

Dance Suite, a brilliantly scored re-working of three piano pieces: *American Polonaise*, *Tango* and *Danza*. Paul Creston's *Chant* 1942 carries out well enough the title's implication; the music is both troubled and optimistic. Dai-Keong Lee of Honolulu, now an army corporal in the South Pacific, was represented by a *Hawaiian Festival Overture* in which native themes color modernistic technic. There was also a gay, and successful *Tolentine Overture* by Robert W. Wilkes and *Penguin Island* (movement from a symphonic suite) by Darrell W. Calker of Hollywood.

Most impressive of the American works given first local performances by Dr. Kindler was Robert E. Ward's *Symphony Number 1* which is remarkably mature and confident. There is intellectual power in this work, expressed with alternate austerity and poetic imagination. The first movement has an elemental force rarely felt in young composers; the andante is nocturnal in mood, and the scherzo-finale has a breezy motivation. Other American works heard here for the first time were Gardner Read's *Prelude and Toccata*, Henry Gilbert's *Riders to the Sea*, Morton Gould's *American Salute* and his *American Concertette Number 1*, with Percy Grainger as soloist. First local performances were also given to Milhaud's *Suite Provençale*, Kabelevski's *Second Symphony*, the Bartok and Elgar violin concerti and the Busoni piano concerto.

Ray Brown

ARGENTINE SEASON

BEFORE commenting on the recent music season in Buenos Aires, it would be well to devote a few words to our unfamiliar ways. Argentina's musical life is confined almost exclusively to the capital, a situation for which some solution must still be found. Beyond Rosario, Cordoba, and a few towns near Buenos Aires, and Mendoza, home of the National Conservatory which is part of the University of Cuyo, organized musical activity ceases to exist.

Buenos Aires has much lyrical drama, ballet, and a heavy "standard" concert program. But contemporary music, local or foreign, plays a minor role. Traditional repertory prevails in the opera as in our song and piano recitals. Artists are more than usually prone to intellectual sluggishness. Except for two or three specialized groups, the only way to hear music of our day is via the phonograph.

Most remarkable for a country of such wealth, size and importance,

is the absence of a permanent national symphony orchestra. This lack drags the whole cultural level down.

The Colón Theatre confines itself mainly to opera and ballet. Occasionally a symphonic performance is smuggled in between two lyric works, but it is never a part of a harmonious, well-developed plan. The private orchestras, short of funds, can offer only sporadic and short seasons, not always of the best quality.

The activities of the Colón are, by sheer volume, the most important factor in the city's musical life. They extend throughout the year, with four seasons following the calendar. In 1943, the open-air season at the Sociedad Rural Argentina lasted from January to March, the works being of popular music. Seven operas were performed, among them *La sangre de las guitarras* by the Argentine composer, Constantino Gaito, and fourteen ballets (two of them by our countrymen: *Huemac* by Pascual De Rogatis, and *La Infanta* by Alfredo Schiuma.) The Autumn season was devoted to the dance, concerts (Daniel Ericourt and Rudolph Firkusny) and symphonic music. The conductors were Fritz Busch (*The Passion according to St. Matthew*), Albert Wolff, Hector Panizza (who gave his *Tema, variaciones y final* on one program, and Juan José Castro, whose interpretations included Kodaly's *Psalmus Hungaricus*.

Castro also acquainted us with some sections of the *Juerga*, a ballet by the Spaniard, Julian Bautisto, now living in this country. It is a work of vigor and intense color. Ferruccio Colusio presided over a concert devoted to the Asociación Argentina de Compositores, giving the *Oberatura en do menor* by Celestino Piaggio; *Atipac* by De Rogatis; a *Piano Concerto* by D'Espósito, popular but effective; fragments of the ballet, *Estancia*, by Alberto E. Ginastera; *Usher*, Opus 8, by Roberto Garcia Morillo, and *Preludio y danzas incaicas*, of Lazaro, by Gaito. Thus, much music of local origin was heard here.

Most important is of course the official or winter season. This lasts from the end of May to the beginning of October. As is customary, an important group of famous artists participated. Busch, Panizza, Wolff and Erich Kleiber conducted the usual operatic repertory, with *Falstaff* and a little Wagner and Mozart thrown in. Ballet was offered too. *El malón* by Hector Iglesias Villoud had its premiere, an ingenuous work not without interest. The occasion was made more brilliant by the participation of Jehudi Menuhin and the pianist, Witold Malcuzyński.

Four operas spanned the spring season, among them Felipe Boero's *El Matrero*, and again many ballets, *La Valse*, *Firebird*, *Petrouchka*,

Apollon Musagète, The Prodigal Son, Icare. The Mexican, José Vazquez gave the premiere of two symphonic pieces, his own *Tres acuarelas de viaje* and Daniel Ayala's *El hombre maya*.

III

In the aggregate, our music societies play a role of some importance. The Asociación Wagneriana offered several symphonic, chamber and solo concerts. Juan José Castro began the season with a Spanish Festival, interpreting works by Falla, Turina, Halffter and Mompou. The Society's twenty-fifth anniversary was celebrated by a cycle of six concerts under Busch and Wolff and by a second series of four in collaboration with the APO orchestra, which included contemporary works: Bartok's *Dance Suite*, Gianneo's *Turay-Turay*, and Ravel's *Piano Concerto*, Bloch's *Schelomo*, Ginastera's *Impresiones de la Puna*, Honegger's *Pacific 231*, Vasquez' *Suite Romantica*, Silvestre Revueltas' *Janitzio*, Alfredo do Pinto's *Rebelión*, Miguel C. Bernal's *Noche en Morelia* and Rafael J. Tello's *Patria heroica*. Buenos Aires heard all these works for the first time. The fourth concert presented pieces by Jaime Pahissa, Acario Cotapos, and Mossolow, and a youthful and inexperienced *Piano Concerto* by Pía Sebastiani.

The Asociación Argentina de Compositores also gave a chamber music series. The novelties were a *Sonata* for piano and violin by Ricardo Rodríguez, an agreeable suite; *Juguets* by Pedro A. Sáenz, somewhat impressionistic but fine in structure; *Salmo CXXIX* by Pedro A. Valenti Costa, on Gregorian subjects, and *Norteñas* by Angel E. Lasala, folkloric in character, weak in imagination.

The Grupo Renovación introduced works by its members including José María Castro; Luis Gianneo, whose *Divertimento Number 2* is a good piece; Jacobo Ficher, Honorio Siccardi and Washington Castro. Outsiders represented were Jacques Ibert, Erwin Schulhof, George F. McKay and Dmitri Shostakovitch. A new chamber orchestra, AGMA, is affiliated with this group.

A festival of North American music opened the season for La Nueva Musica. Juan Carlos Paz conducted works by Roger Sessions, Roy Harris, Virgil Thomson, Wallingford Riegger and Walter Piston. Other programs gave us pieces by Paz, whose *Music, Opus 43*, for flute, saxophone and piano proved to be abstract, implacably logical, and pure in sound; compositions by Anton Webern, Karel Haba, Ernst Krenek, Esteban Eitler, William Schuman, Carlos Chávez, Adolph Weiss, Eric Satie, Maxime Jacob, Igor Stravinsky, Georges Auric, and Darius Milhaud.

Roberto Garcia Morillo