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CONTACT

Contemporary Music Magazine

Chart

CONTACT 5

AUTUMN '72

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A very cosmopolitan issue, this one: including articles on contemporary Polish music, the Greek composer Jani Christou (whose death in 1970 at the age of 43 deprived the world of one of the greatest composers of this century) and even Chinese popular music - even if it was made in Hong Kong.

The supplement - which also contains a theatre piece by actor-singer-poet-dramatist Roy Jackson - is a new feature which it is hoped may continue with future issues. New pieces (musical or otherwise) are invited for inclusion: they should not be too large (on the page, that is) or too complex, otherwise they wont be financially viable. I am greatly indebted to Peter West, without whom this supplement would not have been possible.

Meanwhile more familiar features continue: with another in our occasional series on Schoenberg - an article drawn from John Drummond's recently completed doctoral thesis on post-Wagnerian opera. And another article from Leroy Cowie - on solo music for the double-bass. Selected reviews concentrate on music in London during the summer.

Contact 6 will concentrate on two different but related aspects of modern British music. The British avant-garde will be represented by an extended discussion of the Experimental Music Catalogue (recently resuscitated and much expanded). It will contain a number of pieces from the Catalogue, some suitable for everyone to play. Also the long-awaited interview with Cornelius Cardew. (The delay is my fault, not his). The pop scene will be discussed by Meirion Bowen (music critic of The Guardian), David Mabey and Peter West ("Buskers I have known").

My thanks go especially to Hilary Bracefield, associate editor, who does much of the actual "production" work now that I have left Birmingham, and to our typist, Jean Bourne. Cover design by David Woodgates.

Once again we are thankful to the Birmingham University Musical Society for their financial support.

KEITH POTTER.

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THE THIRD ACT OF SCHOENBERG'S "MOSES UND ARON"

Why did Schoenberg not compose the music to the third act of Moses und Aron? This problem has usually been answered by giving practical excuses for Schoenberg: that events in Germany in the Thirties, and his exile, created such a traumatic experience that the creative thread was lost, or that he simply became more interested in other works. These may be factors of importance, but Zillig's remark that Schoenberg was "too humble" to complete the work is of rather more interest, since it hints that the third act remained unfinished for internal reasons rather than because of external pressures. From our wider knowledge of Schoenberg's personality, we would not expect him to be primarily influenced by outside events, and we know that the work was for him a testament of spiritual faith.

It is my belief that Moses und Aron shows Schoenberg wrestling with the central problem of his creative life, and that he found it aesthetically impossible to provide music to his own text of the third act. The very incompleteness of the opera is an important factor in any assessment of the worth and value of the twelve-note system. In order to see why this might be so, we must analyse the aesthetic and spiritual developments which led up to the work.

The months of December 1914 and January 1915 were evidently a period of psychological and spiritual crisis in Schoenberg's life. At this time he wrote two important texts: the Totentanz der Prinzipien (Death-dance of Principles), which may have been a verbal contribution to the symphony he was planning at the time and which led him to investigate the structural nature of his music, and Die Jakobsleiter (Jacob's Ladder). The Totentanz shows Schoenberg in despair, realising L'Absurde, the meaninglessness and aimlessness of life and human activity. Out of this shattering experience comes Die Jakobsleiter, which offers a possible solution: first of all an acceptance of the situation, and secondly an appreciation that human actions are the path to identification with God. (The influence of the mystical Jewish Qabalah is profoundly significant here). What Jacob's Ladder provides is a form to life, a structure of human existence which enables man to reach from the depths up to the heights, according to laws of transmigration, reward and reincarnation.

Psychologically this crisis can be regarded as following authentic lines: depth-analysis (in the Totentanz), and psychosynthesis, the process of reconstruction based upon new or renewed beliefs (in Die Jakobsleiter). It is caused by the emergence into the

consciousness of unconscious contents of great energy, which must be brought under control if psychic stability is to be reasserted. Zillig underlines this by stressing the passage in Die Jakobsleiter about "the dissolution of the ego". This polarity between unconscious forces and conscious controls lies at the centre of Schoenberg's aesthetic beliefs.

The setting of Die Jakobsleiter to music was broken off at bar 603; Schoenberg turned to an investigation of how to write music, a process which led to the formulation of twelve-note technique. In a famous letter of 1937 to Slonimsky, Schoenberg makes it clear that the new technique arose out of a desire "to base the structure of my music consciously in a unifying idea". The process of renewal by means of conscious control which had begun in Die Jakobsleiter was continued in terms of musical technique. In his essay Style and Idea Schoenberg extended the process into the field of direct aesthetic statement, bringing together his spiritual beliefs and his structural discoveries, maintaining a distinction between Idea - the idea the composer wishes to represent, and therefore in a sense precompositional, like a note-row - and Style - the way in which the Idea is represented, what we may call a series of images.

Moses und Aron is a religious-cum-aesthetic discussion of the relationship between idea and image, and is therefore not only a further contribution to our understanding of Schoenberg himself, but is "about" the twelve-note method itself. Schoenberg stated that there are three characters in the opera: God, the People of Israel, and the Leader of the People (letter to Eidlitz, 1933). However, it is clear that there are two Leaders: Moses and his "brother" Aron. In their common task - to communicate the Idea of the Only God to the People - they take very different approaches, which in fact together create a balance. There are in fact good internal reasons for regarding them as two sides of a single personality; Schoenberg himself.

It is to Moses that God presents the Idea of monotheism, but, although Moses thus possesses knowledge, he does not have the power to communicate it (the role is a Sprechstimme one). Aron, on the other hand, has no direct comprehension of the Idea, only an image of it, but is by nature a communicator, able to create verbal and visual images to which the People can respond - if not intellectually, at least emotionally. God's announced intention is that Moses shall govern and control Aron's images, and thereby communicate the Idea through Aron to the People.

Aesthetically, we can draw an analogy here with Wagner's Gefühlsverständnis, "understanding through feeling", for it is clear that Aron is a symbol for this function of music. His miracles (works of art) appeal to the People's sensory and sensual perception. However, as the history of nineteenth century music tells us, images tend to get out of hand; emotional contents can too easily obscure, distort or move outside the Ideas which lie behind them. Moses quickly discovers that he cannot control Aron: The God-Moses-Aron-People chain of communication breaks down and Aron gains his independence while Moses retired to the wilderness.

Clearly the Moses-Aron psyche is becoming unbalanced, and although the People are able to apprehend Aron's images, they are little nearer to a full comprehension of the Idea of the Only God. Indeed, in Moses' absence, Aron allows and encourages the setting up of an idol, the Golden Calf, as an image of God which the People can worship. Since he has communicated to the People through their sensory and sensual perception, the worship they offer is a physical, sensual one, an orgy of sacrifice and sexuality that is far removed from the spiritual controls and restraints involved in a true awareness of the Idea. The Gefühlsverständnis has been taken to its post-Tristan, frightening extreme.

Some controls are urgently needed. Schoenberg had realised the necessity of control in the extravagant, sensual expressionism of late-Romantic music, the necessity of controlling the power of music over a listener's unconscious feelings, by introducing a unifying Idea on which to "consciously" base the structure. Thus Moses returns from the wilderness to reassert his authority, armed with the tablets of the Law. These can be comprehended, and by means of them the natural unconscious desires in the psyche may be renounced. A new standard is set up whose aim is to encourage the renunciation of sensual desires and to lead the People to a new spiritual state (see Freud: Moses and Monotheism).

The two brothers confront each other, now representative of contrasting extremes: the sensual imagery of music and the necessary controlling Idea in musical composition. Moses accuses Aron of creating images: Aron produces the shattering reply that even Moses' perception of the Idea is itself an image. The Burning Bush, the Voice of God, the tablets of the Law themselves, are just as much images as are Aron's miracles, speeches and the Golden Calf itself. He is, unfortunately for Moses, absolutely right, and his argument is not without relevance to the Idea of the twelve-note row, in which the row-model is just as much an "image" as the variants of it in which it appears in a twelve-note work. Moses, confused and angry, breaks

the tablets of the Law and collapses, disillusioned, while Aron creates the pillars of cloud and fire to lead the People away.

Here the second act, and Schoenberg's music, end, with Aron victorious, and Moses in despair. A victory for Aron means a victory for Gefühlsverständnis, a triumph for music's sensual power over the "desire to base the structure of music consciously upon a unifying idea."

For Schoenberg the inventor of the twelve-note method this conclusion was intellectually intolerable. In consequence, he wrote the text to a third act, of his own invention. Here Moses, having recast the tablets of the Law, appears from the start as in control, with Aron in chains and on trial, guarded by armed soldiers (a slightly unhappy picture of Moses as tyrant?). This time Aron's arguments about the necessity of images are in vain: Moses has become what Freud calls a super-ego figure, whose role is to control the desires of the unconscious. Images, he says, are no longer of service: the path to eternal life is through the renunciation of images. In their place we have the Ten Commandments, by the pursuit of which, presumably, Jacob's Ladder may be climbed. Aron, now no longer of service either, is released, and falls dead.

The tables have been turned on the second act. If the Golden Calf scene represented the extreme of the Aronic side of the psyche, this third act climax shows the extreme of the Mosaic side. It is no coincidence that Schoenberg regarded the Golden Calf scene (at least while he was composing it) as the most "operatic" moment in the opera, and provided no music to the third act. The text of this act was the necessary intellectual response to Aron's victory, but the implications of that text, that the Gefühlsverständnis side of music must be renounced, and is redundant, was for Schoenberg the composer quite unacceptable. As a creative musician he realised that formal principles, while necessary, cannot and must not be taken to the extreme at which the sounds of music are no longer apprehended directly by the unconscious.

The text of the opera, then, shows a gradual polarisation of the two sides of the Schoenberg personality; while the Aronic extreme of the second act is in essence, and traditionally, musical, the Mosaic extreme of the third act is in essence anti-musical. The fact that Schoenberg seems to have been aware of this on the deepest creative level not only explains why there is no music to the third act, but indicates the stature of his genius, and points a moral to the creative musician of all times.

JOHN DRUMMOND.

JANI CHRISTOU

Awareness of and identification with the past is a nationalistic feature more present in the Greek character than in perhaps any other European race: proximity to the legends of classical antiquity - often recreated in modern terms - further identifies this close relationship. A translation of tragedy into the romantic image, in the case of individuality of mind and creative ability, brings with it the danger of over-emphasis of events and the formation of a myth divorced from essentials to become a non-reality. Early death when aligned to tragedy tends to heighten such a situation.

The death in a car accident on the 8th January 1970 of the composer Jani Christou on the eve of his forty-fourth birthday deprived Greek artistic life of a rare mind who explored in his work new areas of the imagination. The vehicle in which the tragedy occurred also claimed the lives of the wives of Christou and the composer Stephanos Vassiliades, the last named being the only survivor.

Awareness of the time available for creative work certainly played an important part in Christou's life; his rejection of academic opportunities and anything limiting his life was further accentuated by the energetic fervour with which he himself devoted to composition during his last years. At the time of his death he was engaged on a new concept of opera in The Orestia, a multi-media version in contemporary terms of the classical legend.

Christou was born in Heliopolis, a suburb of Cairo, in 1926 of a Cypriot mother and a Greek father. After studies at the English school in Alexandria he attended King's College, Cambridge, for philosophy with Ludwig Wittgenstein, obtaining his M.A. in 1948. At the same time he studied composition with Hans Redlich and his first accepted work, Phoenix Music, is a product of this period. Serial, and post-Bergian in style, it is an important work, both in its own right and in relation to his later development. The association between philosophy and musical creation became realities early in his life, for it was from the philosophical disciplines, especially logic - the symbolic logic of Russell and the linguistic logic of Wittgenstein to which he attached particular importance - that he derived his later view: that "in order to be validly non-logical it is necessary to master the techniques of logic" - a viewpoint close to statements made more recently by Xenakis in relation to chance and random procedures.

After a short period of study in Italy with Frederico Lavagnino for orchestration and attendance at the courses of the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Sienna he moved to Zurich where for a time he studied

psychology with Carl Jung. Christou's elder brother, a psychologist (who was also to die in a car accident) was working with Jung and guided Christou's development, including, one may presume, areas important in Jung's life that are mirrored in the concepts of "protoperformance" of the composer's later years.

