

personal, it is lightly entertaining. Some have been disappointed because it did not repeat a former achievement. For me, it is apt and charming and, wisely, not overblown. In a more popular, simplified style than *Billy*, it has less personality and fewer memorable moments. But there are longer lines – if not always through interesting developments –, a refreshing and novel treatment of square dances to replace the unrepeatable use of cowboy tunes, and a shy, sensitive understanding and sympathy that are very winning.

Donald Fuller

NEWS FROM PARIS AND ELSEWHERE IN EUROPE

Geneva, October 3

PARIS, according to reports that reach us here in Geneva, appears to have been living several lives at once. It is, first of all, an occupied city, where the New Order reigns and the tread of the German soldier resounds. It is also a political arena with defenders of Fighting France opposed to collaborators, where assassinations alternate with reprisals. It is the center of the French black market where the fortunate get all they want, paying for every course on their menus with hundred-franc notes while others are frequently deprived of bare necessities and follow the giddy upward spiraling of prices with anguish. But Paris is, let us not forget, also the heart of intellectual and artistic France, where the tradition and spirit of the country are centered. This spirit still endures in the rich collections of the libraries and the museums, which in the past have seldom known such an attendance as they now enjoy, and even on the Parisian stage, where a significant word or phrase frequently slips into a song or comedian's dialogue.

The Parisian opera houses, theatres, concert halls, and particularly the churches, still attract throngs of people though the productions are not always very satisfying. There is an effort to gain easy success with popular works. (Performances of modern music are, of course, rare, a situation duplicated unfortunately in most countries affected by the war.) A large number of programs are naturally devoted to German works, which might not be so bad if the subjects were Beethoven or Bach. But Parisians must now learn to swallow operas by Pfitzner or works by Werner Egk, the official prodigy of the Third Reich. Under the direction of Egk, the Opéra recently gave his *Joan de Zarissa*, whose action is laid in the fifteenth century at the court of the Duke of Burgundy. The choreography, by that

fervent collaborator Serge Lifar, according to a French critic combined "Teutonic expressionism and the classic dance, seasoned with Lifar sauce." The lavish spectacle contrasted cruelly with the poverty of France today and the sadness of the Paris streets.

The Opéra has also exhumed *Le Drac*, a lyric drama by the brothers Paul and Lucien Hillemaier (Prix de Rome, 1876 and 1880), a work so mediocre and superannuated that it drove the critics to open expressions of despair. Two productions were worthy of interest. First was an opéra comique by Marcel Delannoy, who has to his credit many stage pieces, a string quartet and much film music. This work, entitled *Ginevra*, was commissioned by the French state in 1938. According to the composer it is in the modernized tradition of "Cimarosa, Pergolesi, Mozart, Rossini and Chabrier." The libretto is by Julien Luchaire who has taken Boccaccio's *The Imposter Confounded* for his plot. The story is amusing but the score has imposed on it a certain lengthiness. The press encouraged the composer by emphasizing the clarity, spirit and singing character of the music. Delannoy will now doubtless complete his other projects: a ballet for Lifar, scheduled for the Opéra; a hymn for a popular and religious festival, and an oratorio on the life of Saint Louis.

Choreographic spectacles in Paris seem to be having a tremendous almost pre-war vogue. Ballet is of course a means of escape – however momentary – from the harsh brutality of the times. Taking advantage of this desire the Opéra has just put on a new work by Francis Poulenc, *Les Animaux modèles*, inspired by the *Fables* of La Fontaine, and has selected *L'Ours et les deux Compagnons*, *La Cigale et la Fourmi*, *Le Lion amoureux*, *L'Homme et ses deux Maîtresses*, *La Mort et le Bûcheron* and *Les deux Coqs*. The characters are given human qualities; the ant appears as a prodigal dancer, the amorous lion as a blusterer, and Death is represented as a lady of the court. Two rural episodes, the departure of peasants to the fields and their return at noon, frame the six themes of the ballet, which is rendered altogether in the sumptuous style of Louis XIV. The music, at times gay, at times solemn, is said to be spirited and agreeable – like most scores by Poulenc, whose lack of personality is compensated for by solid workmanship and French charm.

