

DOCUMENTS

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PAN AMERICAN UNION - WASHINGTON, D. C.
General Secretariat, Organization of American States



Colonel Samuel R. Rosenbaum

the United States Legion of Merit and decorations from Luxembourg, Italy, Belgium, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and China.

The above is only a partial listing of his many achievements, but it clearly demonstrates the incredible energy so consistently evident in all Colonel Rosenbaum's undertakings. Added to this energy is an unfailing good cheer, a singularly positive approach, and a vision of the utmost clarity.

A DISTINGUISHED PATRON OF MUSIC IN OUR HEMISPHERE

We take this opportunity to acknowledge the very great contribution made by Colonel Samuel R. Rosenbaum, Trustee of the Recording Industries Music Performance Trust Funds, not only to the First and Second Inter-American Music Festivals, organized in Washington, D.C. by the Inter-American Music Council under the auspices of the Pan American Union, but also to the general cause of music in our hemisphere. In his capacity as Trustee, he has been by far the largest single contributor to the support of the Festivals through which many world premieres of works of major importance by composers of the Americas are presented. His other services to music include the organization of chamber music recitals in art galleries, museums, libraries, schools and other public institutions throughout North America, substantial aid to many civic symphonies in all parts of the United States and Canada, and the enlargement of literature for the harp by his personal commissions. His enthusiastic support of serious Latin American composition has been a significant factor in its increasing popularity in the United States.

His accomplishments are numerous. He has been an attorney-at-law since 1961, Vice President of the Bankers Securities Corporation, 1928-1942, Trustee of the Music Performance Trust Funds of the Recording Industries since 1948, President of WFIL, Philadelphia, 1932-1942, Chairman of the Independent Radio Network Affiliates, 1937-1941, Commanding Officer of Radio Luxembourg, 1944-1945, Director of the Philadelphia Orchestra Association since 1928, and President of Robin Hood Dell, 1938-1941. He is also a member of the Board of Governors of the Philadelphia Museum College of Art. His war service decorations include the French Legion of Honor,

TENTH FESTIVAL OF CARTAGENA DE INDIAS, COLOMBIA

The sesquicentennial of the Independence of Cartagena was celebrated with the Tenth Festival of Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, from May 30 through June 5, 1961 at the Teatro Cartagena. Concert programs were as follows.

First Concert: Tuesday, May 30: Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Colombia. Conductor: Olav Roots; Soloist: Helvia Mendoza de Diaz.

Program: Symphony No. 3 in one movement by Fabio González Zuleta (Colombia); Concerto in D minor for piano and orchestra by Bach; Symphony No. 7 by Beethoven.

Second Concert: Wednesday, May 31: Cuarteto Bogotá - Luis Biava, first violin, Jaime Guillén, second violin, Ernesto Díaz, viola, Luis Matzenauer, violoncello.

Program: Quartet in B flat minor (The Hunt) by Mozart; Quartet No. 15 in A minor, Op. 132 by Beethoven; Quartet in F by Ravel.

Third Concert: Thursday, June 1: Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Colombia. Conductor: Olav Roots; Soloist: João Carlos Martins.

Program: Homage by Adolfo Mejía; Concerto in B flat, K. 595, for piano by Mozart; Symphony in D minor by Franck.

Fourth Concert: Friday, June 2: Recital by João Carlos Martins, Brazilian pianist.

Program: Sonata in C major, K. V. 545 by Mozart; 32 Variations in C minor, Op. 191 by Beethoven; Sonata in one movement by Fabio González Zuleta (Colombia); Ballade in G minor, Op. 23, Nocturne Op. 8, No. 1, and Scherzo in B minor, Op. 20 by Chopin; Malambo by Alberto Ginastera (Argentina); Toccata, Op. 11 by Prokofieff.

Fifth Concert: Saturday, June 3 : Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Colombia. Guest conductor: Guillermo Espinosa; Soloist João Carlos Martins.

Program: Symphony No. 35 in D major, K. V. 385 (Haffner) by Mozart; Concerto No. 3 in C minor for piano and orchestra, Op. 37 by Beethoven; Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 56 (Scottish) by Mendelssohn.

Sixth Concert: Sunday, June 4: Recital by John Sebastian, U.S. Harmonica player.