During the next period his musical language was to develop slowly in isolation from the international music scene. He read and studied philosophy, religion, anthropology, psychology, alchemy, magic and pre-history. These activities were an essential part of the discovery of his true self and an individual creative path which incorporated "musical ideas derived from metaphysical speculation"; for, as John G. Papaioannou has observed, "Christou believed unshakably that only from an invincible internal necessity based on a philosophical-metaphysical foundation could the creation of art have meaning for anyone".

His development is important in the attention it gives to the evolution of musical form, beginning with Phoenix Music, where a symmetrical form derived from the "phoenix principal": beginning - drama - end/beginning, follows a complete life-cycle: birth, death and re-birth, yet unlike classical ABA form correctly mirrors the beginning. Here and throughout his work we see the characteristic gesture of Christou in which at a moment of tension (drama), silence or a sudden change to a new area will occur - as at moments of awareness of a new reality. In later works a colourful orchestral palette does on occasions lead to the danger of over-orchestration. The works are purified in language and texture, as also are his evolution of serial and post-serial techniques; the latter in the sphere of rhythm lead to the concept of pattern and permutation and the road to a synthetic notation in which the score is a summation of essential complex elements more clearly defined in the parts.

Clarification of notation to essentials - orchestration and pitch material - is also combined with a complexity of rhythmic possibilities existing in multi-layers of small units. Such melodic and rhythmic units each have a function and can be subjected to processes of permutation or exist as separate entities together with other non-related material. Examples of these are found in Patterns and Permutations (1960) and the Toccata (1962) and a clarification from complex elements in Six Songs From T.S. Eliot (1955).

The complex structures of Patterns and Permutations are audible in an orchestral work of vivid yet essential colour; it is music for the ear and mind, a dialogue of actions through degrees of complexity that abruptly end as they began. A work of dramatic intensity at the crossroads to the new language of the final years is The Tongues of Fire (1964) for baritone, chorus and orchestra, a Pentecost oratorio set in the period following the resurrection. The chorus enact the drama as seen through the eyes of the

uneducated populace whose semi-pagan religious outlook is mirrored in an emotionally charged score that makes extensive use of new speech possibilities in chanting, whispering and shouting; lamentation with relatively little in the way of sung choral roles. Christou's desire to move beyond the drama itself into the psychology of the people of the time is aided by his studies in pre-history, and realised in the unleashing of emotional forces absent in the devotional oratorio.

Following a series of works for the National Art Theatre, there emerged what in performance may appear to be Christou's outstanding contribution to our time: Mysterion (1966), a setting of the Egyptian "Book of the Dead" for narrators, three choirs, orchestra, actors and tape. This is a work written in the new "synthetic" score notation in which figurative illustrations indicate theatrical and emotional actions; ritualistic-mystical elements dominate the score in the book which is a series of magical incantations from the lore of Egyptian magic - a powerful force in its own right without the particular type of Christou musical alchemy. The enactment of the ancient past through ritual drama here is heightened through the invocation to the Gods of Upper and Lower Egypt in the liturgy for the dead and their resurrection in the after life - the underworld of the animalistic gods of pre-history. Moments of hysteria and trance that move beyond logic are characteristic of Christou's late works.

Ritual instrumental theatre is developed with systematic logic in Praxis (1965). The work exists in two versions, for eleven strings and pianist-conductor (Praxis for 12) and for forty-four strings and pianist-conductor (Praxis) - the two are identical except for minor points of orchestration. The title indicates "purposeful action" which is combined with and alternates with metapraxis: "action beyond rational control" (trance, panic, hysteria). This is further defined by the composer: "a violinist playing the violin is a praxis, a violinist screaming instead of or while playing the violin is a metapraxis... the term metapraxis is meaningful only in the context of concert convention". The musical and metamusical actions of controlled random sound aggregates, trance-like movement across the stage and sounds of hysteria are transmuted into ritual theatre that is logical in its beauty through an invocation of a stillness and meaning beyond the sounds and gestures. The notation of the final version made shortly before the composer's death incorporates visual symbols that clarify the degree and nature of the metapraxis.

The notational procedures of Mysterion and Praxis are used with flexibility in each work that followed; fixed pitches appear less, to be replaced by signs and "traffic signals" together with graphic notation and rhythmic pattern notation. With these new possibilities Christou could realise his intentions with brevity and was able to compose at speed. With such a notation as he required for a ritual re-enactment of moments in pre-history and their valid transformation to present-day situations - the

use of controlled aleatoric procedures involving actors, instruments, and electronics - Christou realised his intentions in a series of thirty-five works for various combinations written between 1966 and 1968. These works all aim at "protoperformance". Protoperformance is the name given to performances in "remote pre-history involving ritualistic re-enactments of the drama of renewal", at a period "when the terror of non-renewal of vital processes in the environment was felt as real". The title of one work, Anaparastasis, means re-enactment. In these works only the climate of protoperformance is attempted, not anything specific; the audience as well as the performers interpret the drama in the light of their own consciousness and the logic or non-logic of the dream material presented.

Anaparastasis for baritone and ensemble premiered at a Musica Viva concert in Munich in November 1968 is a setting of the nightwatchman's opening oration from "The Orestia" of Aeschylus in which he is awaiting a beacon flash signifying the Fall of Troy. The keyword is "release"; allied to this are the names of colours spoken by the conductor as "traffic signs" "keeping a city's circulation under control" and acting as instrumental cues to the players. Combined with this are texts spoken by the players taken from the safety alarm regulations governing fire and the abandonment of a ship at sea. The re-enactment operates on a number of levels incorporating degrees of hysteria. Within the work's short duration these are subdivided into four phases: vocal terror, hypnotic state of the soloist, instrumental panic and sudden solemnity. The meta-action is of terrifying intensity where Christou's flexibility with large volumes of sound is used with masterly control; his use of the crescendo as a formative/generative element is unique. (The device was for him akin to the use by Xenakis of the pizzicato towards differing metamusical ends.) When imitated by other Greek composers since his death and divorced from the rationale behind its use-allied to concepts of pattern, time and a ritual meaning - it is merely an illogical event.

Christou's last completed work was Enantiodromia for orchestra and tape, written at the suggestion of Heinrich Strobel and premiered in Oakland, California in 1969. At the root of this piece is the regulating function of opposites: the forward movement of energy and regression. (The contrawise action of dualities is one of the major psychological laws discovered by Heraclitus). Each instrumental entry is defined by a pattern. There are twenty-seven of these plus simple permutations and each player has a role further extended by a metapraxis function indicated by sign notation. These pictures are of a metapsychic variety; the "pictures are to be un-scrambled, decoded by reference to a set of specifications". The degree and type of action will alter with the country and nationality of the performers. The "synthetic notation" of component patterns creates a picture whose visual impact can be assimilated as a whole and not merely in stages. The success of the Oakland performance proved to Christou the

validity of his notational process with a large body of orchestral players working within the confines of the conventional repertoire, and therefore its adaptability for future works.

In the work of relatively few artists can such a continuous line of development be traced as in the work of Christou from Phoenix Music to Enantiodromia. Clarity of texture stripped to essentials is achieved by the composers of the past only in old age. Christou found his clarity of vision by the age of forty.

With the loss of any creative artist speculation on the uncharted future is meaningless. The Orestia would have been a considerable contribution to the death of conventional opera; certain of his plans for the work were discussed with the writer some months before his death. His original treatment of the sound possibilities in electronics are preserved in the tape he prepared for a recording of Epicycle and in his work for stage and film. Plans for the creation of an arts centre in Greece, where artists could work for a period away from commercial pressures, and the founding of a multi-media group for authentic performances of his own work were ideas close to his heart. His contribution remains in his music, and in his remarkable qualities as a man. In this,he will be especially remembered by the young Greek composers and performers whom he guided on a path to the future.

DAVID JONES.

SOLO MUSIC FOR THE DOUBLE BASS

I am frequently asked if the double bass is a solo instrument; whether any music has been written for it and, if so, what it ought to sound like. Therefore it might be useful to summarise my findings, since I have been building a library of music for the double bass over the last fifteen years.

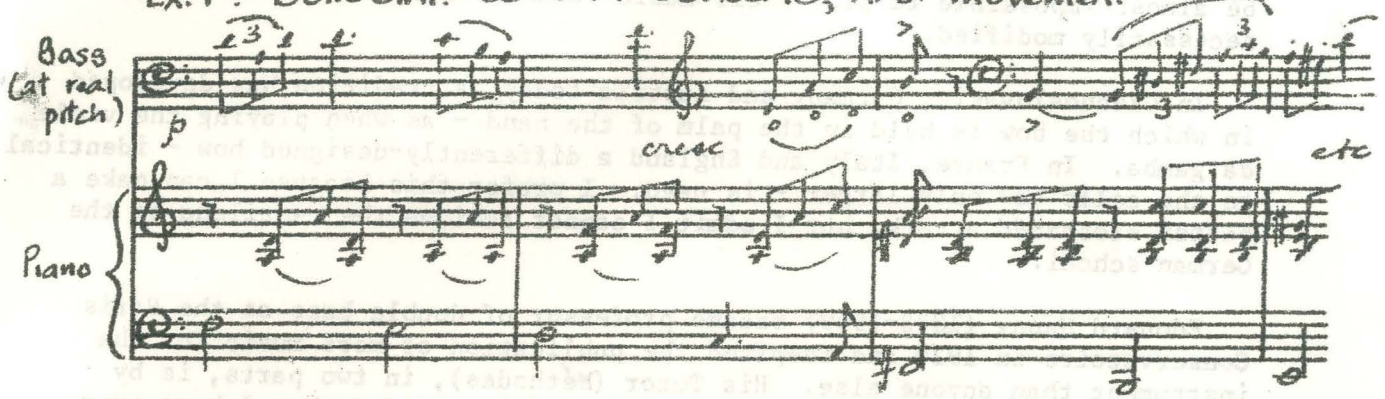
There are many transcriptions of popular cello pieces for the bass, but these must be dismissed if they do not add anything to the original. The only exceptions are some of the sonatas by Vivaldi, Marcello and others: the over-rich, more dignified melancholy of the double bass can blend with a harpsichord accompaniment in a pleasant, antique manner. Only when the bass tries to imitate the brightness and limpid quality of the cello tone, or the instrument's smoothness in connecting wide intervals, does it fail. Or if it succeeds it simply makes one ask: so what?

G.B.Cimador (1761-1805) wrote a concerto for bass. Karl Ditter von Dittersdorf (1739-1799) wrote two concertos and a sinfonia concertante for bass and solo viola. Domenico Dragonetti (1763-1848) wrote several concertos and was the first bass-player to achieve an international reputation. Any of this music is as agreeable to listen to as some of Haydn's lesser works. It is completely devoid of depth - as is typical of many forgotten 18th century drawing-room pieces designed as elegant background music.

The greatest bass virtuoso in the 19th century was Giovanni Bottesini (1821-1889). His most important works for the instrument are the two concertos, the Concerto di bravura, a double concerto for violin and bass, the Carnival of Venice and the Sonambula variations. He also wrote an Elegy, a Reverie and a Tarantella - all with piano.

Bottesini's music requires great accuracy in the playing of harmonics - usually at high speed. The themes, developments, modulations and key rotations have to fit in with the natural harmonics available and are subservient to this display of virtuosity. His style may be termed "inferior Verdi" - or perhaps it might be as though Bellini or Donizetti had written concertos for the double bass! The best works are the Tarantella, the Carnival of Venice and the double concerto which are all unashamed display pieces in which Bottesini did not take himself seriously as a composer. However, the sonic effect of so many harmonics is ghostly and curious and therefore worthy of study:

Ex. 1 : Bottesini: Second Concerto, first movement



Better known as a conductor, Serge Koussevitsky (1874-1951) started life as a double bass soloist and wrote four short pieces for the instrument as well as a concerto. In every detail - themes, harmonies, even orchestration - the concerto is modelled on Tchaikovsky (First Piano Concerto!). Nevertheless, it remains the only truly romantic work for the bass, neither apologetic (like Dragonetti) nor absurdly over-inflated and acrobatic (like Bottesini).

