

## Festival in Full Swing

Instrumental music came into its own with the appearances of the young American pianist, Van Cliburn, who also filled the halls in two solo recitals and two appearances in Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto. The I.P.O. contributed two undistinguished performances of undistinguished works by Milhaud and Avidom. In the other concert—contemporary music by Dallapiccola and Ben Haim, and a Piano Concerto with electronic accompaniment by Josef Tal—three local choirs and several soloists contributed fine performances under conductor Gary Bertini. This concert did not draw a capacity audience—that was expected—but many listeners followed the presentation with interest, awe and wonder.

Yet there seem to be shortcomings. The main theme stated in the orchestral introduction is neither original nor inspired, although the composer derives from it material which changes the atmosphere and later enriches the music magnificently. In the Resurrection music of the last part certain passages remind us of local colour conventionalism.

Conductor, orchestra and choirs did an excellent job. Sandwiched between these two works was Tal's Piano Concerto with Electronic Accompaniment. In general, we agree with Mr. Tal that this is purely experimental music and all conventional criticism would be out of place. We should only like to mention two impressions. We feel that the piano part is too "conventional" to be juxtaposed with the electronic music. We feel, too, that electronic imagination is only in its beginnings. However the experiment was most stimulating.

Mr. Tal's...  
your...



Accompaniment without orchestra: Yosef Tal and his loudspeakers.

# MUSICAL DIARY

### Unconventional Music

The Second Festival of Music and Drama. The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. Gary Bertini, Conductor; Yosef Tal, piano; R. Arie, bass; R. Szekely, soprano; R. Samsonov, mezzo-soprano; M. Lichtegz, Tenor; M. Ben-Shachar, baritone; A. Rapoport, narrator. The Binat, Kol Yisrael and Haifa Chamber Choirs. (Tel Aviv, Mann Auditorium, August 25). Dallapiccola: "Job," a Sacred Action in One Act; Yosef Tal: Concerto No. 4 for Piano and Electronic Accompaniment; P. Ben-Haim: "The Vision of a Prophet" for tenor, chorus and orchestra.

IT was a daring evening: two world premieres and one Israel premiere, all contemporary works. No wonder the concert was not sold out, but for those who fight conventional programming policies this was a great occasion.

Gary Bertini was the true hero of the evening. He acquitted himself magnificently of the tremendous task of rehearsing and conducting these unusually scored works. The performances were vivid,

imaginative and spirited. The amount of work put into the choirs deserves special praise.

Dallapiccola's "Job" makes a strong impact on the hearer. The music appeals to heart and mind and is, of course, masterfully written. As such it is a work of great importance, yet it is nothing more than a fascinating illustration of the events recounted in the Book of Job, which in themselves are rather unimportant. The music is an operatic dramatization of the plot and has nothing in common with the monumental spiritual and philosophical meaning of the Book. Even the atmosphere created by Dallapiccola is removed from the spirit of the Biblical work: the great solo bass aria in the middle section, the quartet etc. are striking examples.

Among the soloists, Azaria Rapoport was excellent. His deep, mellow voice sounded magnificent. Rahel Szekely is becoming one of our outstanding singers. She has a

strong and penetrating yet highly musical voice. Ben-Shachar and Rema Samsonov both stood up to their task efficiently. Rafael Arie's bass has the quality of a great voice even though its volume is limited. Its velvet-like mellowness and his deep understanding of the part made his rendition outstanding.

Ben-Haim seems to have penetrated into the spirit of his Biblical text. To compose music to Ezekiel 37 is a daring undertaking. And indeed it took Ben-Haim 30 years to formulate it. Now that he has said it, we are reminded of his words: "This powerful poetic vision of the prophet must inspire every creative musician, particularly now that the renaissance of Israel, foretold in this poetic chapter through magnificent symbols, has begun." It has indeed deeply inspired him.

The listeners are lifted to moments of real exaltation in the choral passages. Of special interest is the solo line, originally and very economically constructed. The work concludes in an atmo-

sphere of peaceful beauty. Yet there seem to be shortcomings. The main theme stated in the orchestral introduction is neither original nor inspired, although the composer derives from it material which changes the atmosphere and later enriches the music magnificently. In the Resurrection music of the last part certain passages remind us of local colour conventionalism.

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BENJAMIN B...