Program: Sonata in F major for violin, flute or oboe by Veracini; Children's Suite for harmonica and piano by Gordon Jacobs; Concerto in D major for flute by Boccherini; Roumanian Fantasy for harmonica and piano (1957) by Francis Chagrin; Pavane for a dead princess by Ravel; Six Greek folk dances by Hovhaness-Sebastian; An American in Paris by Gershwin-Sebastian. João Carlos Martins at the piano.

Seventh Concert: Monday, June 5: Orquesta Sinfónica de Colombia. Guest conductor: Guillermo Espinosa; Soloist: John Sebastian

Program: The triumph of Saint Joan of Arc by Norman dello Joio (U.S.) (First performance in Colombia); Variations on a Peruvian theme by Irving Lowens (U.S.) (First performance in Colombia); Concerto for harmonica and orchestra by Heitor Villa-Lobos (Brazil) (world première - commissioned by John Sebastian); Dances from the ballet "Estancia" by Alberto Ginastera (Argentina).

THE PROBLEM OF WORLD COMMUNICATION IN TODAY'S MUSIC

by

ANDRÉS PARDO-TOVAR

*Translated by Barbara Aylor Brody from the original
Spanish text published in the REVISTA MUSICAL CHI-
LENA, Año XIV, Mayo-Junio, 1960, Núm. 71.*

A state of affairs which dictates the order of musical sociology has been establishing itself now for several decades; this is a real or supposed "isolation" which would tend to separate the artist and his public increasingly. By public, we mean listeners with at least some aesthetic preparation.

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In earlier times, the communication between the composer and his public was established automatically. With a few well-known exceptions, an evident "communicability" existed in the works of the classics and romantics. This held true to the century's end at which time the prevailing aesthetic stirred up the appearance of impressionism. Thus begun, the separation process has continued and become self-perpetuating. It is undeniable that at this time a real or supposed "isolation" can be observed between the composer and his public. The current response of the same general public which used to applaud the instrumental or dramatic works of the romantics to a point of delirium affords a good example of this.

The problem should be shown in its exact dimensions. Its premise is an indisputable fact: certain tendencies of today's most representative music evoke a strong resistance in certain sections of society. Although a good part of the cultured public of our time is characterized by its intellectual and aesthetic curiosity, other areas exist in which a certain conformism predominates or where the new is accepted passively and supported indiscriminately.

Music criticism - in the countries where it exists - assumes a prudent attitude: the unappealable judgements that critics used to make proved to be so much in error that they now express themselves with great caution and prefer to adopt an attitude of benevolence or elusiveness when confronted by the new manifestations of music. The die-hard and negative opinions of the critics of the past have been followed by an impartial climate that is excessively eclectic and is much too timid.

There exists, then, a certain separation between the contemporary composer and that determined percentage of the public attending recitals and concerts, and it is an examination of this partial "isolation" to which part of a most interesting study by Domingo Santa Cruz is devoted. (REVISTA MUSICAL CHILENA, Núms. 64, 65, and 67) and which emphasizes

the sphere of the relations between composer and interpreter, for it is in this sphere - an undetermined and essentially variable one - that the public receives its first impression with either acceptance or lack of comprehension.

The Composer, the Interpreter, and the Public

The musical creator of our time is, or wishes to be, an innovator. At any rate, he assumes a position which is in accord with the predominant aesthetic within his group and with the people in his geographic location. This will be true of an expressionist, a twelve tone composer, a partisan of the primitive movement, or of a neoclassicist or a neo-romanticist. While all of them can bear the acceptance of an evolutionary tradition, they can never accept an attitude of simple imitation of the forms or styles of the past.

But just as the "representative" composer is an innovator and, on occasion, a rebel, the interpreter, on the other hand, is eminently conservative and is usually fairly routinist. In this respect, the concert artists and singers on an international scale are fundamentally traditionalists and academicians. Pianists, violinists, violoncellists, singers and conductors - the latter to a lesser degree - tend to view the production of contemporary music with distrust and therefore include only the most well-known works on their programs. With the rarest of exceptions, few contemporary works are accepted.

This systematic attitude is modified somewhat in respect to chamber ensembles. There are also outstanding exceptions among certain conductors of both the Americas and Europe who are pledged to increasing knowledge of the new values in music. To this end, however, they must count on quite a specialized audience, cultured listeners who are well versed in the new trends of today's music.