To sum up so far: solo bass music had largely been written by the virtuosi themselves and it suffered from lack of original style. The forms are academic in the worst sense and the styles frankly imitative of music by contemporary composers. The music is only occasionally successful when the musical ingredients and the performer's genius coincide.

The pity is that none of the virtuosi established a school of playing and a tradition of competent players. Dragonetti played in the King's Theatre, London for many years and took refuge in multiple eccentricities. Bottesini travelled to most countries of the world, writing operas and conducting with variable success. Koussevitsky became conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Their music may be termed good "bad music" and this is an important definition since the next era produced chiefly bad "good music"!

The double bass was the late developer of the string family and only came into its own in the orchestra at the beginning of the 18th century. Although its structure became more or less standard, players tuned the three or four strings according to individual taste or whim and the tuning E-A-D-G was not laid down until 1832. (For this we have to thank Cherubini, director of the Paris Conservatoire at the time.) As Dragonetti and Bottesini played their solos on three-string basses and varied their tuning from time to time it would be almost impossible to play their music authentically. Modern editions are necessarily modified.

In Czechoslovakia, Germany and Austria today, a tradition has developed in which the bow is held in the palm of the hand - as when playing the viola da gamba. In France, Italy and England a differently-designed bow - identical to the cello bow only larger - is used. I prefer this because I can make a better sforzando attack, but I admit I cannot achieve the cantilena of the German school.

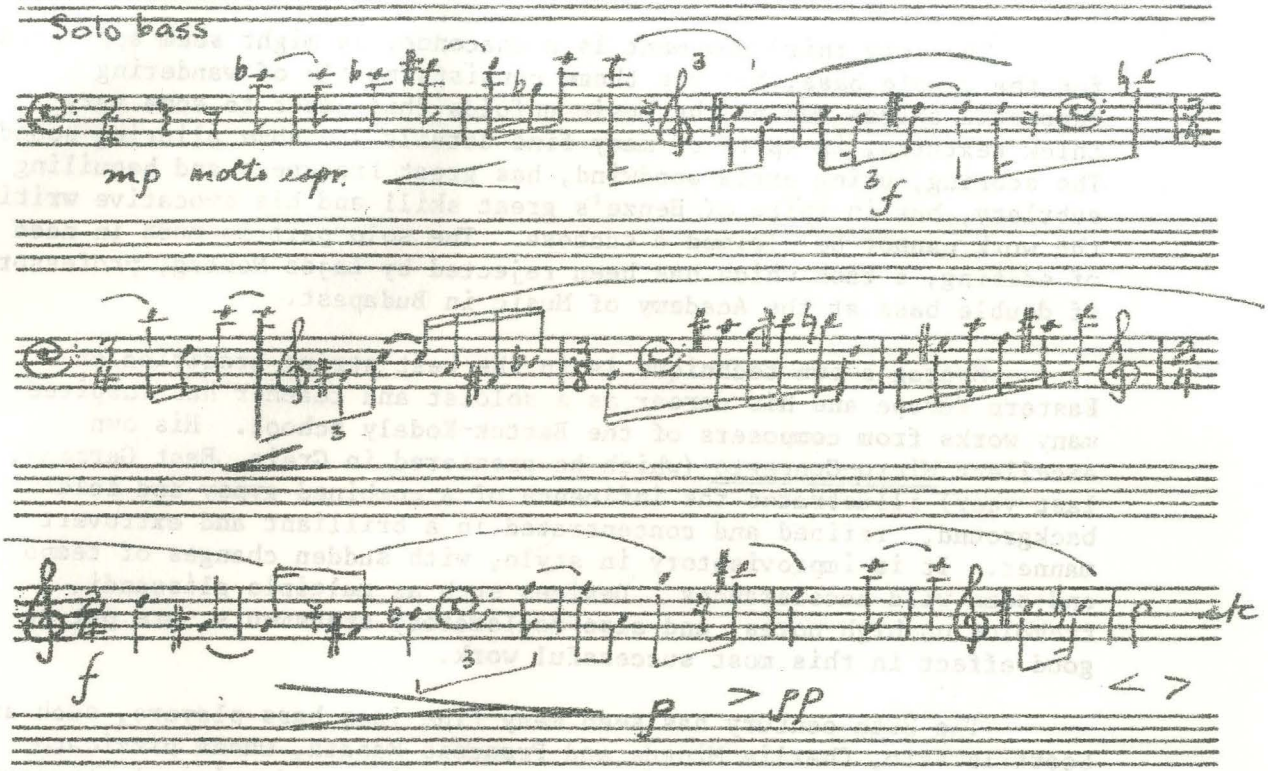
Edouard Nanny (1872-1949) became professor of double bass at the Paris Conservatoire in 1920 and inspired the publication of more music for the instrument than anyone else. His Tutor (Méthodes), in two parts, is by far the most skilful, comprehensive and carefully-graded that I have ever seen. His three books of studies and his concerto and four other pieces have greater technical than musical interest and his transcriptions of popular pieces by some twenty-one famous composers suggest that his conception of music for the bass was rather tied to the expressive and virtuosic ideal of the cello.

But he inspired some twenty-five French composers to write pieces for solo bass with piano. Leaning heavily on the impressionist style then current, these pieces are in the bad "good music" category - usually very stylish and attractively written but lacking in musical ideas, the substance or content needed to give them the magic which is an indefinable ingredient of all great music. I would single out the following as worthy of study and repeated public performance: Dulaurens: Morceau de Concert; Rivier: Pièce en Ré; Pierre-petit: Thème et Variations; Chaynes: Lied, Scherzando et Final; Bozza: Pièce sur le nom d'Edouard Nanny; Lemaire: Trois Danses.

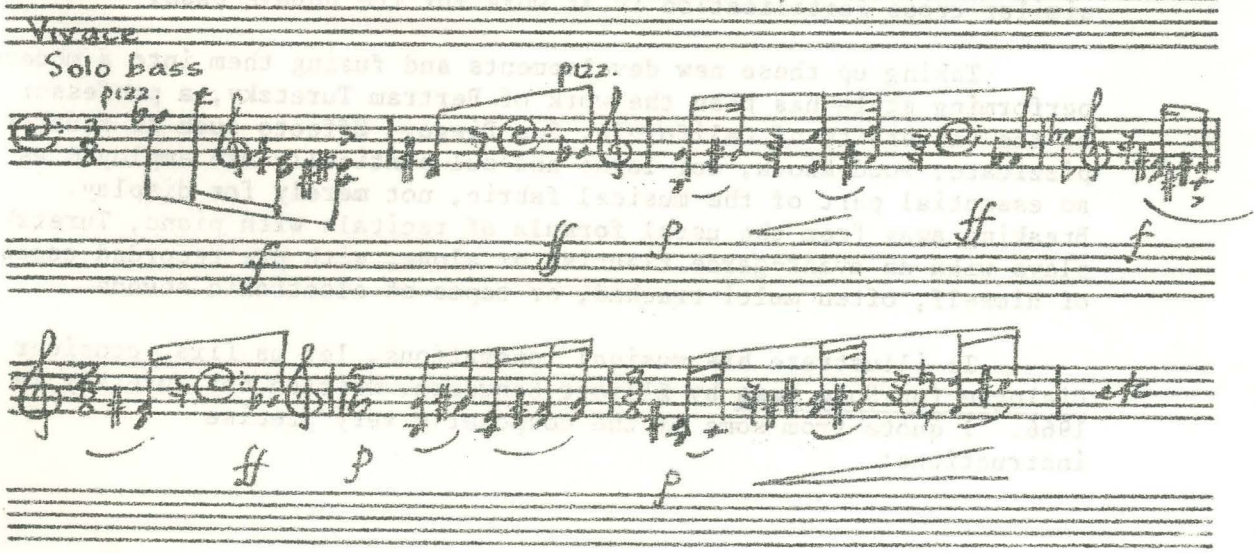
Still in line with the expressive approach, the American bass-player Gary Karr is the most outstanding of our time. He has made seven records of solos and inspired concertos from Schüller, Wilder and Henze. Since the salient features of Karr's playing are his superb tone quality and tasteful phrasing, it is logical that Henze, whose style is basically conservative, should write a concerto for him.

The first movement of Henze's concerto is lyrical and serene (Ex. 2) and is followed by a brilliant scherzo (Ex. 3).

Ex. 2: Henze: Double Bass Concerto, first movement



Ex. 3: Henze: Double Bass Concerto, second movement



The long third movement is a chaconne, as might seem appropriate for the double bass, but the theme consists mostly of wandering chromatic thirds and as the music unfolds this leads to some very thick textures, in spite of many fine details and some alluring sounds. The scoring, using extra woodwind, has great freshness and beguiling subtlety, but in spite of Henze's great skill and his evocative writing, the work cannot be claimed a success. The solo part is much in need of editing, a task which has been rejected by Lajos Montag, professor of double bass at the Academy of Music in Budapest.

Montag's own technique is in the best string tradition of Eastern Europe and his career as a soloist and teacher has inspired many works from composers of the Bartok-Kodaly school. His own excellent Micro-Concerto (which he premiered in Greiz, East Germany, last year) illustrates the influence of a combined gypsy and folk background, refined and concentrated in a brilliant and extrovert manner. It is improvisatory in style, with sudden changes of tempo and some wild accelerandos. Devices such as multiple glissandi, tremolos on high notes, and also declamatory statements, are put to good effect in this most successful work.

The 20th century has seen many fine jazz bass players, such as Scott le Faro, Charlie Mingus and Francois Rabath, whose pizzicato techniques, combining smoothness with velocity, and original structures of the bass-line have revealed new possibilities. Apart from the ephemeral content of much jazz anyway, its heavy reliance on improvisation tends to produce music that can only be heard once, except when played by unusually creative artists. Nonetheless, the jazz trumpet has improved standards in orchestral trumpet playing and a similar cross fertilisation is at work for the double bass.

Taking up these new developments and fusing them into a modern performing style has been the work of Bertram Turetzky, a professor at the University of California, San Diego. Effects such as flutter pizzicato, wood knock, col legno and sul ponticello are employed as an essential part of the musical fabric, not merely for display. Breaking away from the usual formula of recitals with piano, Turetzky plays with an avant-garde flautist or alone, with pre-recorded tapes of himself, often multi-tracked, or tapes of electronic sounds.

To illustrate his musical innovations, let us first consider Dialogue for Solo Bass by Elliott Schwartz, written for Turetzky in 1966. I quote from some of the composer's very precise instructions:

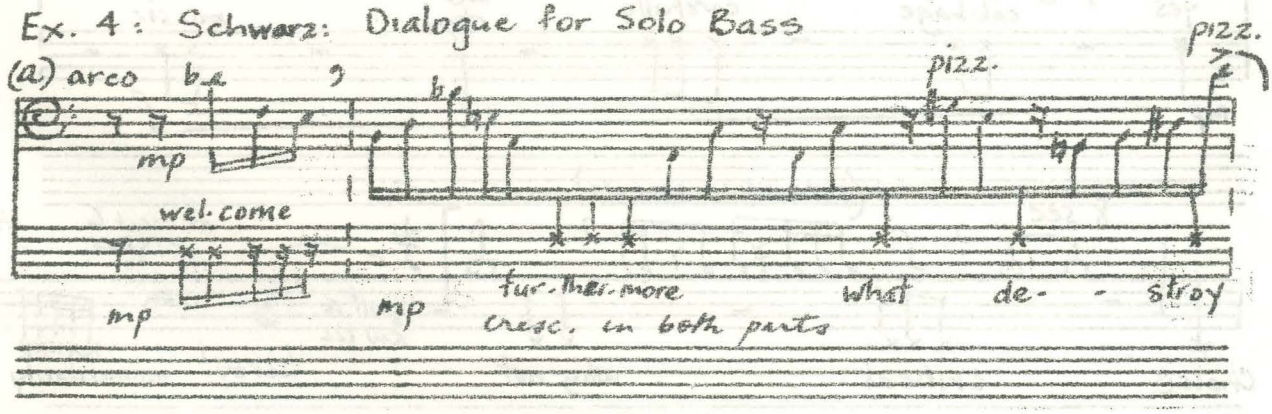
"Although this is a "solo" unaccompanied work, you are to conceive of it as a DUET, one part to be played upon your instrument, the other part to be performed in a variety of ways.

