

line and her little playmate a fairy tale about the fishes following the race, which he invented as he went along. I have never seen him more serene and happy.

He and Jacqueline were surely the most photogenic couple of their time. And it must have been quite a job selecting for this book from among so many marvelous pictures—a job made even more difficult because Kennedy's character, like history, as Goddard Lieberman says in his introduction, was at best "elusive." For all that, it succeeds in showing him at every important phase in his life and in almost every mood. And although Kennedy was of many dimensions, all difficult to capture, this superbly edited and collated pictorial memoir has caught more of them between its handsomely bound covers than one would have thought possible. The work imparts the intimacy of a cozy evening, one perhaps at the Kennedy house in Hyannis Port, with everyone sitting in front of the fireplace feeling *en famille* and talking about things past.

**I**NCLUDED with the album are two phonograph records conceived in the manner of a spoken biography by members of his family and friends, which don't altogether do justice to the pictures and text. Listened to, they are uneven and, where the text is given, they often read better than they sound. The recordings come off best when characteristic incidents are recalled, but where these fall between recollection and tribute Kennedy, with his innate reticence and his preference for the understatement, would probably have frowned. Nor is the connecting commentary all that it might be, relying too heavily on pathos where a sprinkling of parenthetical phrases would have sufficed. But the records do nevertheless add one more dimension to the whole: the affectionate sound of Mrs. Rose Kennedy's voice that could only be a mother talking about her son; the sonorous recollections of some of his teachers that could not be mistaken for anybody else's; the beautifully modulated language of a tribute by Adlai Stevenson; Lord Harlech, representing England's great affection for the President, delving into the past when he first met Jack Kennedy in London and both were lighthearted and much younger.

Finally, in a thoughtfully written epilogue, James MacGregor Burns traces Kennedy's ascension from those early days to world leadership.

It is not only, as President Johnson says in the foreword, "a testament to the vitality of our political process and to the common hopes that transcend all boundaries and encourage the races of man." It is a testament to an unforgettable man and to an extraordinary family.

## Through a Disc, Darkly

**T**HE KENNEDY memorabilia industry, which has several times come perilously close to its *reductio ad nauseam*, continues unabated and unrepentant in *That Day with God* (RCA Victor VDM-105), a collection of thirty-one sermons, meditations, and observations delivered on the Sunday after the President's death. My quarrel is not with the unevenness of the material, which ranges from eloquently inspired to unbelievably banal; in a wounded nation, groping to express its baffled grief, even the most maudlin words perhaps deserved a hearing. Nor is it, certainly, with the fact that spiritual leaders of every place and persuasion were moved to speak out; there is a special poignancy in listening to the accents of New England, the South, the Midwest, Ireland, Britain, and the Vatican trying to express, as the Archbishop of Canterbury put it in his November 24 sermon in St. Paul's, "something universal in the human heart." My disappointment comes instead from the twice-removed quality of a recording that is not of Kennedy himself, nor even of the sounds of those days in Washington after the assassination, but of a faint reflection of what was happening. The sense of remoteness, from the sermons themselves to Henry Fonda's dignified introductory words to each

speaker, is nothing short of ghostlike.

The record's antiquarian quality arises, I suspect, more from the conception behind it than from the words on it. For there it, in its best moments, an almost poetic grief. Here are the Reverend Gabriel Bowe, of the Dominican Church of the Holy Cross in Sligo, Ireland, observing in his quiet brogue that "we seem to need occasions of great sorrow and tragedy to draw us together"; the Reverend Abraham K. Akaka of the Kawaiahao Church in Honolulu saying with moving simplicity, "He gave his life for you and me and our country"; and the Reverend William Sloane Coffin, Jr., of Yale, saying, "We academics expect the world to be rational; but who ever said it was?" Here also are Cardinal Cushing, Pope Paul VI, Norman Vincent Peale, Reinhold Niebuhr, and, the senior of them all, ninety-year-old Dr. Winfred E. Garrison of the University of Houston, delivering his second eulogy for an assassinated President. It was just sixty-two years earlier, in 1901, that he had given a similar address in memory of William McKinley, dead by an anarchist's hand.

But despite such moments the listener is likely to be left with some gloomy reservations about *That Day with God*. Nor, it seems to me, does the title help much.

—JAMES F. FIXX.

## Kennedy on the Ould Sod

**I**N THE LATTER PART of June 1963, John Fitzgerald Kennedy spent a crowded four days in the windblown land of his ancestors, where he made speeches before the Irish Parliament and the huge crowds that flocked to his unique visit everywhere he went. Departing from Shannon Airport on June 29, the President quoted Irish poetry to say he would be "back in the spring." This happy plan was never to come about, for Kennedy was dead within five months and these were to be his last utterances on the soil of the Old World, the only words ever spoken on Irish soil by a U.S. President while in office.

Powertree Records, Inc., has just released a pressing entitled *President Kennedy in Ireland* (PLP 5007), produced in cooperation with Radio Eireann and preserving for posterity a souvenir in Kennedy's own voice of his last visit to Europe. We first hear him address the joint session of Dáil Eireann and Seanad Eireann, dropping here and there bits of Irish-American lore to the delight of partisan listeners. He presents a torn

battle flag from a famous Civil War Irish regiment and makes a good case for the potential of a small nation in a crowded, teetering world. Having been the first to endure the birth pangs of revolution and nationhood in the twentieth century, the Irish, says the American President, are in a particularly good position to guide the emerging nations of the latter twentieth century, as the great powers can never be.

