

casion in the musical life of the city. Tickets for all three concerts at which it was played were sold out in the course of three hours, long before the official announcement, and Symphony Hall of the Moscow Conservatory was filled to overflowing. The composer submitted his creative report, as it were, to a very exacting judge; from the ovation he received his triumph was obvious. Such a victory should bring joy to musicians all over the world.

Grigori Schneerson

COMPOSERS OF AND IN CHICAGO

FOR the second time in two consecutive seasons a Chicago composer has been awarded one of the Philharmonic-Symphony prizes. Last year the major prize was given to Gardner Read of Evanston for his *Symphony in A-Minor*. The current prize for a shorter work has been divided between Robert L. Sanders of Chicago and Charles Haubiel of New York.

Mr. Sanders, now thirty-one years old, has already achieved a good deal of local prominence both as a teacher and as a composer. He divides his academic attention between theory instruction at the University of Chicago and a number of lesser assignments. A competent conductor, for several years a protege of Eric DeLamarter, he has made guest appearances with the Chicago Symphony orchestra and the Illinois Symphony orchestra. The Chicago Symphony has performed his suite *The Tragic Muse*, and a number of less ambitious works have been heard here. Most recently of all, the Federal Dance project produced a Negro dance drama, *L'Ag'ya*, for which Mr. Sanders devised an interesting score based partly upon folk music from Martinique.

The Philharmonic prize-winning piece, a *Little Symphony* in three movements, is more conservative in idiom than most of the composer's recent works. The first and last movements are written in a sprightly, hearty popular vein with which Mr. Sanders has experimented in the *Barn Dance*, already played by the Philharmonic. The middle movement, in slow tempo, uses as its main theme an idealized and greatly improved version of the familiar hymn tune *Jesus calls us, o'er the tumult*. The or-

chestration is handled with a sure hand throughout, and the finale gives evidence of good contrapuntal skill and a flair for dynamic rhythmic development.

Mr. Read, the prize-winner of last year, has finally begun to come into his own on his native heath. The *Symphony in A-Minor* won a warm approval from the critics when Frederick Stock conducted it in February. A week later the WPA Illinois Symphony orchestra jumped aboard the band wagon and invited the composer to conduct his well-knit *Toccata and Fugue*.

A third young Chicago composer, David Van Vactor, has been winning increasing representation on Chicago programs, though his works have unfortunately not yet reached the East. In a single week in February three of his pieces were played. Daniel Saidenberg and his admirable Symphonietta gave the premiere of an unassuming but tasteful suite of *Five Bagatelles* for string orchestra. Hans Lange repeated the neo-classical *Concerto for Three Flutes, Harp and Orchestra* with the Chicago Symphony orchestra. The Illinois Symphony dug up the *Passacaglia and Fugue*, more or less a student work, and not up to the mark of the composer's more recent output.

Two international musical figures have been on our visiting list. Serge Prokofieff came to town briefly for a miserably attended piano recital at the University of Chicago, playing four of his new pieces for Soviet children and his new piano suite derived from the *Romeo and Juliet* ballet music, heard here in its orchestral form last season.

Paul Hindemith is in Chicago as these paragraphs are written. At his guest appearance with the Chicago Symphony orchestra (too late for review in this issue) he will repeat the viola concerto, *Der Schwanendreher* (which he played at a private concert in the Arts club last year) and conduct the first American performance of the new *Symphonic Dances*, a suite from music written for a ballet by Leonide Massine on the subject of St. Francis of Assisi. At the same concert Hans Lange will conduct the *Chamber Music No. 1*, a work already played here by both Mr. Lange and Rudolph Ganz.

Apart from the good move of bringing Mr. Hindemith to the city, the Chicago Symphony has not done more than its usual

wont toward the sponsoring of contemporary music. Raya Garbousova, the cellist, introduced the name of the Roumanian Stan Golestan to Chicago with the *Concerto Moldave*, a dissonant work that won instant disfavor from audience and reviewers alike. Mr. Lange presented the symphonic rhapsody, *Pusztá*, by Zoltan Kurthy of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony orchestra. Though not devoid of expressive material, the rhapsody seemed a bit grandiose and wanting in economy of treatment.

Seeing its audiences fall off, the Illinois Symphony orchestra has decreased the proportion of new music on its programs. The audiences started staying away, however, because the orchestra has been playing badly and not because the earlier programs were inimical to its taste. The only really noteworthy novelty of the past two months was Sibelius' tone poem *Tapiola*, like nearly everything else of Sibelius neglected by the Chicago Symphony orchestra.

Scattered concert activities have brought to the fore the taxing third piano sonata of Hindemith, played by Tomford Harris; Alexander Tansman's *Sinfonietta*, offered by Mr. Lange's chamber orchestra; and Shostakovitch's early but vigorous *Two Pieces*, introduced by the Saidenberg Symphonietta.

Cecil Michener Smith