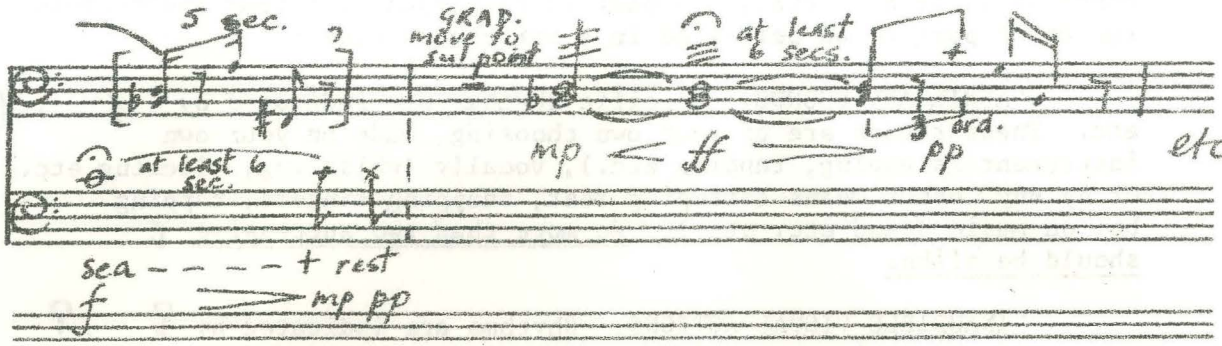
"AUXILIARY SOUNDS. Specific rhythms are indicated by , etc. These sounds are of your own choosing, made on your own instrument (slapping, tapping etc.), vocally (whistling, clicking etc.) or by any other means (stamping feet, snapping fingers, rapping bow on music stand etc. etc.). No more than two successive should be alike.

"INAUDIBLE VISUAL ACTIONS. Rhythms are indicated by , etc., and the actions should convey precisely articulated rhythms. The actions are of your own choosing, but should be abrupt (quick motion), "mechanical" and robot-like: turning your head from side to side or up/down, extending an arm or leg, suddenly sitting or standing etc. etc. Perform the action quickly and then "freeze" it for the duration of the . No successive should be alike".

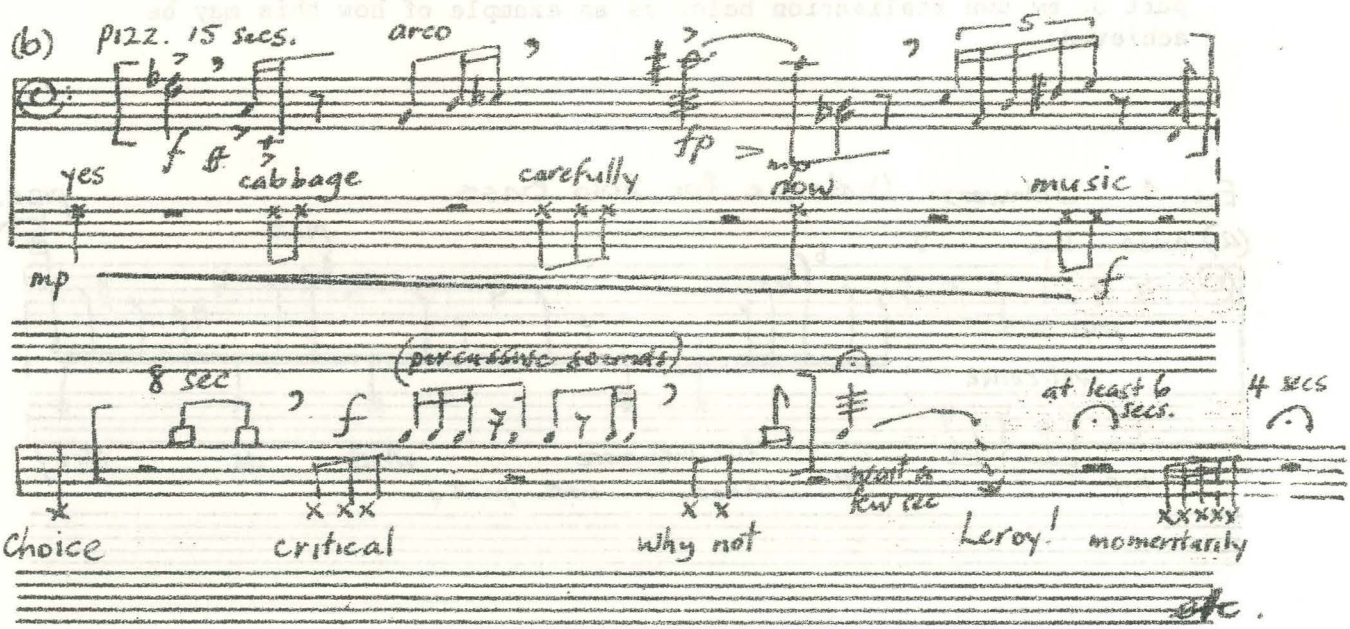
In order to perform this piece the player must add up the number of auxiliary sounds (44) and visual actions (18) and make a list of sounds of indeterminate pitch that he can make, together with drawings of various poses to describe his chosen visual actions. Then he must incorporate these into the piece, making sure that they fit naturally together and also that they make an effective "counterpoint" with the "straight" played part. The piece is a test of the player's inventive ingenuity: the bolder one plays the theatrical part, the greater the effect of the work. I give part of my own realisation below as an example of how this may be achieved:

Ex. 4: Schwarz: Dialogue for Solo Bass



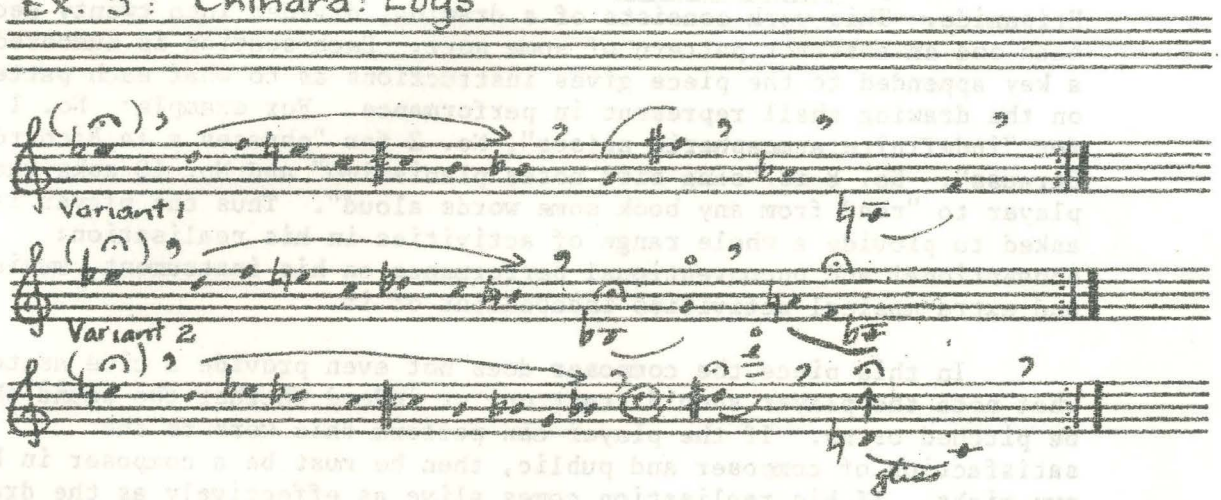


N.B. At times passages in one part are to be unsynchronised with passages in the other part. The free passages are bracketed. Points of attack and lengths of silence are chosen freely within the duration of the brackets.



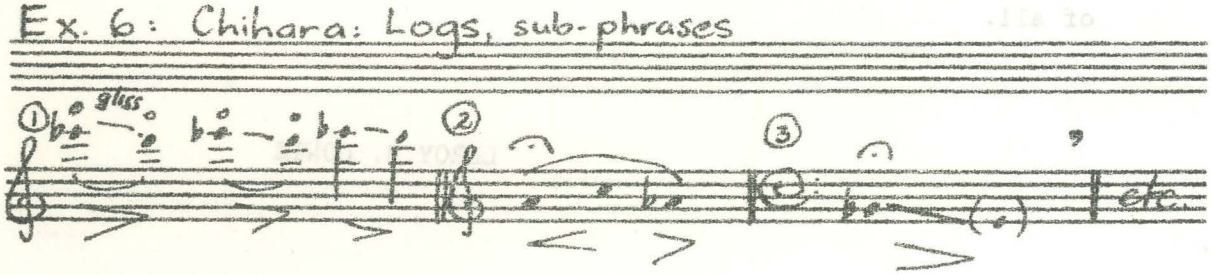
Logs for two or more double basses by Paul Chihara was also written for Bertram Turetzky. It is the fifth in a series of "tone pictures" dealing with trees and it makes more musical demands than the piece by Schwartz. The piece consists merely of one phrase and two slightly modified variants of it, as follows:

Ex. 5: Chihara: Logs



These phrases are repeated continuously with slight deviations each time: alterations in emphasis, nuance, vibrato and micro-tonal adjustment. One or more sub-phrases, such as those in Ex.6, may be interjected or repeated in any order. The piece should "breathe", i.e. it should be in some natural physical rhythm. It is quiet and slow (dynamic range : pp to mp) and it lasts from eight to ten minutes.

Ex. 6: Chihara: Logs, sub-phrases



One critic has said that Logs "reveals the composer as a sensitive lyricist". But the point is, surely, that the performer is composing the counterpoint, length and structure of the piece. In addition to mastering his instrument and interpreting and projecting whatever he plays, the performer of this piece must have a working knowledge of contemporary compositional procedures since it could be realised in any style he chooses - including no style at all.

Lastly, Là ou ca passe, by the Rumanian composer Alexadre Hrisanide. This work consists of a drawing, divided into twenty sections, each one an abstract pattern of some sort. Each section is numbered and a key appended to the piece gives instructions as to what each pattern on the drawing shall represent in performance. For example: No. 1 asks for "indefinite atmospheric noises", No. 2 for "phrases a la Richard Strauss". No. 8 is "sing bird notes pianissimo" and No. 10 asks the player to "read from any book some words aloud". Thus the player is asked to provide a whole range of activities in his realisation: conventional and unconventional performance on his instrument, musical and extra-musical activities independent of it.

In this piece the composer does not even provide a clue as to what note the player should start on, or indeed whether the sound should be pitched or no. If the player can perform this work to the satisfaction of composer and public, then he must be a composer in his own right. If his realisation comes alive as effectively as the drawing surely does then we are back, with small differences, to the problem which faced Dragonetti - who had to compose his own music for the bass because virtually nothing had previously been written for it.

But more is at stake than just the devolution of the composer's role to the performer. Là ou ca passe can be played on any stringed instrument and in time all instrumentalists may have to face only verbal instructions or drawings. It seems contradictory, at a time when scholarship and insights into the mystery of creative composition are at such a peak, that an anarchist school, headed by John Cage, should exist. Yet evolution is a painful process, and if the arts are in a process of democratisation, i.e. a situation in which every person must be a responsible artist and accept the implications contained in the meaning of the word democracy, then this step is the biggest and most painful of all.

LEROY B. COWIE

MUSIC FROM SILESIA

The quarterly journal "Polish Music" regularly lists all performances throughout the world of works by Polish composers and it is very distressing to observe how seldom Polish music is played in this country. (The situation has been partially remedied this year when Polish works were a special feature of the 1972 Edinburgh Festival). Yet, considering the tremendously important role which Polish music has played in recent developments, a disproportionate amount of listening time still seems to be accorded it in Britain, even though two of Lutoslawski's finest works (Paroles Tissées and the Cello Concerto) were commissioned by this country and first performed here. But Lutosławski and Penderecki apart, Polish music is frequently misunderstood in Britain.

