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## Keeping Up With the Cliburns (and the Joneses)

By PAUL HUME

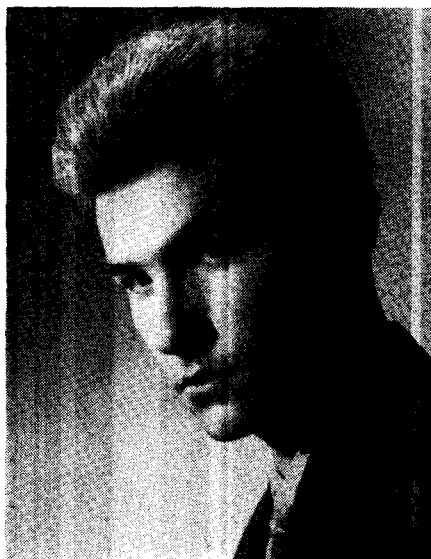
**F**ORT WORTH'S Second Cliburn International Quadrennial Piano Competition has unleashed upon the world's concert stages a twenty-year-old Rumanian pianist who may prove to be one of its most storm-propelled performers. His name is Radu Lupu. In strong and direct contrast to

the calm, rather detached manner of Ralph Votapek, the winner of the first Cliburn meet in 1962, Lupu is a fire-brand, ready and able to eat up pianos and inflame audiences.

For the past five years, Lupu has been a student in Moscow, first in its Pre-Conservatory, then in the three years just past in the senior division of the Conservatory, where his work has been

capped by study with Genrich Neuhaus, famed as the teacher of both Sviatoslav Richter and Emil Gilels. Short and stocky, with an unruly thatch of black hair, Lupu is strongly reminiscent of Gilels in appearance at the piano.

He won his Texas-sized victory—\$10,000 donated by the National Guild of Piano Teachers—by convincing a demanding jury of seventeen eminent men



Radu Lupu, Rumania, first prize winner of the Second Cliburn International Quadrennial Piano Competition.



Barry Lee Snyder of Rochester, N.Y., second prize winner and recipient of the award for best chamber music player.



Blanca Uribe, twenty-six, of Colombia, won third prize of \$2,000.

and women from fourteen countries that he was the most deserving of the forty-eight contestants who journeyed from sixteen countries and all over the United States to enter the two weeks of grueling tests. It was Lupu's sensitive but powerful way with Schubert's A-minor Sonata, Op. 143, and his commanding approach to the Adagio and Fugue of Beethoven's Sonata in A Flat, Op. 110, that first impressed the jury. When he followed these up by winning a \$500 Neiman-Marcus gold watch for the best performance of *Structure*—a new work by Willard Straight commissioned especially for this competition and required from all contestants—and then capturing the Annunziata Beall gold medal for the best account of the second movement of the Copland Sonata, it was clear that Lupu was going to be tough to beat.

His nearest rival, Barry Snyder, won second place and \$3,000, along with a special Pan American Union award of \$500 and a concert in the Union's Hall of the Americas. To these prizes, Snyder, who had opened his race for the crown with a breath-taking playing of Balakireff's *Islamey* at 10 o'clock of a Saturday morning, added the Cliburn prize of \$600 for the best performance of chamber music, a category in which all semi-finalists competed with the assistance of the Curtis String Quartet.

Lupu, however, despite a good but not great account of the piano part in the Shostakovich Quintet, won the greatest public acclaim for a torrential performance of the opening movement of the Second Concerto of Prokofiev, which he preceded with the Beethoven E-flat Concerto that held noticeably less authority than his reading of the late sonata had shown. Strongly abetted by the Fort Worth Symphony, under the direction of Ezra Rachlin, Lupu turned on the heat in Prokofiev. The jury, which

included such eminent pianists as Lili Kraus, Alicia de Larrocha, Friedrich Wuehrer, Beveridge Webster, and Gerald Moore, under the chairmanship of Howard Hanson, seemed to share the audience's unbounded enthusiasm for this irresistible playing.

**T**O the \$10,000, which is paid in four annual installments, Lupu will add a Hurok contract, an April 12 debut in Carnegie Hall, and numerous engagements both solo and orchestral in this country and Europe. It remains a mystery, however, why the winner of this competition, which Fort Worth presents with great distinction and high artistic standards, should not play on our major orchestral circuit rather than with the orchestras of Wichita Falls, Roanoke, Midland-Odessa, and Bloomington. Apparently we still prefer pianists who carry a Moscow accolade to those who make it all the way in this country.

Third and fourth prizes of \$2,000 and \$1,000 went to Blanca Uribe, twenty-six, of Colombia, and Maria Lopez-Vito, twenty-seven, from the Philippines. These rankings stunned the audience, which had thought, as had many professional observers in the audience, that Rudolf Buchbinder of Vienna might take at least second place, if not first. Buchbinder, a seasoned artist far beyond the normal expectations of his nineteen years, was called by one notable American pianist present in Fort Worth (but not on the jury) "the most formidable talent in the entire competition." For this young man, who played a marvelously sensitive role in the Dvořák Quintet and a superbly poised Beethoven First Concerto, to be ranked fifth, for a \$750 prize, brought dramatic repercussions before the competition was over. He was joined at the lower end of the prize scale by Benedikt Koehlen, twenty-

one, of Germany, who took the sixth prize of \$500.

