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MUSIC IN DISSONANCE

Arnold Schoenberg, Germany's Leading Futurist Composer, Gives Ideas.

WORK PLAYED IN AMERICA

Interesting Man Modest About His Achievements Has Admiration for Contemporaries.

Special Correspondence of The Chicago Daily News.

Berlin, Germany, Oct. 12.—Arnold Schoenberg, Germany's leading futurist composer, whose music is being played this year for the first time by the Chicago Symphony orchestra, is not, as one might suspect, a large, fierce man, with wild hair and a perpetual sneer for the classics. He is, instead, a small, half-bald, nervous man, with evident dynamic force and with that comeliest of all adornments, modesty. He talks restlessly, keenly eyeing his interrogator, and invariably there is in his face a childlike expression of candor and simplicity. Occasionally he stops, with his arms over the back of his chair and one knee resting on his desk. There is no polish in the pose, nor in his conversation, no more than in his bearing. He is a man who evidently inhabits a different world, a thinker and a believer, who has left conventions behind and is tirelessly following out the logical conclusion of his own thoughts.

Schoenberg's study is rather barely furnished. Most obvious in it are a dozen or so futurist pictures, the only mural decorations. There are two large bookcases bearing such classics as Schiller and Heine in full, and many shelves devoted to musical works, with contents running from Bach to Strauss and including even Mendelssohn. There is a piano and on the desk when I called lay sheets of manuscript notes, small and neatly written.

Interested in America's Verdict.

Schoenberg was particularly interested to know that his works were to be played in America, which he had not heard until I told him. He asked for a copy of the criticisms when they arrived in Berlin and wondered whether they would be favorable. "Probably not," he said, and smiled. It does not distress him to be excoriated by critics; the precedents are too excellent.

There is a theory which one hears frequently in Berlin drawing rooms that Schoenberg had been a painter and had applied the inspiration of painting to music, writing for musical color instead of melody, and I asked him if this was true.

"I used to paint," he said, "but that was years ago. I didn't do much with it. Maybe I shall take it up again. But painting and my music have nothing in common. My music is the result of purely musical theory and must be judged from purely musical results."

"How would you express your theory if it could be done briefly and for a layman?" I asked.

"I couldn't do it," he said. "Part of it stands in my textbook on harmony. It is, of course, based on a belief that dissonance can be as beautiful as consonance. Strauss uses discord merely to express the ugly, but there is no reason for finding dissonance ugly except that we are accustomed to believing it so. Two discordant notes are merely a little closer together than two consonant notes. I believe that the human ear can be trained to dissonance and find it beautiful, and then the vocabulary of music will be doubled, won't it?"

"You are one of the few men living today who believe in a real future of music. What would you say it is?"

"Genius." The answer certainly is comprehensive. "I tell my pupils," he went on, "that the future of music lies not in the form, but in the individual. I tell them that it is possible—though personally I don't believe it probable—that he might write music in the style of Bach."

Words of Praise for Contemporaries.

"And what do you think of your contemporaries?"

"I admire Strauss very much, and I admire Pfitzner especially." (Pfitzner is a composer of operas, only one of which has been produced. He is now director of the Strassburg conservatory, and many musicians consider him the equal, if not the superior of Strauss.) "I have also the greatest respect for the classics. Without Bach, Beethoven and Wagner we would not have advanced at all. Our music originally began with the simple church cant. These men have brought it to its present elevation."

"And Debussy?"

"His work pleases me extraordinarily."

art awakens a great deal of sympathy in me. I quite understand what they are doing—yes, even the cubists."

Schoenberg is planning now to write a stage work to Balzac's "Serpahita." "I don't call it an opera. I could hardly write an opera. But it will be music, singing and speaking in a combination which makes possible the pure enjoyment of all without the obstacles of convention." He is also about to furnish a collection of about fifty songs. He has written mostly, however, for the orchestra. Piano music, he says, is limited by the stretch of ten fingers. "In the orchestra there are no fingers. One can do what he wants."

German Interest in Schoenberg.

In Germany, where Schoenberg has lived for several years since coming from his native country of Austria, the composer has awakened great interest. He is a close friend of Richard Strauss, who has directed some of his compositions, and he has been warmly defended by no less an artist than Ferruccio Busoni. Schoenberg evenings were given last year in Berlin with limited success, as the audience naturally was attracted by curiosity. To the ear accustomed to conventional music his compositions are merely a putting together of sounds and noises. It seems at first very haphazard and insane. But students of the composer maintain that there is as fundamental theory behind his work as behind the ordinary music, and that it is really beautiful when once one can leave his prejudices behind. Schoenberg admits that he did not come upon his present medium of expression by chance. "I found myself more and more dissatisfied with the limitations when I first began to compose, and I gradually developed into the present style. It is the work of years of thought and study."