I remember reading a review of Tadeusz Baird's Four Essays for Orchestra after a concert in London last December, and how shocked and angry I was when the critic wrote, "I should have felt happier had one of the Four Essays presented a faster and tougher line, but, by the standards of Eastern European proletarian music, these pieces were both adventurous and imaginative." Anyone who has even the slightest knowledge of Poland (an Eastern European country?), with its post-war culture and post-Stalinist freedom in the arts, not to mention an understanding of the individual composers, could never have written those words - the complete antithesis of Polish achievement. Such is the state of understanding in Britain at the moment. Perhaps it will improve after Edinburgh.

There is also the equally wrong assumption that the most widely known Polish composers in Britain-Lutosławski and Penderecki - are still totally representative of modern Polish music. So they are to a great extent, as well as being responsible for a great many recent developments. Because of these men, and others like Serocki, we can speak of a Polish 'school' of composition. No other country has such a modern national school. But within this national unit are many diversified trends and styles - and yet their ultimate goal seems to be one and the same: a Polish sonority. What I aim to do in this article is to put forward the names of three composers as representatives of the middle generation in Poland and as artists working along quite different lines from Lutosławski, Penderecki or Baird.

After the Nazis tried ruthlessly to wipe out all traces of Poland's culture and cultural heritage, the Polish people made fantastic efforts to re-establish its respectability on all levels. The building of primary and secondary schools and academies of music in many provincial towns and cities helped to re-establish a musical culture throughout Poland. While Warsaw remains the chief centre there are many others with considerable power and achievement behind them. One of the most dynamic centres is Katowice where there is a very active academy - and the best Polish orchestra I have heard. This is where Witold Szalonek, Wojciech Kilar, and Henryk

Mikołaj Górecki are working and in comparison with other composers living outside Warsaw these three form a very impressive group indeed.

Katowice is situated in Silesia, an industrial area of Poland which has always been renowned for its music-making - a particularly famous and popular outcome of which is the native folk music, spread by the Slask Song and Dance Ensemble. Szalonek and Kilar both studied at the Academy of Music (or to give it its official title, the State Higher School for Music) with Bolesław Woytowicz, and Górecki studied there with Bolesław Szabelski.

In his more recent works, Szalonek (b. 1927) has been occupied with using a new kind of sound material, particularly in relation to wind instruments. He felt that in most Polish contemporary music the new and very Polish string textures were not matched by a similarly revolutionary sound material for the wind. He has always been attracted by 'sound', especially that used by non-European cultures, and found the solution to his problem in experiments with sound-possibilities of wind-blown instruments. This was not until after 1963 when he had finished working on the Concertino for Flute and Orchestra, in which he wrote whole sections of the second movement to be performed on the mouth-piece and pitch pipe of the flute separately. His researches were extremely extensive and the techniques employed include special blowing methods, altering the fingering for certain notes and providing new combinations of fingering (producing combined tones), and the different effects of using side trill keys to produce combined tones. The latter is used particularly on the clarinet where the main note is held, and either one, two, or three side keys are trilled simultaneously, giving vibrations of different qualities.

A work which aptly demonstrates these techniques is Proporzioni(1967), for harp trio. The flute player is asked at times to enclose the mouth-hole tightly with the lips, to blow with such a pressure as to produce the highest overtone, and then to stop the mouth-hole quickly with the tongue. Another indication is a diminished blowing pressure and a loosening of the lips to produce a non-mechanical lowering of the sound, which is used in conjunction with the 'combined-tone-technique'. Szalonek's raw material is sound itself, and his new technique has been incorporated into Les Sons for symphony orchestra (1965), Quattro Monologhi per Oboe Solo (1966), Mutazioni per Orchestra (1966), Proporzioni and Improvisations Sonoristiques for clarinet, trombone, cello and piano (1968). The latter illustrates Szalonek's work very well, but is not as successful a work as Proporzioni, where musical invention, sonority and form are admirably woven together with none of the stitches left showing. The progression of the music through time is intensified by the plan: introduction, followed by sections one to five, with distinct ideas from all sections projected forward, anticipating the next section and at the same time giving added perspective and relevance to the climax.

Replying to a criticism that he uses unnatural or degenerate sounds, Szalonek quoted Webern's definition of music - "Tone, music, is the reflection of natural laws in their relation to the sense of hearing." "Thus," says Szalonek, "every sound may be used in certain specific conditions to express musical substance."

Wojciech Kilar (b.1932), in his more recent works has concerned himself with an extraordinary simplicity of material. His principal early works include Riff 62 for orchestra (1962), Générique for orchestra (1963), Dipthongos for choir and orchestra (1964), Springfield Sonnet for orchestra (1965) and Solenne (1967), which together form one distinct part of his output. Kilar believes that the musical expression of his compositions is weakened if they repeat what has gone before. For this reason he regards Training 68 (1968) as the first work to result from fresh ideas since Riff 62. Not having written chamber music for ten years, he saw the composition as an exercise (training). The sound material is evolved from the opening cello motive C sharp, D sharp, C sharp, in its lowest position, with matching durations of semibreve, minim and dotted semibreve. This uneasily static material on one plane, and the exactly measured pauses on the other, presents a two-strata sound-structure similar to that which we will find in the music of Gorecki.

After the interruption on his work of Alleluia (for huge forces), and the discovery of the powers of simple material (cf. David Bedford), Kilar began his Upstairs-Downstairs for soprano and orchestra which he completed in 1971. It is in this work that Kilar's thesis is fully presented....." a kind of continuation of my efforts to make music out of nothing, out of elements that are frequently considered as secondary and minor in importance, as a 'background' ". The musical drama in this work arises from an almost emotional regard for the diminished triad which is approached, confronted and eventually transformed by other single notes into a minor triad, and ultimately into a major triad.

By taking this stand, Kilar is not fighting against the present musical situation, but trying to reflect his own personal condition. His current ideas are not in line with many other Polish composers but may be superficially compared with more Western trends (e.g. Stockhausen and Bedford). Yet, at the same time, his work is constructed into one sonorous whole with the emphasis on the progression of sonority, and in this respect Kilar is in direct line from the developments of Polish music in the late 50's and early 60's.

Henryk Mikołaj Górecki (b. 1933) is the most remarkable and prolific member of this group of composers, and perhaps, the most outstanding of the younger-middle generation of composers working in Poland at the moment. His first important compositions, which appeared in

1955, are Four Preludes for piano Op. 1, and the Toccata for two pianos Op. 2. In 1958 he was awarded the Local Artistic Prize for Young Composers, and in 1960 he took part in a competition sponsored by the Youth Circle Association of Polish Composers and was awarded first prize for his Monologhi Op. 16, for soprano and three groups of instruments, set to his own words. I'm not sure if there is any connection between this work and Berio's Circles (also 1960), but the two works are strangely similar in the forces employed and in the instrumental textures.

Górecki's first really significant work after the Concerto for Five Instruments and String Quartet (1957) is Scontri (Collisions) for large orchestra (1960). From his earliest works Górecki's music is composed, like much post-Webernian music, of very emphatic features, and in Scontri the extreme expressions of dynamics give the work an almost granite-like quality. The orchestra is divided into four groups of instruments: woodwind (12), brass (12), percussion (52) and strings (30.12.10.8). These are operated through two kinds of sound disposition. The first is a sound complex (on the horizontal or vertical) of a varied number from 1-12, and the second, of a varied number from 1-88. Gorecki tried to break away from the traditional division of sound in space by specifying a particular seating arrangement. The music is then written in a literally stereophonic manner through the construction of twelve collision courses. These are then followed through triangular movements in space so that sounds travel toward one another from various parts of the orchestra, collide, and then break away (cf. Monologhi and Genesis II). Spatial sound-division such as this has been widely used in recent years, and particularly by Poles such as Górecki, Serocki (Epizody for strings and three groups of percussion (1959), and Dobrowolski (Music for strings, two groups of wind instruments and two loudspeakers (1967)).

The form of Scontri is difficult to grasp at first, but running through the inter-related blocks of sound is a determined internal symmetry. Górecki decides on the kind of symmetrical plan he wants for these blocks and the conclusion is then a logical outcome of the beginning, in the same way that Messiaen's non-retrogradable rhythms are self-constructing.

In his trilogy Genesis (1962-63), Górecki's musical style is much less complex than in Scontri. Genesis I - Elementi per tre archi presents sectionalised ideas, but uses a more direct minimal notation and leaves the rhythm of some repeated ideas up to the performer. In this way the composer aims at a more natural kind of complexity and can concentrate on a more direct expression and juxtaposition of his ideas. In Genesis II - Canti strumentali per 15 esecutori, the same directness of expression is seen but with a further departure. As a contrast to the sustained string writing of the opening (the extension of a note), Górecki introduces the piano (two performers) whose material consists of tone-

clusters. The idea is insistently repeated (the extension of an idea) with only subtle changes. Genesis III - Monodram per soprano, metalli di percussione e sei violbassi follows a similar line to that taken in parts I and II.

Choros I - per strumenti ad arco (1964) marks yet another new departure in Górecki's music. The repeated ideas in Genesis were of a rather aleatoric nature. Now, in Choros, the composer is quite specific, notating exact notes in an audible register. From this point Górecki's argument is concerned with intervallic relationships as well as colour relationships, and this fact is greatly aided by extreme simplicity and an almost ceremonial repetition of, and insistence on, his ideas. The opening is clearly written in triple metre, one strand of sound (violas) playing consistently 'pp' with one note per beat, and the second strand (violins and cellos) playing sustained crescendo clusters which act against the regularity of the violas. The large middle section is more free, yet from the graphic spacing of notes within the bar lines it is quite clear to the performer where the notes must be placed in the bar. The section consists of repeated two-bar units whose notes remain the same for great stretches at a time. The interaction and opposition (collision?) of repeated ideas on different planes fading in and out of focus is extended to the end of the work whose conclusion gives maximum justification to the techniques involved.

In Refrain for Orchestra (1965), Górecki's ideas of simplicity, varied repetition, symmetry, insistence and the exploration of the qualities of intervallic relationships are even more evident. The first section of the ABA structure begins with the strings playing in unison: C, C, D flat, C, C, (in the rhythm - dotted minim, minim, dm., m., dm., (crotchet equals 26 - 28)). This totally symmetrical unit foreshadows the whole constructional logic of the work. To each successively longer appearance of this unit a major second is added until the augmented fourth (C-F sharp) is reached, thus providing a series of parallel whole-tone chords. The second section destroys the hypnotic calm of the first with wind and strings playing whole-tone chords 'marcatissimo' (crotchet = 132-138), and the brass and percussion chipping bits out of the main body of sound. The whole of this rhythmic structure is worked out beforehand and the groups of repeated chords (1, 2, 3 or 5 times repeated) form a large unit whose rhythm and pitch is non-retrogradable. This severe application of symmetry makes Refrain even further removed from Choros, and from this work extended sections are self-contained and not faded into succeeding ones.

Later works such as Muzyczka 2 for four trumpets, four trombones, two pianos and percussion (1967), or Old Polish Music for orchestra (1969) also exhibit a preference for clear-cut sections, but with small groups of notes taking over from long sustained sounds. Yet Canticum Graduum for

orchestra (1969) uses only sustained writing, which suggests that even though Górecki has made a decidedly clear progression from his works of the late 50's and early 60's, he has as yet neither found his style nor reached the peak of his artistic output.

While a lot of Polish composers can sometimes be accused of using cliches, Górecki has, from the very start, been outstandingly original. At the early age of 27 he produced Scontri which in many ways was far ahead of the music being written by his mature contemporaries. What has marked the Polish school is their outstanding originality, and Gorecki, even as a young man, was one of the very first original Polish composers. Through simplicity and insistence his art has a directness and purpose which only the greater composers possess.

It is quite a feat when a country can boast more than one major centre of musical composition. Witold Szalonek has said, "Silesia stands not only for coal and steel, but also for culture and art". If only Britain could boast centres of composition in its industrial areas.....

JOHN CASKEN.

MUSICAL SMØRREBRØD

11th Congress of the International Musicological Society

Copenhagen: August 20-25, 1972.