Among new enterprises, one undertaking is particularly important; the foundation of the International Archives of Contemporary Music in Paris, proposed before the war and now resumed. Carol-Bérard is both its instigator and director. This collection is to be attached to the Bibliothèque

Nationale, and according to its announced purpose will establish a "complete documentation" for all contemporary composers, their lives and music. It is to include – still according to the announcement – the maximum number attainable of compositions, original manuscripts, published and recorded works, articles and mementos of every description – portraits, autographs, letters, stage designs, models of décors. Eventually it will become a permanent exposition, to be called the Musée de la Musique. Occasional hearings of certain representatives of contemporary music will be organized and special sessions dedicated to the most gifted of the young musicians. Classification is promised according both to individual name and style, which will make it possible to get information on any composer or production of any school or country. Brief analyses of principal compositions, resums of the librettos of stage works and summaries of choreographic works are also to be included. Carol-Bérard naturally emphasizes the importance of such a collection, whose scope will constantly increase and should be of inestimable value fifty years hence. Fully realized, such a project, would indeed have tremendous influence. But how can these Archives escape becoming like so many other "cultural" institutions, a center of propaganda? Will "contemporary music" be selected without reference to political or racial standards? Will the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris today actually admit works by Darius Milhaud, Ernest Bloch, Arnold Schönberg, Alban Berg, Paul Hindemith, Kurt Weill, Bohuslav Martinu and Dmitri Shostakovich?

OTHER EUROPEAN NOTES

Again a work by Rainer Maria Rilke has inspired a musician of our times. The Swiss composer, Frank Martin, has set *Cornet*, the most famous work of the poet, to music. The composition, for contralto and chamber orchestra, will be given by the young singer Elizabeth Gehri (Premier Prix de Concours Musical de Genève 1941) and the Basle Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Paul Sacher. The performance is scheduled for 1943 Several months ago a new chamber orchestra, the Collegium Musicum, was established in Zurich under the direction of Paul Sacher. The principal Swiss city will thus be able to profit by the interesting experiments at Basle and will henceforth hear many modern works each season. . . . The Geneva Conservatory, stealing a march on the other cultural institutions in Switzerland, has started a cinema class. The actress, Françoise Rosay, wife of Jacques Feyder, will instruct in the mysteries of the seventh art.

In France the Paris Opéra plans to premiere an old work of Jean

Cocteau and Arthur Honegger, the musical tragedy *Antigone*, composed between 1924 and 1927. In addition it will repeat the *Légende de Saint-Christophe* by Vincent d'Indy and *Pénélope* by Gabriel Fauré. . . . Arthur Honegger has become a professor, conducting the class in composition at the Ecole Normale de Musique. To fill the gap left by the departure to America of the Ballets Russes, a new troupe has been formed, Les Nouveaux Ballets de Monte Carlo. The featured dancers are Tony Gregory – also choreographer –, Linda Nera, Lucien Bergren and Féodor Lensky.

In the Netherlands to the long list of musical works inspired by the legend of Orpheus has been added one by Henk Badings, written for spoken and chanted voice, choruses and orchestra. It will be premiered in Amsterdam with Yvonne Georgi in the role of Eurydice.

In Austria the Philharmonic of Vienna is celebrating the hundredth year of its career, but it is not Arnold Rosé and the members of his quartet who are at the first desks, it is not Toscanini or Bruno Walter who conduct the ceremonial concerts. Works for the occasion were ordered from Richard Strauss and Alfredo Casella; the former had not finished his score by the scheduled date. . . . The Salzburg Festival, once a rendezvous for music lovers from all over the world, has become the exclusive property of the Wehrmacht. Concerts and stage performances are given for an audience of officers and soldiers. To direct them, the German government this year called on Strauss, Clemens Krauss, Karl Boehm, Willem Mengelberg, and finally, Ernest Ansermet, whose cooperation in this festival has come as a great surprise to many.

Arno Huth

THE I. S. C. M. IN CALIFORNIA

THE nineteenth festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music, held this year at the University of California, began with the *Star Spangled Banner*. Appropriately, it reminded the audience in Berkeley's Greek Theatre that the United States was the rallying ground for the thirteen nations whose music was to follow. Alfred Frankenstein, communicating greetings from Edward Dent, Ernst Krenek, Arthur Bliss and the American directors, underscored the fact that, for the first time, a university was sponsoring the festival – thereby reflecting the unity of education and living art. Four orchestral concerts, conducted by Werner Janssen, Nathan Abas and Willem van den Burg, and four chamber music concerts revealed, by vital and secure readings, some forty works.