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It becomes a rare and almost paradoxical situation if, for example, a young pianist beginning his career as an international concert artist does not dedicate himself to the restoration of the limited and inexorable traditional repertoire: something by Bach and Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin and - although not always - Schumann and Brahms. The selection doubtless will include only the most hackneyed works from the vast catalogs of these great masters. In this respect, most concert artists proceed as if all audiences were completely lacking in curiosity and were interested only in hearing the works they know repeated again and again. It so happens that in every city of both the old and the new world, there are thousands of informed people who are anxious to become familiar with the works of new composers. The peculiar attitude of the international concert artists - and especially of those who visit Colombia - is almost always a result of the influence of the impresario or agent who is interested primarily in business - most understandably - and who is thoroughly convinced that contemporary music will drive away his box office public. This utilitarian and anachronistic criterion too frequently subordinates the artist.

The intelligent and constructive attitude of the cultured public of today is explained to a great extent by the increase in music appreciation courses and by the birth of a new kind of music lover - the record collector. By now his numbers have increased to form legions, and they are almost always seeking the new in music. In reference to this phenomenon, Domingo Santa Cruz skillfully points up the situation we are describing - "A symptom of the fact that concerts do not now correspond to the contemporary needs; that they have become rigid, out of focus and without satisfactory direction, is the new phenomenon of direct communication between the composer and his public through records... Records are, at this time, an indispensable complement to all music education." And he adds: - "What function do records serve in the daily existence of music? In the opinion of Aaron Copland, there now exist - at least in the United States - two differentiated audiences: those who go to concerts and those who go to record sales... the concert-goer is mild, routinist, and conservative; the record purchaser is open, curious, and free from prejudice. Thus the discophile would come to be the prototype of the music lover in our epoch."

From the foregoing alone, it could be observed that the public is routinist and conservative in direct proportion to the current criterion for programming concerts. This same public would be curious and open to all the positive manifestations of new music if the policies of the agents and impresarios were to change. It is also certain that the audiences of the United States would be among the most easily managed in the world. The same may be said of the audiences accustomed to attend concerts and recitals in such large and up to date cities as Buenos Aires, Santiago, Río de Janeiro, and Mexico City.

As is often the case, the problem can be reduced to a question of dosage, proportion and equilibrium. If concert managers and impresarios will examine the cultural realities of the society in which they function, they will have to be convinced that a better balance must be achieved in their programming; without forgetting the classics or denouncing the romantics. They must include the most representative works of the contemporary composers or at least augment the tiny percentage of new music in public performance and in so doing, overthrow the unjust prejudice which causes the listener - and the Latin American listener especially - to seek an opportunity to rehear in concerts and recitals only those well known works which are endlessly repeated in all the secular concert literature of the world.

Another factor is the incomprehensible and occasionally actually hostile attitude of certain ensembles - symphony orchestras in particular - when confronting a new work. In this connection, a recent and most illustrative episode took place in a Latin American capital on the occasion of the première of Alban Berg's admirable CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN. The work, an object of scandal and derision among almost all the personnel of the orchestra of this city, was received with genuine emotion and sincere enthusiasm by a public to which the opportunity of listening to a work by this celebrated disciple of Schönberg had been given for the first time.

Some Basic Plans

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These matters of greater or lesser "communicability" of the contemporary composers' musical message, of the attitude of the public when confronted by new works, and of the frequent lack of comprehension on the part of their interpreters, are intimately related to the concept that art is deserving of new creators. Purely aesthetic feelings lie at the bottom of all these problems of musical sociology because it must be confessed that the new trends of music - with perhaps the sole exception of Russia - are not numerous. The composers of the West are not the translators of the feelings of the masses or of the general public at this time. Their messages presuppose a certain technical initiation in order to be fully grasped and this is due to the fact that today's music - even in its exasperatingly dramatic expressions of states of consciousness - is predominately "intellectual".

For a clearer view of this it is necessary to go back thirty or forty years. Between 1920 and 1930, many European composers formulated their aesthetic credos regarding new trends in music in documents which had then and continue to have the merit and scope of true "declarations of principles". Let us examine four of these.

