

preserving an almost academic purity of form is characteristic of Roy Harris as composer. I have drawn a chart of the *Overture*, using a mixed system of musical stenography, marking harmonies and poly-harmonies, contrapuntal developments and metrical changes in parallel columns. Thus dissected, the *Overture* appeared magnificently consistent, a satisfying, fitting jigsaw puzzle, with the eight-bar period as a unit. The main subject, which is our old favorite, "When Johnny comes marching home," is presented by the trombone in the tempo of a funeral march (and marked as such by the composer), which mitigates the feeling of an obvious quotation. The same subject, in the pizzicato of the basses and cellos, serves as foundation to the most romantic display of cantilena in the upper strings ever to grace a modern score. The whole episode is so treated in linear writing. If the vital, pulsating rhythms of the following section, with wood-winds shrieking on top notes at unperiodic intervals, remind some of the inevitable *Sacre*, it may be due to the common error of judgment, "post hoc, ergo propter hoc." But the F# minor phrase, built in the regularly diminishing and augmenting meters, four, five, four, three etc., is peculiarly Harrisian. Here his rhythm is the function of his melody, and harmony is the function of tonality . . . Hence the vitality of his music. It "gets" the listener, still more it gets the performer. During the rehearsal period, I began to hear the poignant thirds of Harris' trumpets in the newsboys' shouting of a current murder,—a parlous state.

Nicolas Slonimsky

GERMAN SEASON UNDER THE CRISIS

CULTURAL affairs in Germany are being forced daily into an ever more dangerous dependence on social and political forces. As is now well known the official German policy on culture since the summer of 1932, has been to war on all vanguard tendencies, particularly on "cultural bolshevism," today the favorite slogan by which are denoted all progressive tendencies in modern art and science. Modern painting, whether by Van Gogh, Picasso or George Grosz; architecture with flat roofs; the literature of large cities; pacifist poetry; atonal music; jazz

—all of these and more are culturally bolshevistic. Whoever espouses them is an enemy of the God-ordered world.

Under such compulsion, the creative artists have split up. A few years ago being progressive was taken for granted; it was merely a matter of good form. Today—how vast the difference. Only the strongest natures profess the ideas of their youth. The large place previously given to modern music on the programs of the important concerts, the radio stations and the opera houses is severely diminished. On the other hand, the strength of the genuinely and exclusively modern groups is all the greater. The International Society for New Music, which had undertaken no substantial tasks in the last few years, has suddenly become a conscious, living entity.

The German opera theatres used the Wagner Jubilee as a pretext to rid themselves of any obligation toward the modern product. Spring also brought the posthumous world premiere of the unimportant *Mister Wu*, a legacy from d'Albert, (Dresden State Opera), and of Franz Schreker's rather unsuccessful *Schmied von Gent* (Berlin, Municipal Opera). The interesting premieres of the winter were given in small, remote theatres, getting little public attention. The greatest effect was created by the performance of Malipiero's trilogy, *The Mystery of Venice*. Jaromir Weinberger's *The People of Poker Flat*, presented by the Brünn National Theatre (Czechoslovakia) and Arthur Kusterer's Shakesperian jazz opera, *As You Like It*, were merely local successes.

The real opera season is still to open. We will hear Manfred Gurlitt's new, realistic *Nana*, after Zola, Alexander von Zemlinsky's *Kreidekreis* (after Klabund) and the *Verlobung im Traum* by Hans Krasa, on a theme from Dostoievsky. Krasa is a young German Bohemian, whose talent promises great things. Leipzig is now presenting the new play by George Kaiser, *Der Silbersee*, for which Kurt Weill has written a score that includes songs, choruses, ensembles, intermezzos, which unites all his imponderabilities from the *Dreigroschenoper* to *Bürgschaft*. There is nothing really new in the work, even in the function of the music, but the great primitiveness of the melodies reveals a stronger tendency toward chromatic enrichment of the harmony.

The Philharmonic concerts under Furtwängler gave us four premieres, mostly works of conservative character. At the first, Prokofieff's brilliant *Fifth Piano Concerto* introduced us to the composer as piano soloist. The young Munich neoclassicist, Karl Marx, expressed himself in a *Passacaglia*, opus 19. Excepting its clumsy instrumentation this is one of Marx' best scores. He attempts a synthesis of passacaglia and symphony, obtains a not very convincing polyphonic effect from his diatonic themes and depends for the rest on dramatic climatic effects. The general impression was twofold, as in all works of the new German classicism which seems unable to decide definitely between the modern method of utilizing materials and the true classical forms.

Gottfried Müller's variations on the folksong *Morgenrot* fared no better. Müller stems from the Leipzig school of Karl Straub, from which Günther, Raphael and Kurt Thomas also come. He is the youngest member of this group of Saxon eclectics, barely eighteen, discovered, before his school days were over, by Fritz Busch. The developments in European music during the last twenty years have passed over him without a trace. In his variation technic he is related to Reger, his harmony is influenced by Brahms, his phrasing is academic in the barren sense of the word.