There were those who did not make the finals for whom great things can nevertheless be predicted. Foremost among these are Larry Graham, twenty-two, a pupil of Jacques Abram and Rosina Lhevinne; Thomas Hrynkiw, twenty-five, of Ukrainian background out of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, studying with Dora Zaslavsky in New York, and Robert Silverman, twenty-eight, of Montreal, who like Snyder, is a Cecile Genhart product.

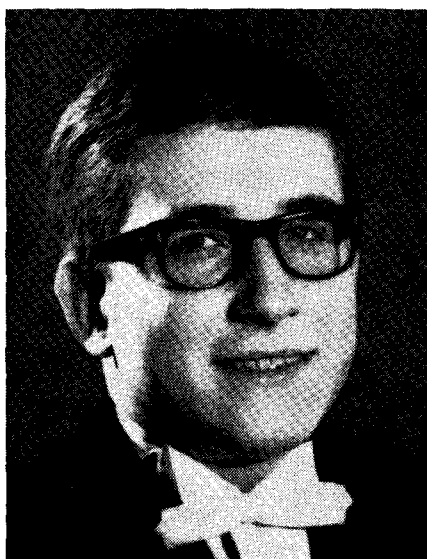
The flare-up over Buchbinder came after every award had been announced, with Irl Allison, president of the Piano Teachers Guild, making the presentation to Lupu in TCU's Landreth Auditorium, where the competition's preliminary and semi-final sessions were held. Sam Cantey III, chairman of the competition, told the audience, "A surprise award has just been announced, about which we knew nothing." By "we," Cantey correctly described the competition's executive committee as well as the entire jury. At that point, Mrs. Rildia Bea Cliburn, mother of the most famous U.S. contestant to make it in Moscow, stepped forward. To honor Dr. Allison, Mrs. Cliburn presented a prize of \$1,500—an amount halfway between third and fourth prize money—to Rudolf Buchbinder. The award was offered jointly by Van Cliburn, Mrs. William Fuller, and Mr. and Mrs. Earl Wilson. The surprise action, sparked by Cliburn himself, was a spontaneous act, if one that can hardly escape the impression of intending to second-guess a distinguished jury.

Four years ago, two Russian pianists, Nikolai Petrov and Mikhail Voskresenski, placed second and third in the first Cliburn Competition. This year the question often heard around Fort Worth

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**Maria Lopez-Vito**, twenty-seven, of the Philippines, won fourth prize of \$1,000.



**Rudolf Buchbinder** of Vienna, whose fifth place finish prompted a special award from the competition's sponsor.



**Benedikt Koehlen**, twenty-one, of Munich, Germany, winner of the sixth prize of \$500.



# Recordings in Review

## The Vocal Ives

IVES: "General Booth Enters into Heaven"; "Serenity"; "The Circus Band"; "December"; "The New River"; "Harvest Home Chorales" (Three); "Psalm 100"; "Psalm 67"; "Psalm 24"; "Psalm 90"; and "Psalm 150." *The Gregg Smith Singers, Ithaca College Concert Choir, The Texas Boys Choir and The Columbia Chamber Orchestra conducted by Gregg Smith, with Raymond Beegle, organ.* Columbia ML 6321, \$4.79; stereo, MS 6921, \$5.79.

FOR SOME, the introduction to Ives came in the Thirties through the recording of such songs as "Charlie Rutlage" and "General Booth Enters into Heaven." It is thus welcome to have the existing, ever growing recorded literature of instrumental works extended by such an abundant addition to the vocal Ives as this one. Some of the material (the "Harvest Home Chorales," "Psalm 67," "Circus Band") has found its way into other collections, but no previous choral survey has been as comprehensive or illuminating as this one.

It is illuminating of much more than a particular aspect of Ives's compositional gamut. For if there is a recurrent, underlying counterpull in Ives's esthetic, it is from the sacred hymnal vocabulary to the folk and popular. Both are represented here, in ways that are not only stimulating in themselves, but contributory to better understanding and appreciation of the symphonies and other orchestral works.

Included in the commentary by the longtime authority on the subject, John Kirkpatrick, is the statement that the newly discovered setting of "Psalm 90," "was, as Ives's wife heard him say, the only one of his compositions that satisfied him." The reasons for this are evident when one hears it in a performance of this quality. The means are exactly suitable to the purposes by which the composer was animated; there is neither scantiness nor excess in the application of them to the text ("Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place from one generation to another"); the outcries of the voices are calmed and sustained by the use of the organ as, literally, an organ point ("a constant low C," says Kirkpatrick, "like an eternal presence"), with a touch of bell sound as a resolving factor.

