

composer displaying the calibre of genius should be Hector Villa-Lobos. In that setting his *Settimino* and *Choros No. 5* continued to be ripe fruit for the musical markets of the world. Another genius in matters of chamber music education was unable to attend this meeting—the sponsor Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge.

Alma Goudy

INTERNATIONALISM À LA VENICE AND FLORENCE

IN Italy, where every opera performance is something of a municipal occasion there are also, in the course of each year, a score of special Music Days and Music Weeks. But real international programs of new music are rare, despite Marinetti and "Futurismo," despite the state's official encouragement of the composer. I am familiar with only two such celebrations, the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, held every two years in Florence on a grand scale and more modestly in the intervening years, and the International Music Festival of Venice, now an annual institution.

The Maggio Musicale is not exclusively dedicated to new music, but merely welcomes it. It is really a great international exhibition at which, for quite understandable reasons, a late opera by Verdi, this time *Otello*, rubs shoulders with an older work; Bruno Walter and the Paris Grand Opera are invited, and naturally, an opera ensemble from the Third Reich. This year Paul Hindemith had a hearing, but so did Alfred Cortot. One of the younger Italian moderns, Mario Labroca, has been the director of the Maggio for several years, so it is a modern music festival too. While there was an opera cycle in memory of Ottorino Respighi, Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* and Alban Berg's *Violinkonzert* also had their first hearing here, more to the astonishment than the joy of the audience who were mostly Florentines and Tuscans. An orchestral concert on a grand scale gave us the beautiful and penetrating *Passione* of Malipiero, a work which deliberately goes back to fifteenth and seventeenth century style; Goffredo Petrassi's *Concerto for Orchestra*, well-formed and full of life; a pair of Luigi Dallapiccola's choruses, rhythmically energetic and original although rather haphazard from an orchestral and harmonic viewpoint.

The leader of the "younger" generation, Alfredo Casella, was represented by an opera glorifying the new Fascist empire, in other words inspired by the conquest of Ethiopia and dedicated to Il Duce. It is entitled *Il deserto tentato*, which may be roughly translated as "The contact of civilization with the wilderness." This was a patriotic festival piece whose text and music might easily have been debauched for cheap effect. However, to the credit of Casella and his librettist, Corrado Pavolini, they were both, in this case, at least, artists rather than Fascists. *Il deserto tentato* has no heroes. The crew of a bombing plane crashes and confronts the danger of the desert; eventually it gains the homage and welcome of the black colony. As literature this work is obscure and turgid, dramatically it is clumsy. But the music has some melodic, rhythmic and tonal charm, and, to that extent, it is a document of sympathetic "noblesse." There was, however, no suggestion of *Giovanezza* in its conclusion, no reminiscence of the grand finale of *Aida*, so it had an unmistakably cold reception.

In conjunction with the festival there was also a congress under the direction of Guido M. Gatti, which discussed two topics: the Relation Between New Music and the Public—or rather, Absence of a Relation—and the Problem of Film Music. The most penetrating talk on the second subject was given by Darius Milhaud, while Ernst Krenek, the most prominent victim of a lack of relation with the public, made the best analysis of the first.



From consideration of the Fifth International Music Festival in Venice we can immediately eliminate a whole group of works by Italian composers, Alfano, Castagnone, Rocca, Jachino, and, sad to say, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, once a sort of "hope," since they do not significantly reflect the present status of new music.

But the young Italians, too, are at a turning point. The printed program quotes an illuminating paragraph by Malipiero. "Sooner or later, often when it is too late, we reach the point of conclusion. The goal is attained and we are weary. We look back to see if anyone is following us. We fear isolation, we hope that someone will overtake us, not only our pupils, our own disciples."

But what goal has been attained? To redeem the musicians

who had been freed from romanticism would be something of a result, but it is not enough. Shall we return therefore to the audience, to communality, to a direct effect? This fear of isolation seems a confession that all new music follows a path which leads to nothingness, that an about-face is indicated, is even essential. Be that as it may, the young Italians are looking over their shoulders for followers.

A *Concerto* for string quartet and orchestra, by Virgilio Mortari, and a *Piano Concerto* by Vittorio Rieti were alike in their tendency to produce pleasant, classically formed music—which formerly would have been called “a happy enrichment of the repertoire.” Rieti is more of a virtuoso than the other, one might say that in brilliance and character (in weaknesses too), his concerto stems from the invention of Liszt. A *Sonatine in C*, for piano and violoncello, by Renzo Massarini actually is far more in the key of C than is Reger’s once famous *Violin Sonata*, Opus 72. It is a sensitive, inspired work, definite in form, with an “old-classic” touch. There is even a real “romance” for the middle movement. A song scene by Antonio Veretti, *Death and Transfiguration of the Shepherd Daphnis*, combines two tendencies, one of static archaism, inspired by Stravinsky’s *Oedipus*, and the other of true Italian gusto. Two *Inventions* for piano and small orchestra by Gino Gorini were not music of severe and scholastic style, but an elegy and a quite restrained fugue. A much more serious effort to resolve expression and absolute form was the *Chamber Serenade* of Giovanni Salviucci, a thirty-year old musician who died while the festival was in progress. Its finale attains exceptional balance.