For several years Eugen Jochum has been a rising star among the young directors. First he proved himself in the provinces, then came to the Leipziger Gewandhaus, and since September he has become established as a generalissimo of the radio hour, leader of a group of Philharmonic concerts, and candidate for a place in the municipal opera in Berlin. His programs foster modern music with care and discretion. For one evening recently he placed himself at the disposal of the International Society for New Music. Before presenting the magnificent *Tanzsuite* by Bartok, this program introduced a series of orchestral novelties. Karol Rathaus' *Serenade* is an excellently worked out and charming three-movement piece with that craftsmanship which always delights us in Rathaus. In four *Orchester Etuden* Jerzy Fitelberg gave us new proofs of his technical mastery and his strong sense of sonority; so much

more the pity that he does not achieve individual expression and remains instead a Slavic copy of Stravinsky and other models. Edmond von Borck's *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, schematic in form and tone, is a mere tour de force. A really significant work is Norbert von Hannenheim's second *Concerto for Orchestra*. This German-Hungarian is one of the genuine talents of the younger generation. A disciple of the school of Schönberg, he has embodied the master's teaching in a completely personal and well-thought out fashion. The individuality of his style lies in its perfect tonal equilibrium; it finds its outlet in a richness of intervals, which unifies every note, every chord, every horizontal and vertical line of the structure.

The new *Orchestral Variations* of Krenek, which were presented here by Klemperer, are familiar in America. One of the best of his works, it shows a marked advance in the use of the material of composition. As a curiosity and an important proof of talent, the *Kindersymphonie* of the young Hermann Heiss of the Hauer school must also be mentioned. This is a work for strings and an ensemble of children's instruments (small trumpets, mouth organs, rattles and so forth), skillfully and unobtrusively using the twelve-tone technic and a succession of most complicated technical devices for counterpoint, in a series of variations on the song *Ein Männlein Steht im Walde*. The piece is written for children and fairly easy to present; it had a tremendous success.

In the profusion of chamber music, Krenek's *Gesänge des Späten Jahres* stood out for their vision, their stamp of the provinces, and their real feeling. The new *Piano Sonata* by Jemnitz attempts a synthesis of Reger-Schönberg-Ravel but suffers from a peculiar disregard of organic musical logic. The most significant in form was Hans Brehme's *Saxophone Sonata*, which develops the rhythmic control of Bartok and Stravinsky's exactness of structure in a personal fashion. Unless the signs are wrong, a rich and fruitful talent, a new German type, is developing in Brehme (who previously made an impression at the 1931 Tonkünstlerfest with a *Concerto Sinfonico*).

As for the nationalists of official Germany, they are trying to get control of musical activities by boring from the outside. So

far they have been unable to present any talents except a selection of mediocrity: Graener, Vollerthun, Trapp, Schmalstich and Bullerjahn.

Since the recent "American" concerts of Ansermet and Slo-nimsky which were so passionately discussed, Berlin's interest in modern American music has grown considerably. There had been debates over Ives, Ruggles, Varese, Cowell, Copland and Weiss. People were eager to learn something about works from "over there." Two orchestral concerts met this demand in most unsatisfactory fashion. Neither the Breslau conductor, Ernst Hoffman nor Howard Hanson, director of the Eastman School, appear to be thoroughly informed on the status of modern American production. The former gave us the composing industrialists, featuring William Woodin's *Oriental Suite* whose completely artificial ecstasies betrayed its dilettantism. Frederick Converse seemed to depend more on the power of popular songs in his *Flivver Ten Million*. Nor did Griffes' *Pleasure Dome of Kubla Khan*, given at both concerts, seem representative or typically American.

Hanson's program was not much better. His own symphony attempts to justify itself by the description "romantic;" it wallows in oversweet sound and post-Wagnerian instrumentation. Bennett's *Sketches from an American Theatre*, called a "concerto grosso" by the terminologically inexact composer, does not achieve more than a witty, humorous Ravel-Stravinsky-eclecticism. The most definite impression was made by the folklore group; the Negro, W. G. Still, hit the mark with an elaboration of national dances. Sowerby and Powell received a good deal of applause. We hope that Mr. Hanson took better music out of Germany than he brought in.

H. H. Stuckenschmidt

PARIS SEASON UNDER THE CRISIS

THE Paris season was resumed in October with the two subventioned music theatres (the Opéra and the Opéra-Comique), and the six weekly or bi-weekly orchestras (Conservatoire, Colonne, Lamoureux, Pasdeloup, Orchestre Symphonique de Paris, Poulet), to which were added in January those of Siohan and