

and chromatic harmony with fresh and original melodic invention supported by rhythmic buoyancy. There was something solid and genuine about the sure-footed score.

Vincent Persichetti

FINE ARTS IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

THE Seventh Annual Fine Arts Conference, held in Colorado Springs this summer, was an encouraging manifestation of cultural growth in this region. It began with a concert of music written by people at present residing in Colorado. This included two pieces by Cecil Effinger, now a warrant officer stationed at Fort Logan. First, his *Prelude and Fugue for Piano*. The *Prelude* is a well made movement, and the *Fugue* begins with a beautiful and fluid exposition, which unfortunately becomes bombastic and tends to disintegrate before an arbitrary cadence. His *Sonata for Viola and Piano*, Opus 27 is rather sparse, full of delicate inlay, with large canonic sections, but to no apparent purpose. The forms are all appropriated from the obsolete sonata school, while the idiom stems from the neo-classical writing of the 'twenties. In spite of a few bright spots, it was not a gratifying work.

Simon Sandler, a product of the New England Conservatory, presented a *Chorale with Variations*, scored for one clarinet, two trumpets, and three saxophones. It is a set of brilliant, clean little pieces, attractive and well scored. The resonance of this chamber group and the smart, tailored quality of the music itself, combine to make a considerable popular success. Ernst Bacon, who was on the summer faculty of the University of Denver, presented five of his songs which for the more conservative listeners came as relief after the sharper idioms of the younger men, but for the majority of the audience were a surprise. It is always something of a shock to realize how literally Bacon has imitated Schumann, Mendelssohn and Brahms.

The concert (which opened with my own *Violin Sonata*) closed with two new works by Roy Harris. His *Lamentation*, scored for soprano, viola and piano, is a sustained, tragic movement, well organized and beautiful. There are no words, and the vocal part is given an instrumental treatment. Mrs. Harris and Gui Mombaerts performed a *Fantasy for Two Pianos*, based on the new Harris piano concerto broadcast in September by Paul Whiteman and his orchestra. This is a compact work, brilliant, intense, gay. Its one movement, divided into five sections, alternately fast and

slow, combines delicacy with the most dazzling sort of bravura writing.

The second evening was a demonstration of theatre arts. The drama department of Colorado College produced a one-act play; all the rest belonged to the dancers. Hanya Holm was assisted by Martha Wilcox and her group, a small but expert organization which has developed a receptive dance audience and established professional performance standards here. The first dance was *For Our World*, a project of the Wilcox group for which I provided the score. We also saw the performance of Hanya Holm's new dance, *What Dreams May Come*. An interesting experiment in itself, it is an application of the stream of consciousness technic, a varied and subtle work, in which human and half human shapes all flow in the unquestionable, illogical order of the dream world. But the score, by Alex North, is disorderly — made up of jazz, impressionism, and the naturalistic stylization of street sounds. Weak as music, at times it has an evocative quality that is perhaps not bad in terms of the choreography.

On the last day there was an afternoon concert by the Second Air Force Headquarters Band. I will mention here only pieces that are in some sense new. Vaughan Williams' *Folk Song Suite* is a set of three movements in which good folk materials have been squared off and pounded into a harmonic straightjacket that would have done credit to Prout or Goetschius. Much better was Effinger's *Prelude and Fugue for Band*, which we have heard before and which still seems to be a strong piece on rehearing. There were also two versions of *Take the Sun* by Roy Harris, originally composed as the battle anthem of the Second Air Force. Keith Wright made an imaginative arrangement for a swing combination, and Harris composed a *Symphonic Fantasy for Piano and Band*. It contains much beautiful writing, but it is a smaller work than, for instance, the new *Concerto*, and by no means so startling in its content. The last event in the conference was a recital of Bach and Mozart sonatas by Alexander Schneider and Ralph Kirkpatrick, splendid in the musicianship of the players and the precise eloquence of the music itself. The purity of violin and harpsichord combination was a welcome contrast to the richness of the band.

Robert Evett

LOS ANGELES TO HEAR RESIDENT COMPOSERS

EVERY year some new problem arises to make life difficult for the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Now it is being plagued by the defec-