In addition to the scientific and social programmes, the 11th Congress of the I.M.S. provided delegates with the opportunity of hearing a wide variety of modern Scandinavian music. Since much of the music was very exciting and completely unknown to me, and the standards of performance very high, I should like to review the concerts briefly, and to indicate some composers whose music deserves to be played more often in this country, without in any way pretending to be able to give even a bird's eye view of present day musical activities in Scandinavia.

On August 21st there was a concert of chamber works in the excellent Louisiana Museum of Modern Art at Humlebaek. None of the pieces was written before 1967, and all are dedicated to the performers who played them on this occasion. The Danish Wind Quintet is clearly a considerable force in the Danish musical scene. They played brilliantly three works: Per Nørgård's 'Whirl's World' (1970), Pelle Gudmundsen-Holmgreen's 'Terrace in 5 Stages' (1969) and Ib Nørholm's "Preludes to a Wind Quintet' (1972). The Nørholm was the least successful. His rambling melodic style is combined in a totally misconceived and unconvincing manner with more advanced textures. The deliberate diatonicism of the slow movement simply became boring, whilst his Accordion Sonata of 1967, played by Mogens Ellegaard, remained tediously anchored to the accordion's triadic construction.

Nørholm apparently reverted to a more 'traditional' style about 1966, before which, along with many Scandinavian composers of his generation (he was born in 1931), he was occupied with serial techniques. Instead of retreating, as Nørholm has done, Per Nørgård seems to have developed his style relentlessly, and currently employs shifting melodic patterns derived from two or four note motifs which are combined into infinitely long tone rows with repeated rhythmic patterns. In 'Whirl's World' the fast staccato patterns are juxtaposed with and superimposed on sustained notes which sometimes explore the beats produced by simultaneously sounding notes differing slightly in pitch. While not all the transitions seemed correctly calculated, this was a very stimulating piece. The other Nørgård piece, played by Bent Lylloff, was 'Wawes' for percussion (1968), a study in shifting accents within continuous rhythmic movement. After a ritualistic gong stroke the patterns moved from one group of instruments to the next - 4 tuned drums, 6 small tuned gongs, xylophone + side drum, and finally a pair of chromatic timpani. The effect: hypnotic and exciting. Nørgård's works are beginning to become known in this country; several have been broadcast, notably 'Voyage of the Golden Screen' for chamber orchestra.

Gudmundsen-Holmgreen's 'Five Stages' revealed extreme economy of thought, whilst each of the five movements had its own character. Diatonic clusters

were treated with a Stravinskian feeling for chord sounds in the first and with Nørgård-like motor rhythms in the second. The middle movement was an hilarious parody of imitation by computer of tonal music, the fourth a fugue (hardly as "completely simplified" as the programme note suggested) and the fifth static like the first, but melancholy with many drooping sighs.

Arguably the most successful piece of the evening was Arne Nordheim's 'Dinosaurus' for Accordion and Tape (1970). Its use of such textures as clusters and glissandi completely freed it (unlike the Nørholm) from the accordion's traditional idiom. As far as one could tell, the tape functioned as an extra dimension to the sound, not as a stimulus to improvisatory reactions from the soloist.

On August 23rd, a concert was given in Lund Cathedral, Sweden, by Regionsmusiken in Southern Sweden (conductor Helle Rosén) and the Swedish Radio Choir (conductor Eric Ericson), with Karl-Erik Welin (organ). The first-named played Nørgård's 'Ceremonial Music for Winds' (1968), a spatial piece in which four groups, each consisting of a single type of instrument, were located in various parts of the building. The groups always played in the same sequence, viz. trumpets, oboes, trombones and horns, and had their own distinctive material. The brilliant fanfares of the trumpets gave way to bell-like oboe chords where each instrument produced chords by means of special fingering and positioning of the reeds in the mouth. The simple diatonic trombone fanfares gave way to bewitching horn music played largely with natural harmonics. The sequence was repeated several times with small changes, but while these were not sufficient to convince one of a coherent formal structure, the sounds themselves were thoroughly enchanting.

Karl-Erik Welin played Jan W. Morthenson's 'Pour Madame Bovary', written in 1962 when the composer was only 22. After a seemingly interminable stretch of shifting breathy rumblings it reached an effective climax with the notes B flat - A - C - B flat proclaimed loudly over the rumblings.

The remainder of the concert, rather badly planned, consisted of choral music, and apart from Buxtehude's 'Missa Brevis' (rather indifferently performed) was all by composers born between 1915 and 1928. No praise is too high for the choir's execution of this difficult music. Many of the pieces employed clusters, glissandi, Sprechstimme, speech and whisper. The two which seemed most successful were Knut Nystedt's 'De profundis' (1964), the masterstroke of which was the appearance of one of the versions of psalm-tone 4 in the doxology in combination with diatonic clusters, and Lars Edlund's 'Gloria' (1969), which as well as being the least afraid to employ ordinary triads was also the most exciting in its use of speech. At the beginning, for instance, a solo tenor singing from the balcony, aroused responses half-sung, spoken and whispered by the choir.

August 24th saw us assembled in Danish Radio's impressive concert hall for a concert by the Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by its musical director Herbert Blomstedt. Familiar were Sibelius' boring 'Tapiola' and Nielsen's disturbing 5th Symphony, here given a shattering performance with particularly fine playing from woodwind and upper strongs. The rest of the concert consisted of Fartein Valen's Violin Concerto of 1940, and Ingmar Lidholm's 'Poesis per Orchestra' of 1963.

The Valen, excellently played with Arve Tellefson as soloist, is an elegaic one-movement piece employing a small orchestra. Use of tone-rows produced close thematic cohesion but a certain wearisome quality owing to the lack of any contrast to the flowing melodic polyphony. As in Berg a chorale, 'Jesus, meine Zuversicht', enters towards the end, here on a solo trumpet in combination with previous material.

In complete contrast, the Lidholm 'Poesis' is scored for huge orchestra, and was without doubt the piece of the concert. The composer was quoted in the programme note thus:

"My idea was to formulate a kind of instrumental drama and I used accordingly what one can call a tutti orchestra in dramatic contrast to certain distinct individual instruments, in particular piano and solo contrabass..... The work was composed at a time when instrumental theatre was attracting considerable attention in Sweden, especially through Karl-Erik Welin's performances. The piano part in Poesis is written for Welin and his collaboration has, among other things, been determinative for the working out of the solo cadenza." In practice the piano (soloist here Welin himself) and double-bass parts are not large, though clearly important. The work is not temporally notated, the various entries being cued at the discretion of conductor or soloist, or so it appeared. There is comparatively little 'extra-musical' content - the occasional shout. The success of the performance was due to the complete conviction of the orchestra and the obvious enjoyment they drew from their own virtuosity, and to the flawless dramatic timing of the conductor, Herbert Blomstedt, whose Bersteinian gestures (he is a pupil of Bernstein) for once proved an apt visual complement to the sound. The BBC Symphony Orchestra would do well to emulate the enthusiasm of the Danish musicians, and could do worse than to lose their inhibitions by playing this very piece.

ANTHONY F. CARVER.

INTERVIEW WITH ZIGMUND LONG

(German composer Zigmund Long was interviewed recently at his home in Marburg).

- Well, Herr Long, shall we begin?
- Zat is a gut idea, Claude. By the way, you can call me Ziggy.
- Fine. Well, Ziggy, shall we begin?
- By all ze means, Patrick. I've ze no objections.
- OK then, to begin at the beginning. They say you were found under a stork's nest in Frankfurt in 1930.
- So they say.
- In 1931 you entered Berlin Academy of Florentine Music and Good Housekeeping. Isn't this an exceedingly early age to be displaying such talent?
- Fell, actually Claude, my mother was tooking me to see our Auntie Chloe sing, you see, only.
- Now there's news for musicologists! To see his Auntie Chloe! My doctorate is insured.
- For how much, Derek?
- Funf neuen pence, Zigmund old chap. But mayn't I call you Ziggy? We seem like old friends already, what with your Aunt Chloe and all that.
- Certainly, Claude. Now fire away! I'm sure ze readers want to hear of my music, nein?
- Nein, Ziggy, I don't think so, but we'll tell 'em anyway. Wot vos your first composition (if you'll pardon the expression) Ziggy?
- Twas my "Dustbin Sonata", Claude, my pet. Ze first performance vuz in Leipzig, you know, by the combined Municipal Councils of Leipzig and Gibraltar-under-Lyme, in 1952, I believe. Ze critics, Wolf Ganger above all, reportz that a riot greeted the performance, like "Right-off Spring" you know, but, I tell you something, Arnold, that they don't know, zat was no riot, zat was ze piace! Ho, ho. Un bon mot, n'est-ce-pas? How you say it in English? A big doughnut, yes? Oh ya Claude, that was a very big doughnut indeed! Ho, ho. Ho, ho, ho. Ho, ho.
- And, er, after that, Ziggy? What did you write next after that?
- A letter to Francoise.
- Was it a success?
- Indeed it was, Albert. Cecile is now my wife.
- What did the critics think of her, old bean?
- They thought it was vairy ziggy, Claude. Vairy Ziggy! Ho, ho.
- My, you're a jovial cobbler, Ziggy.
- Ah! Claude you havz remindinkz me of mine otter composition - "Cobblers" fur orchester, 1963.
- Indeed, Ziggy, I was about to mention it. I was at the first performance in Mainz.

- Oh really Claude, so it was you sitting there! Vot a smaltz verld!
- What a small audience Ziggy! Has the lack of popular acclaim for your work ever worried you?
- Many times when the rent was due, Claude.
- Here, take this small coin as recompence Ziggy, I'll be famous one day for patronising Art.
- So you givz him ze money too! I vont take it. He is mine enemy.
- But he is your sister, Ziggy.
- How darz he to be my sister!
- Have you any new compositions in mind, Cuthbert?
- !
- Ziggy?
- Oh yes, Marcel, many of zem.

(Bang!)

- Oh Claude, my publicity agent, why havz you shot me? Oh, oh.
- For your money, Zigmund, for your money!
- But (cough, cough) I havz ze no money!
- Oh.

EMBARKATION

Elgar Concert Room, Arts Block, University of Birmingham
Saturday, November 11 at 7.30 p.m.
With c p e (Chris May, Phil Gebbett, Ed Fulton)
Music by Ichiyanagi, May, Fulton, Cage, Wolff, Hearn, Feldman and Potter.

Cockpit Theatre, London
Wednesday, November 22 at 8.30 p.m.
Music by Cage, Wolff, Potter, Buck and Hearn.

R E V I E W S .

August 13th: Roundhouse, London.

HPSCHD: John Cage.

Take one circular building with balcony; build seven rostra and decorate each with a harpsichord, one amplified; select queues of assorted people, enough to go three times round the building and allow to stand for 2-3 hours; take 12 film projectors and 56 tape recorders, prepare coloured films of natural objects and space projects and tapes of various noises; add performers and technicians. Mix all together making sure that most of the audience are still outside the buildin at 9 p.m., the advertised starting time; begin before the BBC comes on the air, and stir vigorously for three hours by when all will be completed.

Just how did the ICES/Prom performance of John Cage's HPSCHD sound and look? Different for everyone there. It was what one made it. For some, an enjoyable evening in the bar, outside the sound, but still part of the occasion; for many, a chance to meet friends - very much, therefore, part of the sound; for others a scientific experiment; others an intense musical experience. Or a weird trip on the black ice-cream available throughout the performance.

The sounds, the movement, the lights, the films, the audience, the atmosphere - at any one minute of the 3½ hours the totality was not particularly different from any other minute: unless one made it so by moving around or concentrating on different things. For me, the totality was exhilarating and enjoyable. Whether it was "music" is not worth pursuing here. It certainly was for the harpsichordists playing Mozart, computerised Mozart, amplified and modulated Mozart; it was for Cage himself, ambling round the hall; it was for anyone standing by any of the speakers linked to the tape-recorded sounds; it was for anyone who allowed their ears to accept what was presented as music. I'm willing to admit that some people were probably bored and confused and sceptical; but I was glad I made the journey.

HILARY BRACEFIELD.

August, 1972.

International Carnival of Experimental Sound.

Let's be practical about this. ICES was an enormous jamboree which happened in at least six different places (often several at once) and spread itself over some sixteen days. (Possibly more: who knows whether the after-festival events in the English Channel ever took place?) It was not confined to evenings either: whole days were often crammed with events - and some nights, too, I believe.