In a letter to Windisch, Busoni refers specifically to the discord among the critics and to the intrinsic value of contemporary music which should be appreciated for itself - *per se* - and judged by means of objective evaluation: - "On various occasions I have insisted that, within the dominions of our art, spiritual fineness, awareness and intrinsic value should be the criteria for judging the value and durability of a work. At the present time a confusion has arisen among those critics who assume a progressive attitude: now they do not differentiate at all between the worth of a work and the trend which the work represents; they reject worthy works, because they originate in the classics and they exalt mediocrities merely because they have been engendered by the modern spirit. Nevertheless, there is an art which is "beyond good and evil". . . Far from trying to dissuade those musicians who would choose any efficient procedure from our many contemporary possibilities, I am content to ask that each time a new technique is used that the process be aesthetic and critical so that all creation - whether it be spontaneous or extremely elaborate - may ascend to the classic level using the concept of "definitive perfection" in its original meaning.

Busoni, as it is known, fought to find a new classicism, a system or aesthetic which would assure the durability of modern music. Aloys Haba, the European revolutionary systematizer of microtonalism, holds the viewpoint that contemporary music is the culmination of a long evolutionary process and not simply a manifestation of revolt against the past. One of his most illuminating articles, from 1925, discloses the following ideas: -"The production of contemporary music reveals an effort to give form to expression, beginning with a purer and clearer differentiation between sounds. It is necessary to return to the origins of European musical art in order to understand that this effort is the logical consequence of a continuous evolution. The stylistic peculiarities, as much individual as national, all rest on a communal base, established by the theories from ancient Greece". He continues: -"The general criterion for judging the authenticity of a work of art, consists of its coinciding exactly with the intention of the author. It is necessary to become familiar with the creative intention in order to judge the work of art... The perfect unity of musical thought and its expression is what guarantees the artistic integrity of a work. Musical creation is, then, one of many ways of expressing a truth".

Schönberg advocates the creative liberty of the artist, a liberty which is not and cannot be absolute, in his view, because it must support the knowledge of the past. He says: -"It is sad that the formula 'Today you can write everything', keeps so many young people from really serious study, thereby preventing them from understanding the works of the classics and from acquiring a true culture. These are precisely the composers who have not the licence to 'write everything', but who instead should get to work and do what is necessary..." In this same article we also find an idea which basically extends the previous assertions: -"The artist who has self confidence trusts his instinct completely. Only he who trusts his instinct is worthy, and only he who is worthy is an artist."

Schönberg thus moves in both subjective and objective fields at the same time, but he implies that the problems of the musical creator are problems which demand order from his own inner world exclusively. The bases of these problems and their solutions exclude the listener absolutely in terms of "communicability" between the composer and the listener. This exclusion is understood and it is unnecessary to grant it excessive importance. In 1920, Stravinsky had anticipated this attitude by assuming a haughty and distant hermeticism which clearly pronosticated the impending separation between the contemporary composer and the great majority of the public. -"I have always believed", he writes, "that the only legitimate medium at the disposition of a composer with which to convince his public is his music and only his music, divested of all kinds of commentary even if it seems useful. If he fails, it is still very possible that some day he will triumph..." As can be seen, this deals with a point of view, of one aesthetic and human position diametrically opposed to that of Aloys Haba. This does not prevent Stravinsky, in many of his works, from being an extremely well understood composer - all too well understood, sometimes. Neither does it prevent Haba from being a composer for the initiated and one whose works can be interpreted only by specialists - by instrumentalists and singers who have received a most intricate and difficult ear training.

A Fascinating Book

There is an exciting book devoted to these problems of the contemporary social aesthetic. Bernard Gavoty and Daniel Lesur have compiled more than one hundred opinions from contemporary composers, conductors, musicologists and critics in *POUR OU CONTRE LA MUSIQUE MODERNE?* (Flammarion, Paris, 1957). It consists of a series of interviews, in which the compilers ask different questions related to the alleged "cold war" in our music world.

The replies of the composers and conductors of the stature of Auric, Britten, Dallapiccola, Enesco, Honegger, Jolivet, Malipiero, Messiaen, Migot, Milhaud, Petrassi, Poulenc, Schmitt, Villa-Lobos, Ansermet and Inghelbrecht are most illuminating. Some of them are exceptionally lucid and profound.

When Britten was asked if a separation between the public and the composers of today really exists, Britten answered: -"I do not believe the general public is uniformly hostile

to new music. With certain reservations, even the new operas attract large audiences and enjoy a very real success. In my country, I have observed that the festival public is passionately interested, and with a very liberal criterion, in music of all times, from Perotin to the youngest of the contemporary composers."

