to appear in London this year.

Jossleyn Hennessy

BELGIAN RADIO, A FORCE FOR NEW MUSIC

DESPITE great musical activity in Brussels during the occupation, modern music was rarely heard. The Germans prohibited Russian, English and American music; moreover Schönberg, Hindemith, Milhaud and Stravinsky could not be played. A Bartok quartet was barely tolerated and only on occasions. For five years the public heard nothing essential in contemporary music.

The liberated residents of Brussels are therefore more than ever avid for novelties. But the modern concerts they follow so closely have not been organized by the concert-giving societies. These, as elsewhere, are quite commercial, and fail in their duty, for the resumption of intellectual life

in Europe requires a stimulation of the desire for knowledge, the encouragement of manifestations of living thought.

Because of this neglect the National Broadcasting Institute has taken on the job of making contemporary music known. This organization subsists on taxes which all owners of radio sets are obliged to pay. The government collects and turns over these taxes to the Institute, which has therefore no commercial obligations and can be primarily a cultural force. Thus in reality the people themselves are patrons of the Institute's concerts, and its activities in favor of new music constitute a real duty.

The Institute took up its work again the very day that Brussels was liberated. Its magnificent installations have remained intact. Its symphony orchestra, the best in Belgium and one of the best in Europe, was prepared to start without delay. This happy combination of circumstances made it possible to work out a program which, in the space of a year, has been responsible for performances of most of the important works composed in the free part of the world from 1939 to 1944. Stravinsky, Bartok, Milhaud, Martinu, Hindemith, Schönberg, Prokofiev and Shostakovitch have been heard. Michael Tippett and Benjamin Britten have represented England, and a big place has been given to American composers, Copland, Barber, Schuman, Harris, Creston, Blitzstein and Chavez. And, incidentally, all the broadcast concerts are open to the public.

The young Belgian composers have been the first to benefit from this cultural policy. Many are connected with the Broadcasting Institute as staff musicians or as orchestral players, and their works receive the same care as foreign composers'. Daily contact with the best modern scores, presence at rehearsals, the working out of technical problems in the pieces, exchange of ideas with the conductors and musical director, constitute a fruitful instruction whose results are beginning to show. Four of these composers should be mentioned here.

Jean Absil, the eldest of the younger generation, distinguished himself as long ago as 1935 with a *Piano Concerto,* performed at the Eugène Ysaye competition. Intelligent and cultivated, Absil assimilated the peculiarities of the great modern composers and developed his own language, fusing the most diverse tendencies. This "modern" tongue however is common to talented composers in all countries. Though Absil is gifted, he lacks the distinct personality necessary in a period when the best music is also the most individual. His recent *Variations* for orchestra are interesting but lack inner life. On the other hand, his *Chants du Mort* for vocal quartet and chamber orchestra, composed to popular Romanian poems and affecting in their melodic line, are more personal and expressive than his other works.

Raymond Chevreuille is the most remarkable Belgian musician at the

present time. He has all the freedom of the self-taught artist and speaks a distinct, original and convincing language. Chevreuille's sensitivity is marked by a childlike freshness and the capricious versatility of the young. He passes with the greatest ease and inimitable naturalness from airy grace to the lyric or the dramatic. These rapid shifts from one mood to another are accomplished without breaking the unity of the thought, always by that logic of the child, according to which everything is simple. Chevreuille, by his quick and penetrating mentality, reminds one of Debussy or Webern. His temperament is expressionist rather than impressionist and this brings him closer to Webern, though he is not uniquely contemplative like the composer of *Das Augenlicht.*

His works were notable from the beginning for the sureness of their realization and the richness of their content. Among the most remarkable are the fourth, fifth and sixth string quartets, a symphony for large orchestra, three excellent concertos for piano, violin and cello, respectively, and a very developed work for orchestra, vocal quartet and soloist, *Souvenirs.* This symphony in seven movements, free, diverse and yet beautifully unified, unfolds some reminiscences of childhood whose scenes are bound together by nothing more than the logic of dreams. Its subconscious essence shapes the musical material which underlines quite diverse and contradictory evocations. *Souvenirs* is large in conception and admirably orchestrated. There are also two delightful compositions for voice and chamber orchestra. *Evasions,* with soprano soloist, is set to very brief children's poems; *Saisons* is for baritone. In both works the voice is used most discreetly. It is scarcely an efflorescence of the music and seems to murmur the text through the orchestral web; in fact the orchestra expresses what the voice only suggests.

The youngest of these composers are Victor Lengley, author of an interesting *Sextet* and a *Concerto* for thirteen instruments, and David van de Woestyne, whose first work, a *Concertino* for violin and chamber orchestra, shows a most inventive and free talent. But this is still in the process of formation.

Paul Collaer

YOUNG FRANCE TODAY

IT is certainly too soon for an exhaustive picture of the music of young France that is just beginning to stir out of the winter's sleep into which it was plunged by four somber years. Political instability and the material difficulties that still weigh heavily on the country's activities could not curb the impulse of the summer of 1944. But after this short period of euphoria during which all hopes flourished, the reign of moderation,