

MUSICAL DIARY

SATURDAY night's concert of the Tel Aviv International Society for Contemporary Music suffered from a number of handicaps, but turned out quite a success. The first part of the programme presented Palestinian music—M. Starominsky's interesting Choral Suite based on traditional texts, and Oedoen Partos' vigorous Concertino for String Quartet. The choral work was well rendered by the Tel Aviv Chamber Choir directed by Otto Lustig, with Mmes. Goldschmidt and Lustig and Messrs. Gilboa and Zuzcinsky as soloists. The choir's service to Palestinian composers (and to the great literature of vocal music in general) cannot be sufficiently praised.

After a considerable lapse of time, the Palestine String Quartet (Fenyves-Rosenberg-Partos-Vincze) made a welcome re-appearance in the fine Partos work.

Leonard Bernstein was the centre of attraction in the second part of the programme. He first presented his youthful Clarinet Sonata, a work which was certainly called most promising when written six years ago and which we can see today in the light of the early fulfilment of its promise. Klaus Kochman gave a fine account of himself as solo clarinetist in this work.

The Mexican rhythms in the work of an American composer and the American idiom in

the composition of a Frenchman provided Mr. Bernstein with a subject for a short and illuminating address on nationalism in music before playing his piano version of Copland's "El Salon Mexico" and conducting Milhaud's ballet music from "La Creation du Monde."

Mr. Bernstein's exciting piano playing and his temperamental direction of a small ensemble from the Philharmonic Orchestra (with J. Kaminski as leader) brought tremendous ovations. —

Mimo-Dancer

THERE is hardly a Palestinian composer who has not created an "In Memoriam" in recent times. The Opus by O. Partos (Violoncello - D. Hofmekler) gave a rather grim introduction to Deborah Bertonoff's dance recital at the Zion Hall on Friday afternoon. The one gleam of light in the first part was "The Dance of Miriam" in the new suite, "Exodus," by J. Gruen, that excellent music, with the composer at the piano and K. Sommerfeld, percussions. Still, in these days, it

is not the best psychology to present such mournful stuff, even if it is artistically performed.

Deborah Bertonoff is at her best when she dances in the grotesque, eccentric style the manner derived from such outstanding artistes as the famous Swiss, Trudi Schoop, and her dancing comediennes, or Valoska Gert. Except for the original "Memories of a Dancer," to Debussy's intoxicating "La Plus Que Lente," we saw Miss Bertonoff in numbers with music by Marc Lavry, all of which we had seen before. Miss Bertonoff's success lies in her personifications. Chaya Nurik was a competent accompanist.

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Bertonoff Dance Recital

MISS Deborah Bertonoff's new programme, given at her last two recitals in Tel Aviv, was not quite up to her previous standard. The reason for this seems to me to be a certain indecision on the artiste's part as to the scope of the "mimic dancer" and what new fields she can conquer.

Faced with this difficult problem, Miss Bertonoff seemed unable to find a solution and sometimes she reduced the mimic — not to mention the physical and dance aspects — to an overall stiffness. In that way artistic effect was lost.

Portraying the love and work of a maiden of the Emek, something of a rather primitive theatrical nature ensued. The same applied to the idea and rather too simple

figures of "Joyless Street." In the same way the style of "Gebrauchsmusik" was unable to help the character of the dances. This does not apply so much to the composers—Pantos, Gruenthal, and Lowry — as to the style of the music generally, which sounded somewhat old-fashioned.

The "prayer" from the "Exodus," by Josef Gruenthal, was very effective and interesting, but not beautiful from the dance and aesthetic angles. On the other hand there was beauty in the "Dance of Miriam," and it seemed as if the dancer breathed more freely at the opportunity it gave her.

Other good items were "Memories of a Dancer" (Debussy) and the grotesque, "First Bell."

MANDO

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With every other successful chamber music concert the unfortunate lack of balance in our musical programmes becomes more obvious. There is far too much place and space allotted to the orchestra and too little to other fields, particularly chamber music and vocal music. Not that we are lonely sinners — this trend is noticeable everywhere, moved by a general inclination towards quantity and the fashionable idolatry of the conductor. But this is no reason to sit back and let things stand. What we need is the acknowledgment of a mistake, more chamber music and a well-laid plan for the education of music-lovers towards a better appreciation of the more fastidious sides of musical literature.

The second evening of the Jerusalem Chamber Music Society (on Saturday at the Beth Halutzoth) was of a standard which made the listener wonder whether such concerts could not be made a regular fortnightly feature. The programme was perfect, consisting of a good selection in the minor key, the quartets in D by Haydn (the "Fifth Quartet"), the one by Debussy and the Brahms quartet in A. The Tel Aviv Quartet (Bernstein, Silber, Blumberg, Salzmann) was somewhat wanting in respect of vitality, but in every other aspect on a high standard of ensemble playing. The tone which Theo Salzmann draws from his cello is a pleasure in itself.

"Exodus"

The first performance of Joseph Gruenthal's ballet music "Exodus", with the composer at the piano and Dr. Liebenthal, percussions, was broadcast on Sunday. Mr. Gruenthal is one of the few, who still follows the style of the 'twenties. But it is exactly this "motoric" and "linear" mode of expression, its lack of sentiment and its hardness, which suits the theme. After a first hear-

ing it seems that this is not only one of the latest, but one of the most mature of Gruenthal's compositions. *R. da C.*