Dallapiccola, answering the same question, expresses himself thus: -"Upon examining the true situation, it can be asserted that there does exist a public which is devoted to contemporary music. It exists in the same proportion in terms of numbers and importance as did the public which in its own time followed the works of Monteverdi, Gluck, Wagner and Debussy." The illustrious Italian composer attributes the apparent coldness of a certain sector of the public toward contemporary music to the "indifferent" performances of its interpreters and to the critics' lack of actual contact with modern music.

Honegger, in his declarations, condemns the twelve tone system exclusively and systematically, and, in spite of being one of the great music innovators of this century, confesses his respect for tradition: -"A branch separated from the tree trunk does not take long to die. It is necessary to know how to play the same game, because to change its rules completely is to destroy it and force it back to its primitive point of departure... I have always striven to write music which might be understood by most audiences and at the same time would be of sufficient originality to interest the music lover".

George Migot - composer, poet and eminent musicologist -, declares: -"I am a man of my time and I aspire also to be one of the future by trying to emancipate my works from the time factor. A person is up to date in his way of dressing, of living, of thinking, and of expressing himself, but he can be of yesterday and of tomorrow through that particle of eternity which he contributes for transmission from generation to generation... In art, there is no progress. It is a fundamental error to believe the discovery of new technical procedures and their systematic utilization can create a new aesthetic. The multiplication of these procedures by no means demonstrates the worth of a work." Indirectly, this great French artist negates the idea that there exists any conflict between contemporary music and its environment: true music is not up to date but can be evaluated in terms of yesterday, today, and the future.

When Darius Milhaud was asked whether he had observed the same coldness in foreign audiences that is evident in the French in their response to contemporary music, he answered: -"The phenomenon is not particular to our epoch, and I am inclined to believe it has always existed. Reread the life of Berlioz if you would like to verify the extent of the lack of comprehension on the part of his contemporaries. The same thing happens everywhere, but one can also count on a certain sector of the public everywhere, young, curious, and open - thank God! - to all the trends in the music of our time.

In an epilogue, Gavoty and Lesur review the opinions of those they have interviewed and arrive at the conclusion that those responsible for the alleged separation between sophisticated music and the public of our epoch are, for the most part, the composers themselves, the critics... and the public. That is to say, each one carries his share of responsibility for the situation. From the subject matter of the work we have been citing, a conviction is derived that this "cold war" which has as its background the intangible world of sound, is as old as the world or at least as old as culture. We recall that Terpandro, eight centuries before Christ, was condemned for having improved the lyre by adding some strings.

A Statistic of Cocteau

Now, in finishing, and in the way of a bit of humor demonstrating certain tendencies toward isolation and toward the voluntary resignation of the artist from his duties of communication with the public, allow us to bring in the ingenious - as well as capricious and unjust - classification of the public as made by Cocteau, the friend and propagandist of "The Six Frenchmen", in *LE COQ ET L'ARLEQUIN* (1918):

The Public.

- Those who defend the present while supporting themselves in the past and who have a presentiment of the future (1 per cent);
- Those who defend the present while destroying the past and who will assuredly negate the future (4 per cent);
- Those who negate the present in order to defend yesterday which for them is today (10 per cent);
- Those who imagine that today is an error and make an appointment for the day after tomorrow (12 per cent);
- Those of the day before yesterday who defend yesterday in order to demonstrate that today goes beyond every permissible limit (20 per cent);
- Those who have not yet understood that art is continuity and who imagine it was detained yesterday possibly to be resumed tomorrow (60 per cent);
- Those who understand neither the day before yesterday, nor yesterday, nor today (100 per cent).

This "boutade" of Cocteau, if taken seriously, would by itself bring the contemporary composer to the point of completely disregarding the public and of looking for an audience made up exclusively of his colleagues or more disposed - as is scarcely human - to listen to his own works rather than to the works of others.

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Opinions come and go, but one certainty is that the creative artist can not be obligated to produce within determined limits, to function to please the majority of the public, and least of all to satisfy the critics. It is also certain that if art is "communication", we should use every method at our disposal to close the breach between the contemporary composer and the general public. This is not a task belonging to the composer alone, but is a problem of musical sociology which should be solved on the basis of planned and coordinated activities by teachers, conductors, interpreters, critics and the officials entrusted with the administration of the cultural agencies and organizations of the State.

Bogota, May, 1960

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