

Cultured and technically perfect

6.6.77
Jr. Rnt

ISRAEL CHAMBER ENSEMBLE, Mendi Rodan conducting, with Aurele Nicolet, flute (Jerusalem Theatre — June 2). **Bach: Suite No.2 in B Minor**; **Schoenberg: Chamber Symphony, opus 9 b (1935)**; **Joseph Tal: Concerto for Flute and Chamber Orchestra (1976)**; **Ibert: Divertissement (1930)**.

THIS EVENING'S programme continued the Ensemble's policy of providing contrasting and stimulating works. In Bach's Suite No.2, famous flutist Aurele Nicolet joined the strings, weaving in and out of the orchestral sound not as a soloist but more as the *obligato* instrument conceived by the composer. Nicolet came into his own in the world premiere of Joseph Tal's Flute Concerto, commissioned by the National Council of Culture and the Arts. Scored for a chamber group consisting of 3 woodwinds (English Horn, Bass Clarinet, Piccolo), 3 brass (Trumpet, Horn, Trombone,), and string quintet, the work is in merciful contrast to other

contemporary compositions: it does not employ percussions, does not indulge in excessive noise, there are no *glissandi*, or (I think) aleatorics. Tal can be trusted not to fall into the trap of the *cliches* which make up most modern music. Listening to the work without the aid of a score, I could not appreciate the intellectual side of the composition, and I confess that the immediate musical appeal left me rather unsatisfied. Aurele Nicolet scored a personal triumph and added solo pieces by Stockhausen and Jollivet as encores, in which his technical perfection and musical culture could be admired without the deflection of other sounds.

After all that intellectual exercise, Ibert's *Divertissement*, an entertaining parody without claim to profundity, sounded even more platitudinous despite the concerted effort of conductor Mendi Rodan and musicians to give it the best possible presentation.

Y.B.