It also included about four hundred performers: musicians of a number of different kinds, dancers, actors, film projectionists, tape operators, environmental artists (this is a useful term to describe those who don't fit into any of the above categories and yet don't sell ice-cream either) and an actor-ventriloquist who appeared uninvited on several nights and who may in the end have made the most serious comment of all.

At this distance, and in this space, it is neither possible nor desirable to give any detailed criticism of individual performances. Like most people, I had to be very selective. I went to five evenings at the Roundhouse and three theatre - dance presentations.

I seem, from what I have gathered of other performances, to have picked a number of bad nights. This was a pity - but I can only suppose that a number of other people must have had a similar experience. And with such a vast quantity of events taking place in such a short time, it is inevitable that the quality will be variable.

There was the disastrous Friday, August 18th at the Roundhouse, for instance. Stein Kwartet from Holland ended by turning out Communist propaganda which detracted considerably from their otherwise interesting musical performance. California Time Machine did not live up to expectations. In fact, apart from their opening piece for three wine-drinkers, they gave a very poor showing - additionally spoilt by the Roundhouse bogey I have already mentioned, who, together with girl, paraded around in (Edwardian?) costume for half an hour until the audience realised that he wasn't part of the performance and had him forcibly removed.

The other entertainments promised for that evening - including "girl on a rope" - did not materialise. The girl couldn't find her rope or something..... The very fine and deservedly popular

Ghanaian drummers came to the rescue and delighted the audience with their exuberance, vitality and sheer joy in making music that seemed to make the evening worthwhile. They had already appeared on the second night of the festival, following a fine performance by the Gentle Five.

The anonymous intruder turned up again the following Monday. (By the way, I daresay I'm helping him to think he achieved his aim by talking about him so much. While his intentions were no doubt suitably dishonourable, he became a crashing bore very swiftly: this is my main objection to him). Monday night saw the non-appearance of Intermodulation - anyway, everyone was on the musictrain to Edinburgh, weren't they?

There was fortuntately another English group called C.I.M. who, though they played too long in a gallant attempt to fill the gap left by Smalley and Co., showed a very high standard of group improvisation and, like Music Plus on the following Thursday, gave a most musically satisfying performance. The tape of this should be bought (from Harvey Matusow) by all improvisation groups as a model of how these things should be. And, by the way, the high standard of English groups that I heard made a telling contrast with the frequently low standard of foreign ones. We're not so backward in this country as we're sometimes led to believe.

Music Plus also joined Roy Hart Theatre at St. Pancras Church on the last (official) day of ICES. The Theatre's performance of <u>And</u> was one of the most moving and frightening experiences I have ever had in the theatre.

Very different - but highly enjoyable - was the Red Buddha Theatre Company at Nash House. Very much Yamash'ta's evening, with music (rock and Japanese-folk influenced) composed by him and played by his English rock group, Come to the Edge.

I was disappointed by the low standard of some groups. A lot of bad improvisation, in particular; the worst I heard was a hideous so-called mixing of east and west by the Belgian-Japanese group, Transition.

I was annoyed by the attitude of the Roundhouse Staff, who were generally off-hand and wouldn't allow anyone (except those with passes for the whole festival) into the hall until the performances had started. Some of them did have beginnings, middles and ends - contrary to general opinion. I was also annoyed by a certain lack of organization

in general: that so many good groups - Intermodulation, Musica Electronica Viva - didn't turn up and that the whole programme of Bank Holiday weekend outdoor activities had to be cancelled because the G.L.C. wouldn't grant permission to use either Hyde Park or Parliament Hill Fields.

Some of this must have been less fun for the organisers than it was for the audience. And don't get me wrong, I'm very glad ICES took place - if not all in the spirit in which it was intended. The aims, justifications and all the moral issues (yes, I do mean moral) that people always seem to want discussed whenever avant-garde music flaunts itself publicly in this manner will have to wait for another time, though. But I do sometimes get the feeling: why don't we just go out and get on with it? I'm glad that, despite some of the polemics which surrounded it, ICES did try to do just that.

KEITH POTTER.

August 29th: Albert Hall, London.

London Sinfonietta conducted by
David Atherton.

Following the success of last season's "long prom", the London Sinfonietta presented another endurance-test of music and what might be called music theatre. Again a good fifth of the audience felt unable to see it through - again a pity for the last item which inevitably suffers from being presented so late.

Harrison Birtwistle's Down by the Greenwood Side was a bright opening to the evening. Commissioned for the 1969 Brighton Festival and termed a dramatic pastoral, it has two elements: a traditional ballad, The Cruel Mother, sung and acted by a soprano, and a conflation of various mummers' plays acted and spoken (not sung), with musical accompaniment. It is for dramatic works such as this that

I question the use of the Prom arena, since there were actors in strikingly bold masks and costumes and actions one wanted to see - fights and a grisly operation on St. George, amongst others. On this occasion I did not really see anything properly. I do think that for dramatic events we should be allowed to sit down in the sacred precincts (as at Covent Garden Proms, where one's squatting view in the stalls is superb). The play did seem to proceed heartily and the band of musicians at the side provided very suitable musical accompaniment - a spiky style which did not jar with the traditional words and actions. It is good to have such traditions preserved and refreshed. For all the symbolic message of the story of Mrs. Green and her dead babies and the juxtaposition of two traditional tales of life and death and the renewal of the seasons, however, I could not feel that putting the two together did much for either. The ballad was prettily sad, but Jenny Hill, the soprano, bathed in green light and flitting round the perimeter of the stage, never had the impact Birtwistle surely intended.

The meat of the programme came with performances of Stravinsky's Octet and Schoenberg's First Chamber Symphony which preceded Kurt Weill's cantata Kleine Mahagonny. The Albert Hall is too big for these chamber works; they certainly suffered from juxtaposition with music for much larger forces. The Stravinsky sounded flaccid with little of the bite and rhythmic intensity one would expect from the London Sinfonietta. The Schoenberg was given a particularly romantic reading, popular with the audience if not with Schoenberg purists. I have some grumbles to make about the Weill - the singers were provided with microphones, the orchestra was not. Annie Ross, Cleo Laine, Gerald English, Robert Tear, Raimund Herincx and Michael Rippon stood before us and fed their capable voices into amplifying systems, and as the loudspeakers were at each side of the stage, one heardeither women or men - only the lucky few in the middle heard both and the orchestra. The work was presented with gusto, if not with enough of the bitter-sweet quality or savagery it demands. The men blended well (as far as I could hear); the women less so, Annie Ross having more idea of the style, Cleo Laine more stage presence.

John Tavener's Celtic Requiem was the unlucky final item, but in spite of the lateness of the hour it was given an attentive hearing and enthusiastic reception - it must be one of the most instantly-successful of recent works. In spite of previous hearings, I still found it almost impossible to pick out the words of the soprano and

chorus - the heavenly sounds and effects have to suffice; but the children's singing games always come over well. The organist enjoyed his big moment of E flat-based sound blocks, but 20 minutes of one chord was almost too much.

HILARY BRACEFIELD.

October 13th: Barber Institute, University of Birmingham

Jane Manning, soprano
Peter Lawson, pianc

With the coming of magnetic tape, electronic music happened more or less overnight, but after its initial novelty a big drawback soon became apparent. What do you look at during a performance of electronic music? Somehow tapespools turning just aren't very stimulating and loudspeaker cabinets hardly compare with an orchestra for visual interest.

But before the arrival of live electronics - ring modulators, VCS3s etc. - brought the musician-cum-technician onto the stage to twiddle the knobs, the "classical" phase of electronic music had discovered a simple solution to the problem of the missing visual and "human" elements and the sense of "performance" - combination of tape with live conventional performers.

A combination which stimulated several composers' imagination was that of voice and tape. Stockhausen's"Gesang der Jünglinge", Berio's "Visage" and Milton Babbitt's "Philomel" are all written for this medium and are works of major stature.

This concert gave us the rare opportunity of hearing the Babbitt. I was pleasantly surprised - having formed the impression from radio performances that it was a dry, cerebral work - to find that performed live it had great warmth. To be sure, the classically inspired text (based on Ovid's story of Philomel's change into a nightingale) though rich in word-play and puns, renders it less purely emotional than

"Visage", but by compensation it is a far more controlled piece. One could imagine that every sound was probably serialized according to half a dozen parameters. Jane Manning's performance, as might have been expected, was first class but the sound reproduction of the tape was disappointing in quality.

The other piece in the programme for the same combination - "There the true silence is" by Philip Lane - obviously showed the composer finding his feet in the electronic medium, but I liked it and thought it had good points. Like "Philomel" the tape held a tight rein upon its resources, and range of tone colour and kept mostly to discreet pitches. Unlike Babbitt, Philip Lane did not have the benefit of the immensely sophisticated RCA synthesiser: the absence of any stereophonic effect showed it had been produced with limited resources. In contrast to Babbitt's precisely notated vocal score - demonstrated by the high degree of synchronisation between soloist and tape - Lane's piece had a freer justaposition of the two - the more usual procedure. The text by Thomas Hood was imaginatively set.

In more conventional vein, for voice and piano, were Peter Lawson's songs from his cycle "Sitting in Farmyard Mud" which I found an unsympathetic setting of MacNeice's verse. Though there were some nice things in the piano writing, it too was unsatisfactory in its rather embarrassing pictorialism. As a whole it seemed uncertain of its idiom. However, the cycle received a Royal Philharmonic Society prize so there must be those who disagree with me.

By contrast the three sets of Webern songs (Ops. 12, 23 and 25) interspersed in the programme were superb models of how to write for voice and piano - just enough notes and no more to evoke each song's fleeting mood. A high quality performance brought over the marvellous music behind the awesome printed page.

DAVID Ll. ROBERTS.

'YELLOW MUSIC': forty years on

Peter Evans

The cellophane-wrapped books and mags of Britain's porn center have almost been eradicated from one Soho street, by a festival not of light but of tinsel and strange vegetables. The Gerrard Street area supplies Chinese restauranteers with food and their waiters and families with culture. Look around: you could be in Hong Kong, almost. Posters advertise Shaw Brothers' latest epic of heroism and plastic blood, while the fairytale window of Hong Kong Culture and Services displays beautiful girls smiling at you distantly - from record sleeves printed a thousand kilometers away.

The music on these records (for instance Songs of Stella Chee, no. LSR1002; and 趙曉君:梨山痴情花 (Tang Shiao Jen: 'Pear Mountain's Affectionate Flower') no. LFLP180; Life Records, £1,75 each) is certainly western. The voice is backed by strings, bass and guitar, but its odd projection stops westernization short: here's why.

Chinese speech tones impose an 'orientalism' at least to the melodic line. Each Chinese monosyllabic word or word-component has a fixed intonation: high and level, falling and dying away, and so forth. This characteristic must be shown for the meaning to be retained, for the relatively low number of possible morphemes means that an imprecise or wrong meaning is likely to result from bad intonation. Harmonic correctness and meaningful emphasis are no longer the only essentials of a vocal line. Also correct pronunciation requires more control of consonant aspiration, overlooked in English. (Compare the p in patch" and "dispatch") Singing in Chinese exhibits what one notices when hearing a tape of western vocal music played backwards.

Fortunately this is not the only eastern influence. Though some tunes are second-rate western - with an amusing "yeah, yeah, yeah!" thrown in - others are not at all: 送君情淚 on Stella Chee's album is very strange. The solo girl singer is the most popular Hong Kong product and their styles are different; Tang Shiao Jen has a very attractive voice. There are happy songs and sad songs, light tracks and heavy ones. What the instrumental writing lacks in imagination it has in color and stereo-spread. Being from Hong Kong the recording is impeccable, and played loud these records should fascinate you, amaze your friends and alienate your neighbors.

From the missionaries' introduction of the harmonium and choir into China, the Chinese people have accepted western music in its simpler forms. During the Anti-Japanese War, there were Saturday-night dances at Yenan, capital of China's communist Border Region. Divers instruments played old ballads and western dances, and the dancers sometimes included Mao Tse-Tung himself. (1). That music merely boosted morale and provided relaxation for the people's war.

