

capture something of what lies behind the inscrutable Indian visage; capture the whole rainbow of their savage grief, their martial fire, their craving for sun and space."

The impact of primitivism is what one feels from *Pueblo* wherein is none of the dulcification with which composers are apt to romanticize Amerind material. The treatment is severe and stark, economical in instrumentation, savagely plangent in harmony, direct in statement. This stripped and muscular music, elemental in its urgencies, provokes atavistic response. It is not imitation but transubstantiation of a primitive ethos.

Another premiere at this concert merits mention: a pianoforte concerto by Everett Stevens, a Washingtonian of twenty-two with a promising talent. Brilliantly written for the solo instrument and well scored, the work has dash and vitality; a tendency toward romanticism in the melodic lines is counterbalanced by a conservative modernism in harmony.

Ray Brown

NEW MUSIC IN CHICAGO

THERE is still some life in musical Chicago after all. It would be difficult to remember a similar period when as much new orchestral music has been introduced to audiences here as in the two months since the first of the year.

Carlos Chavez' *Sinfonia Antigona* did not meet a rapturous public success, either with the audience or with the critics. In the latter group I seem to be alone in finding the symphony worthy of considerable praise. Certainly it is a reticent piece of music. But the gracious fluency of its modal melodic lines, which are neither medieval nor quite Greek in structure, was enough to give the symphony great honesty of expression. No novelty of the current season has exemplified so pure a taste, or so virtuous a disdain of artifice.

Serge Prokofieff's first suite from his new ballet, *Romeo and Juliet*, is more shrewdly calculated to seize upon public fancy. At the same time, it is one of the best of all the Prokofieff works I know. Both melodically and harmonically it is straightforward—almost conventional. It shows, however, that Prokofieff has graduated from his recent period of gymnastic melodic lines.

Here he has written music for the masses, and at the same time has discovered a new nobility of utterance.

William Grant Still's *Afro-American Symphony*, played, like the two works just mentioned, by the Chicago Symphony orchestra, proved to be a vigorous, earnest work, without thematic material of symphonic genre. Two members of the Northwestern University faculty recently submitted new works—Albert Noelte his *Four Symphonic Impressions*, a turgid, discursive endeavor in the Strauss-Mahler vein, and Felix Borowski his second symphony, a concise work with stirring rhythmic passages, marred by unimaginative development of fairly effective material. Other works, of less value, presented by the same orchestra are *Once Upon a Time*: five fairy tales for orchestra, by Bernard Rogers; *Five Miniatures*, by Paul White; and Stringham's *Nocturne No. 1*.

The Illinois Symphony orchestra, an energetic WPA outfit, has given competent performances of several American novelties drawn chiefly from the neo-romantic super-conservatory school of Middle Western composition. Among these may be mentioned a symphonic poem *Marco Polo*, by Irwin Fischer, a Chicagoan who may find himself in time; the *Tragic Overture* of Florence Grandland Galajikian, who never will; Radie Britain's *Overture to Pygmalion*; and Cecil Burleigh's second violin concerto. This same orchestra has also provided local premieres of Sibelius' *Fifth Symphony*, Milhaud's *First Symphony (Le Printemps)*, and the Shostakovitch *Piano Concerto*. Most recently Ernst Bacon of San Francisco conducted the slow movement of his *Symphony in D-Minor*.

Cecil Michener Smith

PARISIAN NOVELTIES

THE Paris concert season has been marked by unusual activity favorable to contemporary music. The year already stands under the sign of the 1937 International Exposition, for which a whole series of musical preparations is anticipated. Milhaud, Honegger and Ibort are jointly preparing a work, to be produced in the setting of the Fêtes Populaires. Two orchestra concerts, two chamber music programs of the International So-