

Music News: 21 Programs Toscanini Wanted on Tour

Schoenberg's 'Warsaw' Premiere Thursday; Notes on Other Musical Activities

By ARTHUR BERGER

When Arturo Toscanini put his mind to the task of compiling programs for his forthcoming concert tour with the N.B.C. Symphony he was aware of a sense of relief at being freed for a change from the limitation of broadcast time. Twenty-one concerts he assumed, in working out the details, called for twenty-one different programs, which caused consternation among those in charge of the travel facilities, who saw themselves coping with the problem of extra baggage space for additional instrumental parts in a luxury train already burdened with copious lounge-space for the Maestro and orchestra and with baggage cars for instruments. Also, there would be the problem of rehearsing so many programs. Since each concert is to be in a different place, one program could suffice as far as the audience is concerned. But the Maestro's idea is to avoid the staleness of routine, and he finally agreed this end may be attained by arranging seven or eight programs and reshuffling their contents so that a still larger number of variants will be made available.

Arnold Schoenberg's "Survivor from Warsaw," to have its New York premiere at Thursday's Philharmonic-Symphony concert, has a text by the composer in three languages. It is a story of existence in a concentration camp, narrated in a way that lies halfway between speech and song, as in the same composer's "Ode to Napoleon." That is, the rhythms and the approximate pitch lengths and directions are indicated to the speaker for the intoning, but not actual singing, of the text. When the German sergeant is quoted, the narrator's words are in German, but otherwise he speaks English. At the end, when Jewish prisoners are lined up to be counted for the gas-chamber, they spontaneously break into the Hebrew prayer for the dead in the original tongue. This is the only entrance of the male chorus, and it is a chant sung in unison.

"A Survivor From Warsaw," completed in 1947, is in the twelve-tone technique and its means, as in the characteristic works of this style, are highly concentrated. Its length is somewhere in the vicinity of five minutes. Commissioned by the Koussevitzky Foundation, it received its premiere from the Albuquerque Civic Symphony under Kurt Frederick in 1948 and in line with a tradition established for twelve-tone works (partly owing to their difficulty and newness) it was encored on that occasion. Next Thursday it will be conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos, that ardent

partisan of Schoenberg and his orbit, and he will be assisted by Adolph Anderson as narrator and the Princeton University Chapel Choir, prepared by its director, Carl Weinrich.

The originally planned order of the two remaining concerts of the I. S. C. M. series has been reversed, and the one with the new Milhaud octet has been put off to May 3, while the program with works of Ruth Crawford, Robert Kurka, Artur Schnabel, Seymour Shifrin and Igor Stravinsky will be given Tuesday night at the McMillin Theater. . . . Roy Harris will conduct the Boston Symphony Orchestra in its home city next Friday and Saturday in his "Kentucky Spring." At its pair of concerts one week later, also in Boston, Virgil Thomson will make his first appearance with that orchestra when he conducts his Suite from "Louisiana Story" . . . Thomas Scherman's plans for his Little Orchestra Society series in Town Hall next season include a concert at which Joseph Fuchs, violinist; Leonard Rose, cellist, and Nadia Reisenberg, pianist, will each be heard in a solo concerto and will then join forces in the American premiere of Alfredo Casella's triple concerto.

Contemporary music continues to get lively support in the colleges. The University of Delaware will give an orchestral program of modern works April 22 under the direction of Anthony Loudis of its faculty, and Aaron Copland will give a talk in connection with it. Mr. Copland is also among the composers who will participate in a six-week series of lectures on contemporary music to be inaugurated this month at the Institute of Adult Education of the new Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass. Others to speak in this series will be Roy Harris, William Schuman, Rene Lebowitz, Lukas Foss and Marc Blitzstein. Music by contemporary composers, among them Roger Sessions and Alvin Etler, will be combined with sixteenth and seventeenth century works to make up the programs of a festival at Smith College next weekend honoring Alfred Einstein, who retires from the Smith music faculty in June, and commemorating the college's seventy-fifth anniversary.

Eduard van Beinum will be guest conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra in New York Jan. 16. Ernest Ansermet has been announced for the Philadelphia's Carnegie Hall concert on Jan. 2, and Eugene Ormandy is listed for the other eight in this city.

This Week's Operas

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