That was not to be music's only important function. As areas were liberated from the Japanese and the Kuomintang, the peasants were at first cautious of dispossessing the landlords, fearing the reprisals which would follow a return of their oppressors' forces. Theater and opera had to go out to the villages and serve the people by depicting their struggle and its objects, thereby giving them confidence. In chapter 34 of Ranshen there is an American's account of such a performance and its remarkable audience reaction. (2). Current drama and musical drama is modeled on that of the 1940s, indeed the White-Haired Girl, first written as a play in 1944 was made into a ballet by a Japanese company) and into an opera, and is still popular today.

The White-Haired Girl is based on true events of the Anti-Japanese War. The girl, Hsi-erh, was abducted by a landlord from her peasant father who owed him money. After some time, during which the landlord raped her, she escapes to the mountains where physical deprivation makes her hair turn white. After Liberation the landlord is denounced and Hsi-erh is reunited with her fiancé. The music of the ballet is often good, and only occasionally sugary in a way more suited to the nonsense ballets still performed in the Soviet Union and elsewhere. Much is brassy, loud and lively, and when this tires there are some solo breaks by instruments such as the Chinese flute and er-hu. The singer once sounds rather embarrassing when she bursts into tears, but perhaps this would not be so for those understanding the words. A new recording has just been released (three 12 inch records, nos. DM 6175-7, £3), with a vocal score in sol-fa.

The White- Haired Girl appeals because it is designed to do so. In the talks at the Yenan Forum on Art and Literature (1942) Mao described the function of Chinese artists and writers;

> 'A thing is good only when it brings real benefit to the masses of the people. Your work may be as good as The Spring Snow but if for the time being it caters only for the few and the masses are still singing the Song of the Rustic Poor you will get nowhere by simply scolding them instead of trying to raise their level. The question now is to bring about a unity between The Spring Snow and the Song of the Rustic Poor, between higher standards and popularization. Without such a unity, the highest art of any expert cannot help being utilitarian in the narrowest sense; you may call this art "pure and lofty" but that is merely your own name for it which the masses will not endorse.'*

Mao has also stressed that artistic forms should be changeable:

> 'Letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred thoughts contend is the policy for promoting the progress of the arts and the sciences and a flourishing socialist culture in our land. Different forms and styles in art should develop freely. We think that it is harmful to the growth of art and science if administrative measures are used to impose one particular style of art or school of thought and to ban another.' (3)

Two schools of thought might be these of the Chinese-style and the western-style. Mao has described, in a characteristic way, how western culture should be 'digested' to retain whatever is to China's advantage.(4). The Chinese element, 'a splendid old culture' is to be treated in a similar way, and he stated: 'To advocate "wholesale westernisation" is wrong' But these ideas were contradicted by the statements of Chou Yang, one-time party spokesman on culture, 'a man who never did anything creative in his life'(5), who made the aesthetic component of the people's culture follow western ideals.

Chou's statements have only recently been denounced in China (6), and there is now more chance of furthering indigenous music. One record with a title-track translating as The Poor Peasant tells his Family History (10 inch, no. M 753, £1) contains music of a more eastern flavor. One track contains film-music-type singing strings, while others alternate eastern instruments and style with western instruments and style in a way that is fascinating, or alarming. Even when Chou Yang was powerful, researchers were studying folk music, and a documentary history of the classical music has just been published.

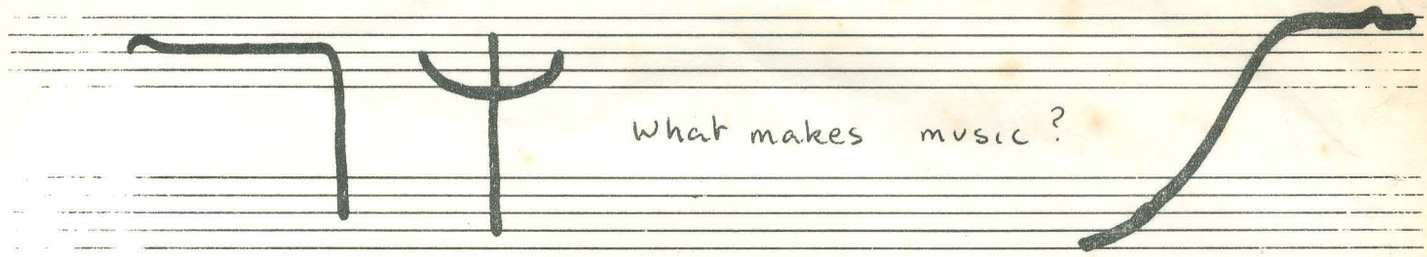
A hundred flowers are in bud.

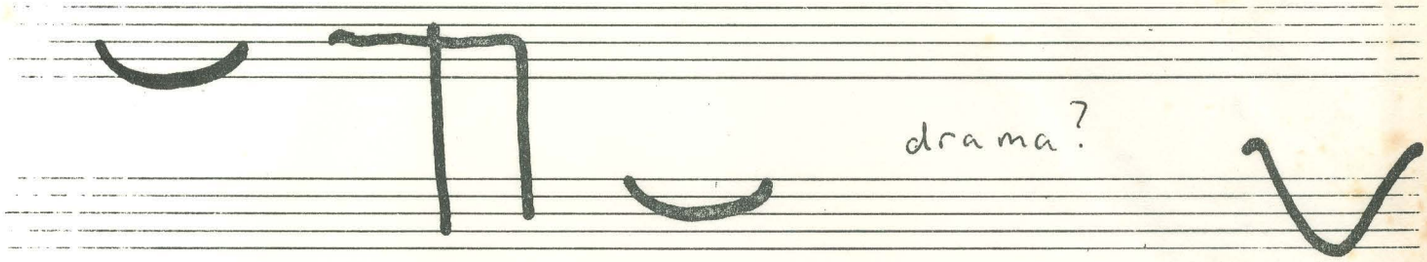
* Song titles refer to a classical story of the Chu Kingdom, 3rd century B.C.

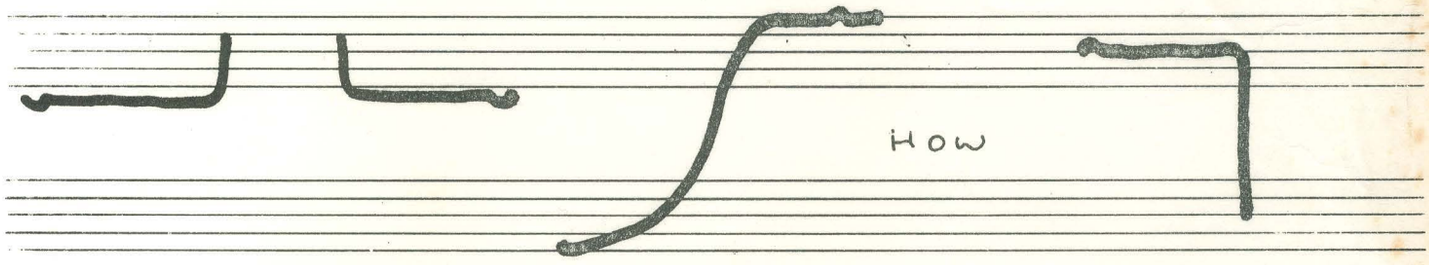
(1)Harrison Forman: 'Report from Red China', 1945, pp.96-7 (2)William Hinton: 'Fanshen: a Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village' Monthly Review Press, New York, 1966 (3)'On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People', 1957 (4)'On New Democracy', 1940 (5)A.C.Scott: 'Literature and the Arts in Twentieth-Century China' (6)'To Trumpet Bourgeois Literature and Art is to restore Capitalism' (booklet) 1971

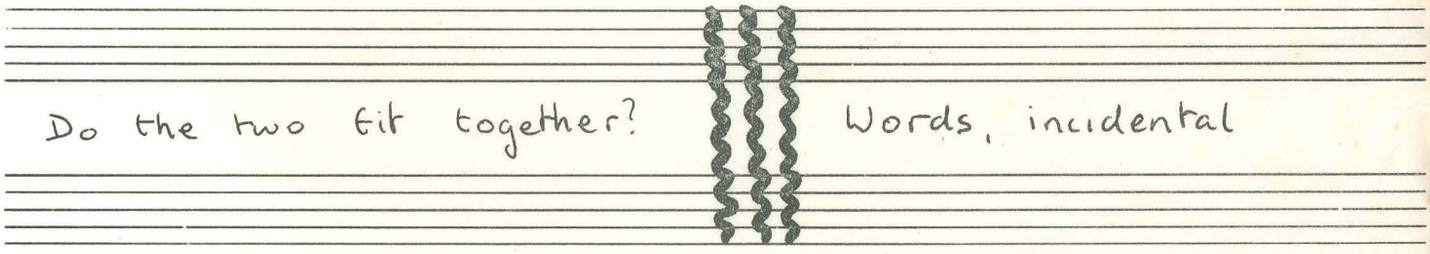
THE RECORDS: Hong Kong records are sold by Chinese stores in and around Gerrard Street. Chinese Art and Craft, and Hong Kong Culture and Services, have a large selection. Each shop may only sell certain labels. Records from China mentioned above are available from East-Asia Books and Arts, 277 Eversholt Street, London NW1, as are: 'Yellow River Concerto'(piano and orch.), 'The Red Lantern'(opera exc., piano acc.) (both 10 inch, £1 each) and 'The Red Detachment of Women'(revolutionary ballet) (three 12 inch, £3,25). Add 10% for postage.

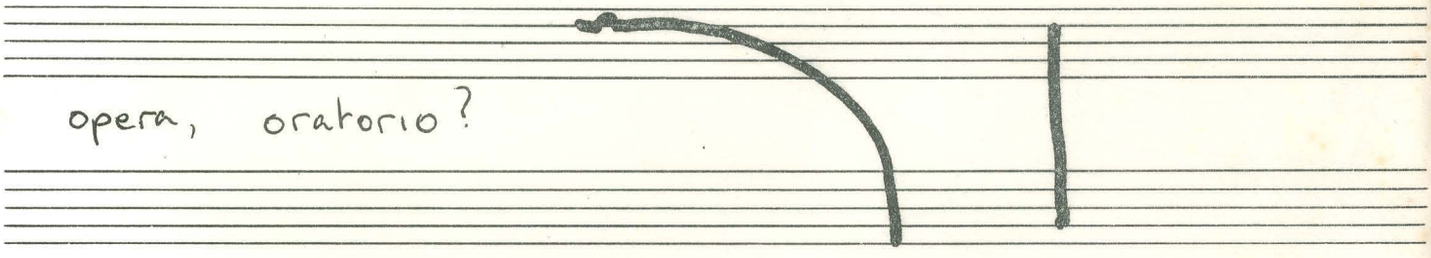
TALKING SHEET MUSIC AND DRAMA

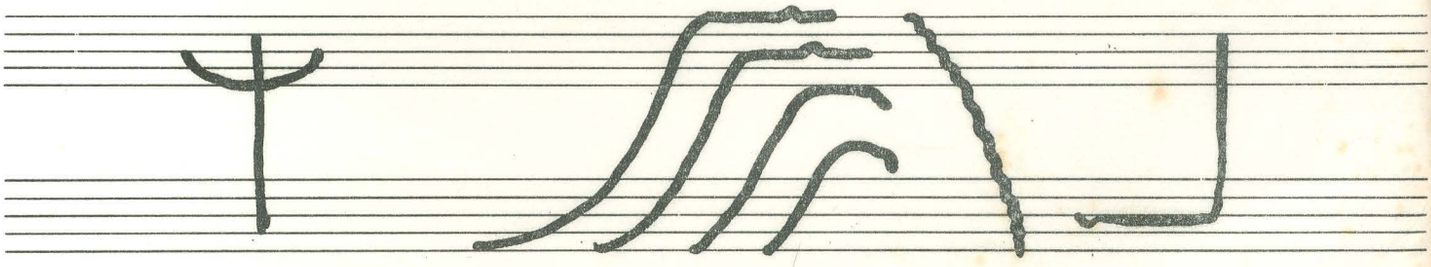












ACADEMY MANUSCRIPT

R.J.