He lives in the lovely suburb of Suedend, a delightful little group of homes on the border of a small lake. The city gardener has thoughtfully planted the street corners with violets, which look out cheerily through the fallen golden leaves. The whole environment is one of rare charm, and who knows whether the music it is inspiring will not one day be thought as beautiful?

RAYMOND E. SWING.

Orchestra's Third Concert

BY ISABEL LOWDEN.

At Orchestra hall yesterday afternoon the Chicago Symphony orchestra presented the third of the season's programmes. An audience full of curiosity and expectation greeted the conductor, Frederick Stock and the orchestra, for advance press notices had heralded at this performance the first reading in Chicago of what is perhaps the most unique compositions before the musical public to-day, and which have brought into notoriety their composer, Arnold Schoenberg.

The programme, in addition to the "Five Pieces for Orchestra" by Schoenberg, included two symphonies, the one in C major by Beethoven, and the D major symphony by Brahms. Thus were set forth in contrast the works of three revolutionaries yet as we listen to Beethoven and Brahms both satisfying to our sense of melodic harmony, it is difficult to realize that in the past they may have experienced the thing of the notoriety aroused by Schoenberg to-day.

The "Five Pieces for Orchestra" by Schoenberg are not capable of any least according to established rules of harmony. Schoenberg, a self-taught pianist, has his own system of harmony built on a progression of four notes which makes possible an almost endless variety of combinations, most of which to accustomed ears are harsh and unmelodious. If one were to hear in accentuation of the voices in nature at once get something of the impression of the Schoenberg symphony. Not all of this unique composition is on the ear. There are strange beauties there are of that are supernatural in the sense that there are still other moments with the strife of warfare. Schoenberg is moved to wonder if he is not a grim humorist, enjoying the expense of an unsuspecting audience. Whatever the final verdict on Schoenberg as a composer, it is certain to endure the martyr's place in the realm of music.

Of the other two numbers of the Beethoven symphony programme. To this famous orchestra gave a sympathetic hearing which was appreciated by the composer.

The Brahms symphony, the second part of the programme, in many respects the feature of the afternoon. The audience was grateful for the delight given to the first and second movements, in this composition, in which the musician speaks directly to the heart. This spirit to catch and convey to

Programme for

Next week's concert of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, under Frederick Stock, at Orchestra hall on Friday evening, will bring forward the season, Fritz Kreisler, the Austrian violinist, who has given the first appearances upon both the work and to the orchestra's

tion." "And Debussy?" "His work pleases me extraordinarily."



ARNOLD SCHOENBERG. (Germany's foremost futurist composer.) [Photo by Erfurth, Dresden.]

One is bound to recognize that he is a great master. I heard his "Pelleas and Melisande" some years ago and was tremendously impressed by it. Strangely enough in 1902, the year the opera was produced, I wrote an orchestra suite with the same name and thought then of writing an opera on Maeterlinck's play, and it was not until several years after that I read that a new French composer had done it first. I called his attention to the fact that his admiration for his contemporaries was unique.

"I hope I shall always be able to enjoy their works," he said simply. "Musicians are jealous because of the greater success of some other man. It may be that I shall become that way in ten years. I can't promise, but I shall try not to. I admit I don't like Reger. I can't understand him. But I don't doubt he is a thorough artist."

His Taste in Literature.

In literature Schoenberg is an ardent admirer of the grim Strindberg, and has read all of the forty-eight volumes of that man's work. His "Damascus" he believes to be the finest contemporary literary work. Maeterlinck is also a favorite and he spoke appreciatively of Hauptmann.

Schoenberg refused to scoff at the futurist musicians of Italy, whose recent "noise symphonies" have attracted the universal ridicule of the press. "I can't say that I understand them, but it is because I haven't heard them. You can be sure the newspaper accounts are exaggerated. Perhaps some genius will be able to use the noise instruments. But futurist

trian violinist, who his fifth American t been given the furt appearances upon th being a concerto in both the work and to the orchestra's later be heard in concerto in D major also be the means number on the p formances in Ame orchestra's patron Humperdinck sole the latter having orchestra fourth mer nineteen y in its detailed Overture to "The Concerto for violi Allegro maestoso

Accompaniment "Moorish Rhapsody" Tarifa: Elegy in a Moorish style "Life's Dance" (First Concerto for violin) Allegro

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