

—on Odeon ALP 1456, mono only, of course), but aside from that it can now be retired without regrets. The new Menuhin-Boult reading is every bit as successful. It captures just the right combination of rhapsodic swagger and soft understatement, and throughout one is aware of two musicians wholly committed to a labor of love. I am with them all the way; this is glorious music, no matter how unfashionable, and the sweep and sweetness of this performance are irresistible. The stereo sound is something very special too.

**J**EAN SIBELIUS is no longer quite as unfashionable as Elgar. The centenary last year persuaded conductors to take a new look at the composer's symphonies, and in the wake of those performances we are now getting an assortment of new recordings. The latest comes from Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic—the daring, concentrated, highly personal Fourth Symphony, regarded by many Sibelians as the composer's finest work (Deutsche Grammophon 138974, with *The Swan of Tuonela* as "filler"). Karajan goes all out in conveying the brooding, lonely *misterioso* aspects of this score (it is the pessimistic converse of Elgar's concerto), and the engineers co-operate by giving a marvelous immediacy to the dark, plummy tones of the Berlin instrumentalists. This is the best likeness yet of the orchestra's unique sound—a burnished, ripe solidity of utterance that suits Sibelius well. Now that the symphonies are getting good up-to-date recordings (in addition to those by Karajan there are new ones by Ansermet, Bernstein, and Maazel, not to mention a forthcoming set of all seven by Watanabe and the Japan Philharmonic), some enterprising company should give attention to Sibelius's lovely incidental music. *Rakastava* is an especial delight, but the only extant recording—a poorly stereoized reissue of an old Arthur Winograd performance (Heliodor 25023)—does it scant justice.

**A**FTER YEARS of neglect there are suddenly two new recordings of *The Unanswered Question* by Charles Ives, a short orchestral piece

in the composer's "transcendental" vein dating from about 1908. It opens with a hushed blanket of sustained chords from the strings over which a trumpet intones a strangely mournful interrogation. Seven times its haunting question is propounded, but the only answer is a cacophonous chatter of flutes, and the vignette ends as it began, in eerie, distant quiet. Though the sound of it is characteristically Ivesian, the music has something of the lulling, mesmeric quality of Satie's *Gymnopédies*, and it is the sort of thing that demands to be played again and again. Of the two recorded

performances, I favor Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic (Columbia 6843) over Morton Gould with the Chicago Symphony (RCA Victor 2893). The piece goes better at the faster tempo taken by Bernstein, and Columbia's more cohesive recording acoustic is preferable to Victor's sharp separation (trumpet on the left channel, flutes on the right). Actually, *The Unanswered Question* is only incidental to other Ives music on each disc—the early, Dvorákian Symphony No. 1 in the case of Gould's, the folksy Symphony No. 3 in the case of Bernstein's—but for my ears, "the short"

## At Stonehenge

Romula Bett of Beaver Falls, unaccompanied,  
Confronts the Heel Stone, and finds,  
From the National Monuments guidebook,  
That the Druids had nothing to do with it.  
How to untell the fifth grade at Beaver Falls?

The chatter of foreign tongues confounds Miss Bett:  
(Bank-Holiday English sit ferries for France;  
The French come to Stonehenge).  
The rattle of foreign coins confounds Miss Bett:  
She counts her shillings.  
The shatter of foreign planes confounds Miss Bett:  
American planes from the aerodrome towards Old Sarum  
Blast the sky,  
Dictate the terms of compromise to the Mother Country.  
Magna Mater! When did the Druids die?

Time was.  
The fractured instant claps, closes the past.  
(Where did the Processional Avenue wend?  
Where did the Western Avon flow?)  
Time is.  
These figures in modern dress  
Rampant, with runic signs, describe a ring—  
Ring within ring to the Monument's outermost barbed-wire ring—  
And Tess-like, Miss Bett stands ringed as one stoned.  
Time will be.  
Will be mandatory for Miss Bett;  
Will be: England sinks;  
Will be: home;  
Will be: unaccompanied old age.  
Sun on the Altar at Stonehenge  
Strikes the chambered heart to death.  
Miss Bett in a lunar mood must meet the Salisbury bus.  
Shutting at seven, the broken astronomical time-wheel  
Marks time yet.

—NANCY G. WESTERFIELD

is worth more than the feature attractions.