As satisfying as it is for the information provided by Kirkpatrick, the annotation is equally unsatisfying for its failure to provide any documentation at all about Gregg Smith. To judge from

the discipline, fervor, and excellent musical shape he imposes on the performances of the ensembles utilized here, he impresses me as the best new man in this field since Robert Shaw. The recorded sound is excellent.

## Nine for the Price of One

PURCELL: "When I am Laid in Earth" (*Dido and Aeneas*). MOZART: "Dove sono" (*Le Nozze di Figaro*). VERDI: "Addio del passato" (*La Traviata*). MEYERBEER: "Sur mes genoux, fils du soleil" (*L'Africaine*). MASSENET: "Adieu, notre petite table" (*Manon*). VERDI: "Salce, Salce," "Ave Maria" (*Otello*). CILEA: "Io son l'umile ancella" (*Adriana Lecouvreur*). CHARPENTIER: "Depuis le jour" (*Louise*). BARBER: "Do not utter a Word" (*Vanessa*). *Leontyne Price, soprano, with orchestra conducted by Francesco Molinari-Pradelli.* RCA Victor LM 2898, \$4.79; stereo, LSC 2898, \$5.79.

IT IS easy to conclude from the list of contents above—plus the billing on the package, *Leontyne Price Prima Donna*, and the painting by Tomas Concepcion which bears only the sketchiest resemblance to the photograph of the subject displayed on the rear cover—that this is a typical "celebrity" promotion. The only difference is that Miss Price sings all the diverse matter with sound artistry and an impressive range of vocal colors to differentiate Dido from Manon, and Louise from Vanessa. To the surprise of some, no doubt, she shows the vocal repose for "Dove sono" as well as the trill to do justice to that requirement in the excerpt from Selika's part of *L'Africaine*.

Where the collection fails of full justice to the challenge confronted is in the area of characterization. It is no accident or mystery why the *scena* of Vanessa from the first act of Barber's opera is the most believable of her endeavors. It enables her to go, dramatically, all out, and directly to the heart of the mood conveyed by the music. In most other circumstances—especially, as in the *Manon* and *Otello* excerpts, when she is working with a lighter quality than she normally employs—the sound to me is of a performer more concerned with articulating notes than defining character. To be sure, the notes are sometimes—as in "Depuis le jour"—remarkably beautiful, and will doubtless give pleasure to many of and for themselves. But a performer with her capabilities should strive for the essence of

artistry—which is dramatic truth—rather than being satisfied with one aspect of it, which is sensuous pleasure.

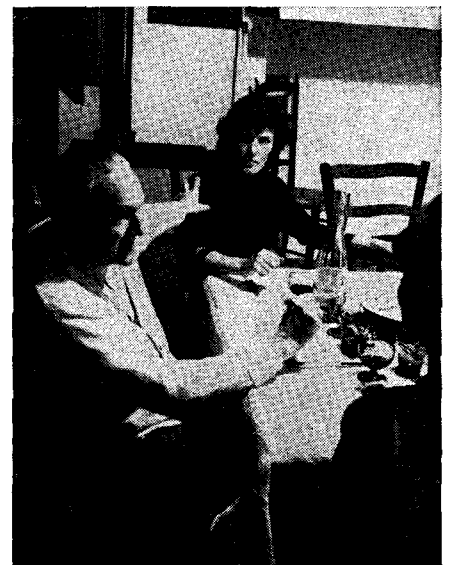
In his production of the various styles and sounds required from the orchestra, Molinari-Pradelli keeps pace with his principal but does not, really, set a high enough standard to urge her on to something better. Included in the elaborate, particularly well printed and illustrated brochure, is one small essay describing the recording session which includes the words "during intermissions, awaiting the return of the orchestra, they tried out Cole Porter songs at the piano, 'Smoke Gets in Your Eyes' coming off especially well." The Kern family won't like that one bit.

## Vale, Scherchen

HAYDN: *Sinfonia Concertante in B flat, Op. 84.* DANZI: *Sinfonia Concertante in E flat.* *Hermann Scherchen conducting the Vienna Radio Orchestra.* Westminster XWN 19100, \$4.79; stereo, WST 17100, \$4.79.

SOME may suggest that it is sheer coincidence that the first disc to be reviewed here to bear the name of the late Hermann Scherchen since his death last summer contains a work by Haydn, the composer with whom his world fame was first associated. In the view of others it is merely proof that however far his glance moved from the center of his musical focus Scherchen could be counted on to return it sooner or later.

Whether by coincidence or by predestination, it is nevertheless a performance which renews admiration for all of Scherchen's best qualities—his ability to arouse a convinced response from the musicians with whom he collaborated, his capacity to combine scholarship with



—Marco Emili.

The late Hermann Scherchen at home in Switzerland, with his wife.