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Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Letters | 4 |
| Open-Reel Update <i>By John Bauman</i> | 20 |
| Letter from UK <i>By Malcolm Walker</i> | 26 |
| Letter from Germany <i>By Martin Elste</i> | 30 |
| New for Audiophiles <i>By Neil G. Levenson</i> | 34 |
| Japan Salutes Abbado in High-Tech <i>By Elliott Kaback</i> | 42 |
| A New Toscanini Edition: A Travesty Continues <i>By Mortimer H. Frank</i> | 45 |
| Oscar's Tin Ear <i>By Royal S. Brown</i> | 50 |
| Lyrta from Allegro <i>By John Ditsky</i> | 56 |
| Tu-be or not tu-be, that is <i>not</i> the question <i>By James Bongiorno</i> | 59 |
| Classical Recordings | 61 |
| A Masterly Achievement from Muti <i>By J.F. Weber</i> | 101 |
| Dmitri Shostakovich: The Eclipse That Wasn't <i>By Royal S. Brown</i> | 196 |
| Collections | 241 |
| Jazz | |
| dbx-encoded discs <i>By Andrew Sussman</i> | 279 |
| Capsule Takes <i>By Andrew Sussman</i> | 281 |
| PopCorner <i>By Jurgen Gothe</i> | 284 |
| Soundtracks | 296 |
| Book Review | 301 |
| Critics' Corner | 304 |
| About the Contributors | 308 |
| Classifieds | 309 |
| Advertising Index | 312 |

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18037

won the praise of *Time* magazine. After all, here is a modern composer with serious credentials, and people seem drawn to his music. Isn't this what we've all been searching for?

My first reaction to this new release was to say, "In a nutshell, there's nothing wrong with this—it just isn't 'classical' music." But that sounds patronizing, and it hangs us up on that old semantic dilemma. What I mean to say is, if you turn to music for the opportunity to share someone else's perceptions and perspectives on the "big" issues of life, for a multi-level experience that reveals its greatest depths only with increased familiarity, if you like music that requires you to bring your own intellectual, emotional, and psychological faculties to bear on the experience—well, then, I don't think you're going to be satisfied with this record.

What we have here are six "cuts"—some slow, some fast—based largely on the static maintenance of a texture created by the arpeggiation of a slow succession of (mostly) added-note and seventh-chords. The appeal of these textures lies in the juxtaposition of different rhythmic patterns produced by the various instruments, combining to create a pulsating composite, communal arpeggiation. (Let me note here that readers who equate—or assume that I am equating—the music of Glass with that of Steve Reich are making a big mistake. Reich's recent work is far more stimulating and involved—and seems to be growing more so all the time.) Most of the music on *Glassworks* is produced by acoustic instruments, but gives the impression of electronic synthesis, partly because of the highly mechanical, depersonalized performance style sought and achieved. Mind you, the resulting sound is not at all unpleasant to the ears—in fact, listening to it is rather like continuously popping artificially flavored gum-drops into one's mouth. There is an essential simple-mindedness, a spiritual vacuousness, to this music, which somewhat resembles rock music before the melody track has been laid down. And there, I believe, is a clue to this record's intended level of appeal. In a very serious sense, this is a sort of artsy counterpart to disco music—a plugging-in to basic neurological or endocrinological sensation unmediated by conscious faculties, comparable to the anesthetic attraction of a TV sitcom or cop show, a video game, or other artifact of current mass culture.

Sound quality and surfaces are impeccable. No program notes are included. (I wonder why not.) Incidentally, CBS has mixed the cassette version of this disc especially with the Sony Walkman-type tape players in mind, compensating for the reduced bass response characteristic of those machines.

W.S.

GOMES: *Il Guarani*. Aurea Gomes, soprano (*Cecilia*); Benito Maresca, tenor (*Pery*); Paolo Fortes, baritone (*Gonzales*); Orchestra and Chorus of the Teatro Municipal, Rio de Janeiro, conducted by Mario Tavares. VOCE-48 (three discs), \$26.94 (distributed by German News).

"*O Guarany*. Antonio Carlos Gomes. Brazilian tragic opera. Book by Antonio Scalvini after Jose de Alencar's Brazilian novel (Milan, 1870). Dedicated to Dom Pedro II, Emperor of Brazil. A score in which Guarani and Aimoro Indian themes lend color to a tale of the days when Brazil was a Portuguese colony. The Romance, 'C'era una volta un principe,' and the great 'Bacchanale Indiano' stand out musically."