The President is then heard on the second side in seven brief appearances in County Wexford, where his ancestors lived; County Cork; Dublin, where he received honorary degrees from the National University of Ireland and Trinity College; Galway and Limerick; and finally in his poignant departure from Shannon. One comes away from both sides of the recording with an expanded sense of the Kennedy facility with words, since not all of these speeches could have been prepared by an overworked staff in an adulatory four-day schedule that would have floored most travelers. Not a vital record but one of some historic interest.

—RICHARD L. TOBIN.

# MARTHA GRAHAM'S RETROSPECTIVE SEASON

By JOHN MARTIN

MARTHA GRAHAM's first New York season in two years was as challenging and as controversial as similar seasons have been throughout the approximately forty years of her independent career. The indomitable greatness of the woman is one of the miracles of our time. Though her area of performing has become increasingly circumscribed, she continues to pour out works at the top of her power; works, indeed, that make virtually everything else—not alone in the dance field, but in the theater at large, which is her true *métier*—seem timid and trivial.

Her two new pieces do not fall into the controversial category (that lies elsewhere in the repertory), but they bring us full-sail into new seas. In their quite separate fashions, they reveal the rich textures of what is clearly an Israeli cycle, comparable by and large to the great Greek cycle that has preceded it.

She has always drawn directly upon the forces and flavors of her immediate environment, and some such cycle was, accordingly, inevitable, since for the past several years she has been the "commuting" artistic director, fount of inspiration, and cornerstone of the newly born Bathsheva Dance Company of Tel Aviv, a cherished project of her long-time friend and patroness, Bethsabé de Rothschild.

In Tel Aviv in 1962 her noble and moving *Judith* had its première, Israeli-commissioned for her own company,

with music by the Israeli composer Mordecai Seter, and setting by the Israeli designer Dani Karavan. Now it becomes evident that this was no isolated creation, but the first of a body of works of similar heritage.

The new *Witch of Endor*, though without an Israeli composer and designer, clearly takes its place alongside as the second one. It is still in a manifestly unfinished state; as with *Clytemnestra* and other works in their earliest stages, she has not yet written herself into it. From performance to performance it has been altered here, rearranged there, recostumed elsewhere, but its final form still has not emerged.

Even through its stages of comparative tentativeness, however, it is essentially a striking piece of archaic, dramatic fantasy in heroic vein. Approached with that obliquity by which Miss Graham habitually brings a fresh point of view to a familiar legend, its narrative is nevertheless fairly direct, if not yet altogether transparent; but its chief function is to serve as a groundwork for evocations and illuminations of an epoch, ancient and enshrined.

Its stage is set handsomely by Ming Cho Lee. Within the dimensions of elegant design, he has produced a rough and primitive surface, largely by superimposing over the face of his central unit a series of varied smaller surfaces, almost like crude laminae, spiked onto the structure.

The great episode of the work (at least as it stands now) begins with the

ominous lowering of Mr. Lee's centerpiece like an armored drawbridge over a moat separating the natural world from the supernatural. Behind it is revealed the white figure of the ghost of Samuel (excellently played by Gus Solomons, Jr.) swaying atop a white column out of which he seems to grow integrally. In the slow motion of his prophecy we are shown David defending himself from the murderous designs of Saul in a duel to the death on the ramp of the "bridge."

Elsewhere there is some beautiful dancing by the altogether admirable Robert Cohan as David, and a fine bit of grotesquerie by David Wood as Saul's evil genius. Thus far, Bertram Ross as Saul reflects the creative uncertainty of the work itself, but when Miss Graham has really taken over on stage, everything should fall into place around her. Even, perhaps, the thick and unresponsive score of William Schuman.

The other new piece, laboring at present under the infelicitous title of *Part Real—Part Dream*, is already a finished and ecstatically beautiful creation. Here Miss Graham has reunited with her Israeli colleagues of *Judith*, and the three of them have produced an eerie and engrossing poem of eroticism, in sensuous tones and overtones of the Middle East. It is exquisite and passionate, under a cloud of hovering malaise that makes it a kind of rapturous nightmare.

It is danced, as it must be, by four beautiful people—Matt Turney, Mary Hinkson, Mr. Ross, and Mr. Cohan—to whom eroticism is altogether becoming, plus an ensemble of ten, which conspires in spinning about them a web of illusory and often neurotic imperilments.

The movement is astonishingly evocative. Now with voluptuous tenderness it meshes the newly discovered curves of feet; again, in a dramatically obsessive complexity of bindings and escapings, it involves its four figures with a stage-long strip of fabric and the passions it encompasses. It is all framed significantly in sorcery when Miss Hinkson, as both prologue and epilogue, crosses the stage in silence with a burning quietness of face and body, her hand keeping aquiver a little bamboo frame of wind chimes around her head and shoulders.

As with all Miss Graham's completely successful works, she seems also to have written the music and designed the set. Over the years, indeed, she has devel-



—Barbara Morgan

Graham in "Primitive Mysteries (1941)"



—Martha Swope

Yuriko in "Primitive Mysteries (1965)"