As a general rule, postwar avant-garde music does not win popularity contests, but there are two works composed in the post-Schoenberg serial idiom that are nudging their way into the orchestral repertoire, and they are now available back-to-back on a new recording by Erich Leinsdorf and the Boston Symphony. The pieces in question are Gunther Schuller's *Seven Studies on Themes of Paul Klee* and Stravinsky's ballet *Agon* (RCA Victor 2879). The accessibility of Schuller's set of studies depends partly on its pictorial associations. Listening for the twitter in *Twittering Machine* helps listeners stomach a typically fragmented Webern-like miniature. But beyond the extramusical connotations lies a score of considerable charm and flavor. The Bostonians play it magnificently. In *Agon* Stravinsky begins with a deceptively easy diatonic fanfare and then almost imperceptibly leads us into a thicket of chromatic, serial invention. The astringent instrumentation is brilliantly contrived, and the rhythms have the incisive spring typical of Stravinsky's ballet writing. Symphony Hall in Boston is a far more resonant auditorium than the studio used in Stravinsky's own recording of *Agon*, and this tends to make the Leinsdorf performance sound less driving and brittle than the composer's, but it is none the worse for this airy ambience.

Incidentally, the latest Stravinsky-by-Stravinsky issue is a recording of the 1920 ballet *Pulcinella* (Columbia 6881), an enchanting pasticcio based on themes of Pergolesi. Inasmuch as *Pulcinella* is a sovereign exercise in orchestration, the most recent recording would normally take precedence. There is no doubt that the new version highlights orchestral detail splendidly and that stereo is a decided asset in playing up Stravinsky's delicious counterpoints. Unfortunately, the solo voices are recorded inexpertly. They have a bloated, unfocused sound, and the overmicrophoned effect is nothing at all like the "singers in the orchestra pit" to which the notes refer. In this respect, Stravinsky's Cleveland version of 1953 (now withdrawn) is a better representation.

## As Who Likes It?

GERALD WEALES

IN THE SUMMER of 1963, the spanking new Tyrone Guthrie Theatre, which looks as though it were designed by an architectural modernist with a secret love for the lace of old valentines, upstaged the older, more sedate Walker Art Center, to which it is attached. The theatre was a symbol, at once strident and attractive, of the vast bustle of theatrical activity for which it was to be home. Professional theatre, for so long an occasional visitor in Minneapolis, had decided that the city was a nice place to live. The Minnesota Theatre Company, heavily larded with veterans from Stratford, Ontario, opened a season of Shakespeare, Molière, Chekhov, and Arthur Miller. The ubiquitous Tyrone Guthrie, an unsteady compound of art and energy, who had been in on the operation since before the beginning, was artistic director and father figure to the new company. The town responded excitedly. History, as the publicity throwaways still say, was being made.

Today, it is possible to pass the Walker only vaguely aware of its unlikely appendage; the theatre has begun to settle quietly into its surroundings. So has the company. It is now an accepted part of the Minneapolis cultural landscape, expected to provide a season (now extended to twenty-eight weeks) of theatrical classics about which the regular Guthrie-goer, having lost the protective attitude of the first year, is as likely to complain as to cheer.

The company, then, has found a home, which is not the same thing as being able to pay the rent. Last year, for the first time, the season ended in a deficit, made up by a passing foundation. The company's problem in the next few years, if it is not to be permanently shored up by some outside fund (as is the Minneapolis Symphony), is to build a regular audience large enough to support the repertory without watering the choice of plays or cheapening the productions. This year's decline in season subscriptions is an indi-

cation of how difficult the job will be. It falls for the most part on the shoulders of Peter Zeisler, the managing director (the other co-founder, Oliver Rea, has moved on), and Douglas Campbell, who inherited Guthrie's mantle as artistic director. Zeisler, as a man in his position would have to do, told me that he was sure the audiences were there.

FOR the first time, the season is being split in two. Three plays opened in early June—*As You Like It*, Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth*, and Strindberg's *The Dance of Death*; in September one or two of these productions will continue and will be joined by O'Neill's *S.S. Glencairn* and Shaw's *The Doctor's Dilemma*. A post-season production of the *Oresteia*, in a new adaptation by resident playwright John Lewin, has been announced. In a conversation with me, Zeisler hedged the announcement by saying that as yet they did not have the money to do the *Oresteia*, but if it comes off, it will almost certainly go into next season's repertory. The choice of plays this year, as in the past, is a solid and conservative reflection of the repertory's need for variety; the only unusual item is *The Dance of Death*, and since it turns up this year in London and in Stratford, Ontario, as well, it becomes this season's unsurprising surprise. Minneapolis, or any other city, should be delighted to get first-rate productions of five good and various plays. Judging by the first three plays, it will have to be satisfied with less than that—with businesslike productions of *The Dance of Death* and *The Skin of Our Teeth* and with a lamentable *As You Like It*.

*The Dance of Death* provides the most absorbing evening; where it fails, the fault is as much Strindberg's as it is the production's. For two closely knit acts, Strindberg draws a horrifying portrait of a marriage in which the husband and wife are held together in a love-hate relationship that is clearly