

arresting rhythmic idea, but was much too repetitious. Repetition is probably very serviceable to the dance but certainly not to concert music. The scherzo of Hindemith's *Sonata for Two Pianos* is sure-fire music; its well calculated motifs and sequences click like a machine that can be turned on and off at any time. The two-piano team of Mrs. Harris and James Sykes wound up with some fancy improvisations on U.S. Service and popular Broadway tunes, which brought the house down.

Robert Evett

MARTINU'S SECOND SYMPHONY

THE newly appointed conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, caused a considerable stir in the city's musical circles by announcing the complete programs of the Cleveland Orchestra's symphony season more than a month before the first concert. A number of new works were promised, nine of them by Americans. Already two of this latter category have been heard, *Music for a Scene from Shelley*, Samuel Barber's early piece, not previously performed in Cleveland, and Morton Gould's resourceful orchestral rhapsody on *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*. In this brief work which Gould calls an *American Salute*, he has managed to summon up the curious nostalgia which underlines the bright tune of one of our finest marching songs. Barber's music more than justifies its revival. It was well received when it made its appearance ten years ago, but it has had occasional performances since. Despite obviously impressionistic derivation, it remains a work of substance which creates its mood quickly and persuasively. What is still more important, it sounds well, the musical texture is lustrous.

The *Second Symphony* of Bohuslav Martinu is, however, the event of the Cleveland season so far. It was commissioned by a group of Czechs here, and bears the dedication: "To My Fellow Countrymen in Cleveland." I have not heard Martinu's *First Symphony*, so I am unable to compare the two. Both of them, incidentally have been written since his arrival in American and after his fifty-first birthday.

In many respects, Martinu's symphony is an answer to those who claim that the form is no longer hospitable to contemporary composers. Martinu has composed a work in four movements which is in the best traditions of the style and yet completely novel and original. There is no slavish imitation of the academic principles of symphonic form. Rather the music follows episodic patterns, benefitting by such traditional unify-

ing devices as recapitulation and the use, in successive movements, of a basic melodic germinal motive. But this work is novel in content as well. It is music for our time, music of calm and of good-will, of the optimism required for present-day life. It would be impossible and undesirable to write a program for this work. Only in the slow movement does an inevitable picture arise – the Bohemian countryside from which Martinu's art springs. But like Smetana, the composer has avoided the parochial for world culture. One would have to look to Smetana, to Mozart, to Prokofiev, Stravinsky and Roussel for the sources of Martinu's style. There only remains to speak of the orchestration, which is that of a brilliant colorist who knows how, as again did Smetana, to maintain a warm color throughout without letting the music evaporate in mere effects.

More American works listed for this season are the *Second Symphony* of Randall Thompson, which will be new to Cleveland, Virgil Thomson's music for *The Plow that Broke the Plains*, Aaron Copland's *A Lincoln Portrait*, and *Porgy and Bess*; *A Symphonic Picture*, an arrangement for symphony orchestra of Gershwin's opera. Mr. Leinsdorf has already broadcast this last piece, making cuts in its meandering opening measures which greatly improve it for the concert hall. Also scheduled for the season are the *Opus Sinfonicum* by Nicolai Lopatnikoff, which won the Cleveland Orchestra's Twenty-fifth Anniversary competition prize last season, and the rhapsody, *Say, Paw*, of David Holden which received honorable mention. Cleveland will hear as well the symphonic poem, *Four Churches* by the Brazilian composer, Francesco Mignone, Arthur Benjamin's *Cotillion*, Prokofiev's familiar *Classical Symphony* and his *Peter and the Wolf*.

George Henry Lovett Smith

INFORMAL SYMPOSIUM AT ROCHESTER

OF the twelve new compositions given first performance at the Eastman School's symposium of American orchestral music in late October, three were of special interest. These were by David Diamond, Eastman graduate, Dr. Herbert Inch, professor of music at Hunter College, also an Eastman graduate, and Dr. John Vincent, professor of music at Bowling Green College, Kentucky.

The four-day conference opened the nineteenth season of the Eastman School's American composers' series. Dr. Howard Hanson, for years one of the nation's leaders in encouraging the efforts of native composers, conducted the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra.