



Solti's Mahler, Gluck by Remoortel

THE NET of Georg Solti's two-week engagement as guest conductor of the New York Philharmonic in Carnegie Hall was, at the end of the Mahler Fourth Symphony, somewhat equivocal. Solti's competence in this area was no matter of speculation, for he is already credited with a representative recording of the work. But recordings and actuality are, as is well known, land masses between which there may be either a gulf or an isthmus.

In this instance, it was more in the nature of an archipelago, with firm links of connection (islands of interest) and others between (straits, perhaps they should be called) in which the listener was more or less afloat. It is, of course, something of a special challenge to conduct a Mahler symphony with the Philharmonic, which has played this particular one lately under Walter, Mitropoulos, and Bernstein.

Solti succeeded well in shaping it to a sound and character of his own, but the results tended more to interest than expression. Part of this has to do with the kind of sound he prefers, which is less vibrant, not so warmly colored as some others. However, he does provide a kind of forward impetus which tended, more than a little, to tighten Mahler's rather loose design, particularly through attention to bridges, link passages, and the like. Where the sound he preferred was most at issue was in the finale, where the woodwind and percussion combinations (presumably Mahler's counterpart of the "angelic music" of the text) was overpercussive for the imagery implied. It may be presumptuous to pretend knowledge of celestial sound as well as the unlimited amount available on earth, but the issue, after all, is Mahler's conception of it.

The afternoon's vocal soloist was Irmgard Seefried, whose sound no longer has the purity of her best days, but is under better control now than at some times in the recent past. The enthusiasm and warmth of emotion that have always marked her singing now plays directly on the music she performs, with results in the Mahler that were broadly artistic and still full of animation. Her presence also provided for a rare hearing of Wolf's "Kennst du das Land?" in his own (second) orchestral treatment, and Purcell's "When I am laid in earth." Both really demand a more sizable voice than Miss Seefried's, but the Wolf had

an intimacy of expression decidedly suitable to it. The vocal interlude was preceded by a suite from Bartok's "Wonderful Mandarin."

Among the matters subject to scrutiny at the season's second session of the American Opera Society (also in Carnegie) were the conducting talents of Edouard Van Remoortel as related to Gluck's "Iphigénie en Tauride." My attention was captured and held by the sure-handed, forthright, thoroughly musical work of the visitor from St. Louis. He has the disposition as well as the musical culture to deal with its structural simplicity without rendering it as sparseness (an exaggerated ritard or two excepted). His orchestra was sizable enough (forty perhaps) to give Gluck's picturesque evocation of storms and furies, Hellenic tranquility and violence, proper coloristic values without infringing on preserves properly those of the vocalists.

Among these, the best known was Léopold Simoneau, whose floating line and clearly verbalized text as Pylade led but did not outdistance the Iphigénie of the greatly talented Marilyn Horne. There are few voices today with the broad-ranging power and extensive range for which Gluck wrote; that Miss Horne expanded hers to keep, at least, abreast of its requirements spoke much for diligence. As in any important role by this composer, virtue begins with a convincing declamation of the text, a respect in which Miss Horne's work qualified well. Gabriel Bacquier put his experienced artistry to the needs of Oreste (this was noted as his United States debut); and Morley Meredith rolled his big voice impressively as Thoas. The way to mastery of "Iphigénie's" style can only be through repetition, and it should be heard again soon.

The latest "L'Elisir d'Amore" in the sequence that began with the Metropolitan's revival of last season was one

of the best, not only for the infusion of such a new name as Anna Moffo's as Adina (a role she has been singing in recent weeks) but also for the reappearance of such old ones as Salvatore Baccaloni in his classic *Dulcamara*, and Ferruccio Tagliavini in his scarcely less classic *Nemorino*. For Baccaloni this was another in a series of more or less annual reappearances during which his voice slims even if his figure doesn't, but in which the art applied to such a speciality as "Udite, Udite" remains as huge as ever—a model of how an ancient melodic quack should disport himself. Tagliavini's seven years of wandering have returned him as perhaps a more sober artist than before, but with no want of the comic impulse to make *Nemorino* endearing as well as foolish. Some might say that he was difficult to hear in the ensembles; but that was the case a dozen years ago. He is still capable of a sound both fresh and beautifully disciplined, and his phrasing of Donizetti is a cultivated pleasure, his instinct for "Una furtiva lagrima" in the blood as well as the throat. As the little boy in the commercial might say, "More Tagliavini, please." Frank Guarrera was Belcore, with Mildred Allen as a particularly lively Giannetta. Fausta Cleva treated all, new and old, the claque included, like friends of the family.

At another extreme of operatic comedy, the Metropolitan's "Nozze di Figaro" has evolved into the category of tiresome, a consequence of the mincing humors imposed on it by Cyril Ritchard's direction and a further fantasy or two from its present supervisor, Ralph Herbert. Rather than swift-moving, natural, and to the manor born, it is fussy, bumptious, and more suggestive of the scullery. Oliver Messel's scenery has its decorative values, but the expanse of playing space he has provided in Acts I and II tends to spread rather than confine the action, and the vocal ensembles that occur with them. This was a heavy burden to Annaliese Rothenberg's first Metropolitan Susanna, for the voice is very light in the range of this part (its high-range beauty is well remembered from last year's "Arabella") and rather hard to hear from this stage. When singing alone, as in her expert "Venite, inginochiatevi," her artistry was audible as well as evident. As the previous evening marked Erich Leinsdorf's two-Wotan "Walküre" (Otto Edelman started, was relieved for Act III by Randolph Symonette, who floundered so that he was replaced, after the curtain was lowered, by Edelman), some lack of lightness in the direction was hardly inexplicable, if no more excusable. Lisa Della Casa was the Countess, with Giorgio Tozzi and Kim Borg as servant and master.

—IRVING KOLODIN.



Farrell, Tucker & Verdi

For the first time on **LP**, this spectacular alliance—Eileen Farrell and Richard Tucker—singing impassioned duets from five Verdi operas.

The Original Schumann Third

Schumann's glorious music as it is rarely heard—

Bernstein records the "Rhenish" Symphony in its original orchestration. Second in a series of ardent and authentic Schumann recordings by Bernstein and the Philharmonic.

César Franck—in Stereo

Franck's D Minor Symphony is performed with majesty and devotion by Ormandy and The Philadelphia Orchestra.

Entremont's Mozart

Young virtuoso Entremont communicates gracefully Mozart's beguiling Concerto No. 22, in company with Eugene Ormandy and The Philadelphia Orchestra.

Time Cycle

An ingenious telling of time by composer Lukas Foss who sets poems by Auden, Housman, Kafka and Nietzsche. Commissioned by its soloist, soprano Adele Addison, "Time Cycle" won the New York Music Critics Circle Award as well as audience accolades.

Ivan Davis, American Pianist

"More than most pianists of his generation, he seems to understand and convey the stylistic core of the music he plays," said the *New York Times* of youthful Ivan Davis. And he does, indeed, with a new album of clear-cut Scarlatti, Haydn and Mozart.



THE COLLECTOR'S CHOICE IS ON COLUMBIA RECORDS

CHOOSE SPECTACULAR STEREO OR MATCHLESS MONAURAL

© "Columbia". Marcas Reg. Printed in U. S. A.



—Diane Robinson, Pix.

SR/RECORDINGS

JANUARY 27, 1962

SECRETARY GOLDBERG AND THE
OPERA DILEMMA

By Irving Kolodin 39

THE JEWELS, AND PASTE, OF VIVALDI

By Michael Steinberg 42

TJADER UP TO DATE

By Robert Farris Thompson 43

RECORDINGS IN REVIEW

By the Editor 44

THE LAST LAUGH

By Ralph Schoenstein 47

RENAISSANCE IN TELEMANN

By Richard Freed 49

Secretary Goldberg and the Opera Dilemma

By IRVING KOLODIN

MOST persons with an interest in the arts know, by now, of the broad decisions arrived at by Secretary of Labor Arthur J. Goldberg in his arbitration of the dispute between the Metropolitan Opera and its orchestral players. It is, however, only by a detailed consideration of the total text of the "Opinion and Award" dated December 14, 1961, and running to sixty mimeographed pages that one comprehends the magnitude of the conscientious, thoroughgoing study applied by Secretary Goldberg and his staff not only to the problems but also to their implications.

It is perhaps the greatest compliment to the function served by Secretary Goldberg that his money recommendations were greeted with relief by those who anticipated the worst (management) and with less than complete enthusiasm by those who hoped for the best (the orchestra). This, certainly, was not inherent in a decision by *any* Secretary of Labor or other Cabinet officer. That such determinations had to

be made at all by a Secretary of Labor rather than by an administrator trained in the arts and selected for office because of an awareness of the problems they face is a sign of weakness, not strength in our society. Fortunately, as his decisions demonstrate, Secretary Goldberg is that rare labor expert who can arbitrate in the interests of the public and of Verdi, Mozart, Wagner, and Puccini as well as those of the parties to the dispute.

Repeatedly, in this award, one comes on values and judgments that will already be familiar to readers of these pages. Such, for example, as "The point is that both parties—the Union and the Association—are in a very real sense right in their positions." Secretary Goldberg is addressing himself here to the musicians' demand for a sizable wage increase, and the management's offer of a modest one. "I have no doubt," he states, "that they . . . are entitled to a larger wage increase than I can award. At the same time, the financial weakness of the Association is not an idle theory. It is a hard and, unfortunately, historical fact." That is the oper-

atic dilemma in the fewest possible words.

As is now well known, the award provides for an increase in base pay from \$170 to \$180 per week in the first year of the contract, and \$5 a week in each of the two following years. This, of course, is exclusive of rehearsal fees, payments for radio broadcasts, fringe benefits, etc. At the end of the three-year term, the musicians will be receiving a base pay of \$190, or \$30 less than the amount they were negotiating for when arbitration was accepted.

Whether at the end of this term (a compromise between the five-year period originally desired by the management and the one-year term preferred by the musicians) the area of difference will remain at \$30 per week cannot be foreseen. Doubtless cost of living and other factors will have to be considered. But the next Metropolitan season (1962-63) has already been extended by one week, to twenty-six. By June 30, 1964, when the present agreement runs its course, work on the new Metropolitan Opera in Lincoln Center may