

the past in terms of movement, man behaving according to the conventions of a perfectly ordered society which automatically brings out in him the most elegant, most graceful and most humanly social aspects.

There are two things to consider in a modern performance of this work. The first is the choreography. If re-devised it must translate a contemporary ideal man into more modern ballet terms. The other is its great difficulty. A company needs to be very good indeed to bring out all the implications of a score that almost visually describes the classic ballet gestures.

Miss Littlefield's choreography ignored Petipa's except in the *Mariage d'Aurore* which was by far her best number. She seemed to have no serious conception beyond that of telling a fairy story in a fairly ornamental way. Had her troupe been better she might have rivaled Radio City Music Hall in sumptuousness and absurdity. As it was, the inadequacy of her company left her intent obscure, assuming that she had any beyond giving the work its American premiere.

The trip to Philadelphia was rewarded chiefly by an opportunity to hear the score; but even here, where precise indications are given, there was so much license taken with the tempi that interest shifted from the total effect to the minutiae of orchestration.

Elliott Carter

OVER THE AIR

GODDARD LIEBERSON

AFTER a ceaseless two month's hunting of radio programs that would contain some element of contemporary music, the most significant discovery I have to report is that Bing Crosby has discovered Debussy (which he pronounces De-bus-sie, out of affection no doubt for that ancient jazz maestro, Henry Bussel!) This program and one by Mark Warnow on which appeared George Gershwin's *Summertime* played à la the opening of Stravinsky's *Sacre*, and a *Swing Fugue in G* have kept me happy with popular tunes.

From reading so many radio columns I have learned my vocabulary well, so I now shift quickly to what is termed the "classical" side of the art of radio. Being limited in these reviews largely to music which originates in a studio (rather than at concerts) I found myself returning continually to station WOR in the hope of finding a Wallenstein program. This same Mr. Wallenstein conducts the freshest, most catholic and satisfying concerts now on the air. He is no more afraid to play the *Cinq Symphonies* of Milhaud than he is to go back to pre-Bach and to Bach's deserving but now forgotten contemporaries. I must say that a man who shows the rare intelligence to take true advantage of the possibilities of radio is something of a white hope. Apparently Station WOR gives Mr. Wallenstein *carte blanche* in these programs, which is a decidedly intelligent move on their part. If a list of *radio first performances* were compiled, Mr. Wallenstein would certainly be first in line. Let us hope he will see fit to play contemporary American music other than that written by Robert Braine which appears to be his present predilection. There are, it seems, prospects of Mr. Wallenstein's playing compositions of Chavez. It may interest composers to know that Mr. Wallenstein receives from fifteen to twenty scores a week, and as far as time permits he reads them himself, presenting those he deems worth while.

The National Broadcasting Company's Blue Network brought us a first performance of the opera *Czar Kalojan* by the Bulgarian composer Pantcho Wladigeroff. The reception was amazingly good but it showed only too clearly that here was more music of the Smetana tradition. An American first hearing is scheduled of Respighi's posthumous opera *Lucrezia*, but too late for any review here. The League of Composers, in cooperation with the N B C Music Guild, presented a program on January 21st with music by contemporary composers of France, South America and Poland. This writer unfortunately missed that program and so can only report that works by Jean Cartin, Castro Siccardi, Luis Ginneo, Szalowski, Szymanowski, Leroy Robinson, and Stravinsky were played.

Columbia has discontinued the Saturday night series which presented a composer each week performing his own work, and

this is really too bad. If the program did not create much interest, part of this may be explained by the hour, which was at 8:30 in the evening, when people are either on the way out of their homes or are out entirely. Such a program would fit in excellently after the Sunday afternoon broadcast of the New York Philharmonic. As a matter of fact, anything would be better than the Columbia Male Chorus which is rung in to fill up the time and sings hefty male choruses culled indiscriminately from the glee club repertory.

Many in the Metropolitan area must already know one need not despair for want of good music during the evening no matter what the large chains are carrying. A simple turn of the dial to Station WQXR (1550 kc.) brings you concerts of symphonic music with occasional sallies into the operatic field. Roy Harris is conducting a Sunday afternoon series for that station, called "Melody Through the Ages" and I understand that some prospective concerts are planned to include music from the Composers' Forum Laboratory. There are other stations in New York offering recorded programs and from these comes the occasional opportunity of hearing from the announcers such literary gems as "We will play next, the Rondo by Scherzo."

Goddard Lieberman