

Zirkelbuch

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

Palestine Section - Jerusalem Branch

F O U R T H C O N C E R T

Monday, 29th July 1940, 8½ h. p.m.

in the Palestine Conservatoire of Music

Jaffa Road, near Cinema Zion.

P R O G R A M M E :

1. ZOLTAN KODALY, Serenade for 2 violins and Viola op.12

LORAND FENYVES, ALICE FENYVES, ÖDÖN PARTOS

2. ~~PAUL HINDEMITH:~~ **Sonata** for Viola solo op 25 No.2

ÖDÖN PARTOS

3. JOSEF GRUENTHAL: Thema and Variations for Two Pianos
and Percussion (1940)

Mrs. KAPLAN, JOSEF GRUENTHAL, Dr. W. LIEBENTHAL

4. ÖDÖN PARTOS: Concertmusic for String-Quartet (1932)

LORAND FENYVES, ALICE FENYVES, ÖDÖN PARTOS,

~~LASZLO VINCZE~~

Theo Salzman

Advance booking please at Balan's Music Shop, Palestine

Conservatoire, Tel. 2694.

Music By Local Composers

MR. HURTIG, GRUENTHAL AND PARTOS

MODERN Music, and more particularly the work of Palestinian composers is gaining in popularity in Jerusalem. While the strictly musical level of these concerts is bound to be, at the best, uneven in merit, they perform an essential service in the creative musical life of the country, for the part of composing must die where the musician cannot hope for a hearing unless he has produced something of imperishable value.

A case in point was the concert last Friday of compositions by the Haifa musician, Hans Hurtig, which took place at the Dublon Studio here. The composer's Dance Suite for Piano, played by himself, showed considerable descriptive talent, and a modernity of style that is marked chiefly by a liking for the grotesque.

In lyrical passages Mr. Hurtig does not hesitate to return to an older manner, which is always a sign of honesty. In this piece his themes were attractive, but of no great originality. He was well served by Miss Lotte Cristall, who rendered his songs in an expressive manner.

THE fourth concert of the Contemporary Music society, held at the Conservatoire on Monday, was a distinguished affair, and by far the best arranged by the I.S.C.M. here up to the present. The programme consisted of works by Kodaly and Hindemith, and by two Palestinians, Joseph Gruenthal and Oedoen Partos, both members of the Palestine Orchestra. The performances were throughout of an exceptionally high standard. Mr. Partos' rendering of Hindemith's Solo Sonata for Viola was polished and impressive both from the musical and the technical point of view, and not likely to be easily rivalled in Palestine.

Mr. Gruenthal's "Theme and Variations for Two Pianos and Percussion Instruments" played for the first time on this occasion, is written in the radical modern style, which is so often felt to be caught in a blind alley. The lyrical passages are weak, and the hearer is deprived wholly of the consolations of harmony — there are only pulsating rhythms to give him a clue to the music but these are highly effective, as is Gruenthal's instrumentation. Strictly speaking, even the pianos are treated as percussion

instruments, a tendency that has been greatly opposed by Vladimir Horowitz; the effect is undoubtedly interesting. Mrs. Kaplan and the composer at the pianos, and Dr. Liebenthal at the percussion instruments dealt valiantly with exceedingly difficult scores.

Mr. Partos' "Concert Music for String Quartet" was very well received, and the audience insisted on a second hearing. The piece is short and concentrated and full of appeal even for the most conservative listener; it is beautifully balanced, penetrating and clear and simple in the arrangement of the voices.

Kodaly's String Trio, which was played at the beginning of the concert, is an interesting, strongly romantic work in a gypsy mood. Mr. Lorand Fenyves, Miss Alice Fenyves, Mr. Partos, and Mr. Theo Salzmann (cello), who joined the others in the quartet, did full credit to the string section of the Palestine Orchestra, to which they belong.

R. da C.

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JERUSALEM MUSIC NOTES

CONCERT ON TWO PIANOS / CHAMBER MUSIC

DEBUSSY'S "En Blanc et Noir," these concerts might begin to be one of the four works played at the two piano concert by Mrs. Elisheva Kaplan and Mr. Gruenthal at the Histadruth Hall on Monday is one of the curious late works of this discoverer of impressionism that gropes forward almost to a new classicism. The middle section "In memory of the dead of the Great War," has unaccustomed clear contours, an economy that borders almost on harshness, unconventional harmonies and a modern intensity of expression.

Mr. Gruenthal's "Theme and Variations," discussed here once before, is characteristic of the contemporary trend to see in the piano only a percussion instrument incapable of lyrical expression. There are few tied phrases, and this impression is emphasized by accompaniment on real percussion instruments. The effect is not unattractive and follows closely similar experiments by Bartok.

As a composer Mr. Gruenthal has personality, his style is polyphonic and his harmonization logical; his courage in writing unpopular music demands respect and probably more than that. There can be no denying, however, that such music is difficult to appreciate at a first hearing and that the average listener has scarcely enough patience to give it more time than that.

The C Major concerto by Bach and the beautiful Mozart Sonata in D Major were given an admirable rendering by the two musicians. Mr. Liebenthal joined the two pianists in Mr. Gruenthal's composition.