The only young Italian who did not seem to worry about conclusions and exclusions, was Luigi Dallapiccola, represented by three hymns for high voices and chamber orchestra. There is a certain relationship between these primitive songs out of Dante’s childhood, their ancient power, and the delicate, yet ruthless music of the young Istrian. In comparison Gianandrea Gavazzeni’s *Songs of Lombard Laborers* seem tumultuous. Quite independent were two *De Profundis*, composed by the “old masters” Pizzetti and Malipiero, as reciprocal elegies for each other. Writing only for voice, viola, piano with a muffled under-

scoring of drums, Malipiero composed a piece of Franciscan delicacy, in the style of his *Passion*; Pizzetti wrote a lovely and austere a-capella chorus, which faded out in a liturgic murmur.

Similar contrasts but more marked were found in the non-Italian music. To the group of those interested in a following, who needed to be sure of an unmistakable effect, belong Lars Erik Larsson, Jean Françaix, Serge Prokofieff—and Igor Stravinsky. Françaix' *Piano Concerto* was typical of what might be called his studio humor—classic form and melody which, apparently in dead earnest but in reality with his tongue in his cheek, he spreads before the bourgeois. In contrast, the *Divertimento* for piano, of the young Swede, is really sincere, humorous, friendly music. Prokofieff's movie piece, *Le lieutenant Kijé*, a suite with baritone solo, has vigor appropriate to a country fair, but its effectiveness should not be overestimated.

Stravinsky, once the terror of the bourgeois with his *Sacre du printemps* and *L'histoire du soldat*, has finally mellowed and become their darling with his *Jeu de cartes* and can expect delighted comprehension. Unfortunately, I am incapable of following its "programmatic" background but as pure music, this "card-game" is entirely intelligible and amusing. The material is not quite new, its form reminds us of Moussorgsky's *Pictures from an Exhibition* in the repetition of a short *tutti-ritornelle*. It belongs at the end of that series which began with *Apollon Musagète* and is best compared with the archaism of the painter Picasso. There is the same empty, mask-like and eerie "beauty," but because of the greater scope for relationships in music, the play with Rossini's arabesques, with the adumbrated waltzes of Lanner, it is much more diabolic than would be possible in any other art. And at the same time there is a buffoonery of rhythmic, melodic and instrumental humor. Paradoxically, this humor of Stravinsky equally delights his connoisseurs and his detractors.

Roy Harris, the American, furnished a complete contrast, with his *Piano Trio*, an attempt demonstrating the greatest possible exertion, but still only an attempt.

There remain Markevitch, Schönberg and Bartok among the "uncompromising" musicians. I would add Darius Milhaud were it not that his new *Suite Provençale* for orchestra was an

excursion into compromise with old French music of the seventeenth century, especially that of Campra. This is not the "southern" music Nietzsche dreamed of, it is too rich, sonorous, archaic, heavy. It is simply very charming, yet modern, personal music.

That is not true of the two selections from Igor Markevitch's suite, *Flight of Icarus*, written in 1932 as a ballet for Serge Lifar. It has tension and climax and it is an arabesque of cutting coldness. Yet it is also the expression of a great, though somewhat over-refined talent. Markevitch has gone further on the road that Stravinsky abandoned. But was not Stravinsky right to leave this road?

Neither does the previous observation apply to Schönberg's *Suite for Seven Instruments*, piano, string trio, and three clarinets. The problem of this music lies in its lack of involuntariness, of spontaneity, in its isolation. It seems as if Schönberg wrote it only for Schönberg. But without a closer acquaintance we cannot decide. What does make a great impression is the richly organized dialog of the instruments, whose relationships are vital though regulated to the minutest detail.

Bartok's *Suite* is a true realization of "new music." In this four movement suite for strings, celesta and percussion, just as in his new *Piano Studies*, the "new" music has transcended everything experimental and negative. It seems as if Bartok intended to let one element prevail in each of the first three movements—Polyphony, Rhythm and Color, to be welded in the finale into one stupendous effect. It is a masterpiece that is unconcerned about a following, which will create one for itself.

Alfred Einstein