The preceding quotation comes from the only book I've been able to find that has any information on this opera. *Sic transit gloria mundi*. Except in the composer's native Brazil, where this performance originated, *Il Guarani* (*O Guarany* in Portuguese) and his other seven operas have virtually disappeared, swept away by the (at the time) irresistible tides of verismo and Wagnerismo. Now, about those Guarani and Aimoro Indian themes. . . if they actually *do* appear in "the great Bacchanale Indiano," they sound like nothing so much as a foreign composer dabbling in local color. In fact, there's really nothing particularly "Brazilian" about *Il Guarani*. The musical language is mostly middle Verdi; the dramatic pacing is mostly early Verdi, and the action often grinds to a halt so the singers can show off their

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10039

voices. Unfortunately, the sort of singers who *have* something to show off are unlikely ever to sing this opera. World-class singers can make enough money repeating the same old roles year after year (and recording them) without bothering to learn exotica like *Il Guarani*, so such operas end up being sung, if at all, by a collection of promising newcomers, has-beens, and never-wases. The opera has not been completely ignored by the record companies. Destinn and Caruso recorded "Sento una forza indomita," and their example has been followed more recently by Caballé and di Stefano. Cecilia's Romance, "C'era una volta un principe," was recorded by Bidu Sayao (the aria only) and Lina Pagliughi (the extended introduction, too), and no doubt there are some vocal tidbits I'm unaware of.

On this recording, taken from a performance of July 4, 1980, Cecilia is sung by the Brazilian soprano, Aurea Gomes, whose apparent caution seems unjustified by the voice and technique she exhibits. In any event, she certainly doesn't embarrass herself, and the enthusiastic audience (constantly applauding at the wrong times) obviously loves her. The rest of the cast may also be Brazilian, but they evoke nothing so much as the rough 'n ready routine of the Italian provinces. The performance is, in fact, sung in the original Italian. Benito Maresca, as Pery, the "noble savage" hero, has a dark, baritone voice which tends to bleat on top notes. He finds the role heavy going and sounds rather like Ramon Vinay on an off-day. The chief villain, Gonzales, is sung with obvious relish by the aptly named Paolo Fortes, but he's no stylist. Let's call him Giangiacomo Guelfi on an off-day. In the role of the menacing Aimoro chief who intends to end Act III by eating Pery (it was created by Victor Maurel at the La Scala premiere), Wilson Carrera isn't able to take advantage of his opportunities... and so on, down the line.

As a guess, I'd say that this performance was recorded from either the first few rows downstairs, or near the top of the proscenium, for the orchestra seems closer than the rather distantly placed singers. The "stereo" sound isn't particularly directional, either, but, of course, these weren't ideal conditions. The important thing is that Voce has given us a chance to hear a voice from the past, Antonio Carlos Gomes, who traveled to Italy for further seasoning after some early local successes. That he was able to get a new opera produced at La Scala shows that he was not without his admirers. Boito once suggested him as Verdi's heir apparent, and the Master himself referred to Gomes as "a truly musical genius." It's easy to hear why. In its tunefulness and vitality, *Il Guarani* manages to suggest Verdi, with a liberal dose of Meyerbeer, but Gomes is no mere epigone. This music may be imitation Verdi, but it's *good* imitation Verdi, and if you respond to that idiom, I think you're in for a delightful surprise. No libretto is provided, but the plot summary is so detailed that you'll have no trouble following the action. In his excellent liner notes, Bill Collins says Voce has more Gomes operas on the way. I certainly hope so; *Il Guarani* has a lot going for it. I heartily commend it to the attention of any impresario in search of 19th-century novelties. J.M.

P.S. One of the "tidbits" I overlooked is a "complete" performance which originated in São Paulo and was once available here, through Records International, on the Chanticleer label. The Voce recording reviewed above is cut in several places, a defect which Voce attempts to mitigate by including a section of Act II, Scene 1 from a 1971 performance as an addendum on the final side. Even including the addendum, the Chanticleer performance runs about 10 minutes longer, which may mean that it's more complete, or may mean that it's merely slower. It may be academic, too, since it's no longer available.

GOODMAN: *Five Bagatelles. Tres Caprichos Goyescos*. See Alexander.

GOULD: *Spirituals for Orchestra*. See Copland.

GOUNOD: *Faust: Excerpts*. See Puccini.