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 Avdonin. In the other concert—contemporary music by Dallapiccola and Ben Haim—and a Piano Concerto with electronic accompaniment by Yosef 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 and wonder.

Yet there was cause to be short-sighted. 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. The resurrection music of the last part of this piece is an electronically constructed work. 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 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 pianistic execution was magnificent.

BENJAMIN B.