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The Darius Milhaud Society Newsletter, Vol. 4, Spring 1988

Darius Milhaud Society

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THE DARIUS MILHAUD SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

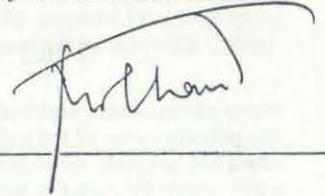
Cleveland, Ohio

Spring 1988

Vol. 4, No. 1

I made too much chamber music in my youth - sonatas, trios, quintets - played with my father at home, or with the quartet of my good old Bruguier [Milhaud's first violin teacher, in Aix-en-Provence] not to have retained the taste for it. . . . [Chamber music] is a form, the quartet especially, that carries thought and which bears the most profound expression of oneself, with the means limited to four bows. It is perhaps a sort [of expression] less direct but very satisfying for its austerity, its essential character of pure

music and also for its economy of means. It is at the same time an intellectual discipline and the crucible of the most intense emotion.



QUARTER-CENTURY REVIEW

25 Years Ago 1962 - 1963



Darius Milhaud cuts his cake at the Mills College celebration of his 70th birthday.

On Friday, January 19, 1962, Darius Milhaud conducted a concert of his music in the Hercules Hall in Munich, Germany. The program, organized by Musica Viva, featured performances of *La Création du Monde*, *L'Homme et son Désir*, *Deuxième Suite Symphonique* and *Agamemnon*. This event anticipated Milhaud's 70th birthday, twenty-five and a half years ago, on September 4, 1962. The comments by Darius Milhaud were translated into German by Willi Reich and printed in the 1962 program booklet. Warmest thanks to Ursula Korneitchouk, Assistant to the Director of the Cleveland Institute of Art, past president of Cleveland's *Maison Française*, and a founding trustee of the Darius Milhaud Society, who translated Milhaud's statement and Jean Cocteau's tribute into English for inclusion in this newsletter.

I BELIEVE IN THE FUTURE

Certain questions are being asked regularly in all times: where are we going? What is music coming to? What are the prospects for the future?

At present these questions are being asked with particular urgency. We have indeed lived through half a century in the course of which the most powerful revolutions occurred in the field of music, especially in regard to the language of sound (*Tonsprache*). One need only mention the names of Debussy, Stravinsky, Schoenberg. The contemporary composer therefore has at his disposal an extraordinary variety of means, expressive, rich, new

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Current Season 1987 - 1988



On October 18, 1987, Madame Madeleine Milhaud, in Cleveland, received a hand-crafted book of tributes and reminiscences by friends and former students. Photo by Marguerite B. Campbell.

MILHAUD ARCHIVE ENDOWMENT SPONSORS CONCERT

The Mills College Milhaud Collection Archive Endowment sponsored a free concert of Milhaud's vocal and piano music on April 10th in the Danforth Lecture Hall of the new Aron Art Center on the Mills campus. Allen Shearer, baritone, with Barbara Shearer, pianist, performed two major song cycles, *Quatre Poèmes de Paul Claudel pour Baryton*, Op. 26 (1915, 1917) and *Tristesses*, Op. 355 (1956). Mrs. Shearer was piano soloist in *Printemps*, Op. 25 and Op. 66 (1915-1920), six piano pieces in two volumes.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Shearer teach at the University of California, Berkeley. Mr. Shearer, composer as well as performer, has written and recorded songs soon to be released on the Contemporary Record Society label, and has recorded performances of other American works for CRI. Mrs. Shearer, former assistant to Karl Ulrich Schnabel and previous Artist-in-Residence at the American Academy in Rome, performs with chamber ensembles and symphony orchestras in North America and Europe and has released an album of piano music by Schumann on the Alba label.

The program at Mills was planned and implemented by Einion Dafydd, a young musicologist from Wales, who wrote his master's thesis on Milhaud's cantatas and is a graduate assistant at Mills for the academic year 1987-88. He also translated the Claudel texts and prepared the

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HONORARY TRUSTEES
Madeleine Milhaud, Chair
Vitya Vronsky Babin
Grant Johannesen
Odette Valabrégue Wurzbarger

HONORARY COMMITTEE
Maurice Abravanel
Leonard Bernstein
Dave Brubeck
Aaron Copland

Charles Jones
Virgil Thomson
Henri Sauguet, *France*
Paul Collaer, *Belgium*

FOUNDING TRUSTEES: Clinton and Katharine Warne, Ursula Korneitchouk

1962 - 1963

improved resources, a wealth of idioms, diverse ways of expression and phrasing, some of them closely related to one another, and others that have only very distant roots in common. From the tonal music which for centuries has blossomed in the bosom of the diatonic system to the music of the twelve-tone series, musical creativity has run the gamut from polytonality to free atonality; the ancient modal music, too, has seen a vigorous revival, not to mention attempts at further subdividing tones (quarter tones, etc.) and the challenge of combining these various sounds in a thousand different ways. Now that all these possibilities have been thoroughly investigated and exploited by contemporary composers, some superficial people appear and say, "See! Everything has been said in every possible way! Music has reached a dead end! Do you think it can find a way out?" These days, it is quite the fashion to reply - as many polls of recent years show - with an attitude of despairing pessimism, admitting that everything has indeed already been said, and that no one can see a way out.

I want to answer that question in my turn. I want to take this opportunity to say that I do not by any means share this pessimism and that I protest fiercely and formally against statements of this sort. On the contrary, I feel extremely fortunate that I am able to express firm confidence in the future.

An excellent first reason is that, to me, there simply is nothing that could justify the pessimistic sentiments that are currently so general and widespread. A second reason is the fact that such pessimism has been around at all times; it has indeed - and verifiably so - been the stronger, the richer the period. When I am asked the above questions, I usually cite, as one example among thousands, an instance I have witnessed myself: Paul Dukas, a great artist because of his talent as a composer as well as because of his profound and probing intellect, once said that the ultimate refinement had been reached with Ravel, and that it would be very difficult to exceed the limits he had reached. Yet after Ravel came Stravinsky and a great many others who brought us many refinements.

Incidentally, speaking of the currently fashionable attitude of total discouragement, one might ask whether what appears as pessimism and an impotence complex, is in reality conceit, arrogance and excessive pride. Those people fancy, no doubt, that they have been to the outer limits of a world, the world of sound, and they presume to believe that from now on, nobody can discover and exploit new worlds.

This is the height of arrogance: for even they are forced to admit that almost always when the limits seem reached, some newcomer appears on the scene to stretch the limits even further. Experience shows that this happens regularly, all the time.

I certainly do not intend, nor am I able, to predict what is next in store for our musical future. However, I confidently endorse Vincent d'Indy's statement, "The evolution of music depends on the whim of the next musical genius."

These observations apply not only to music. They apply to many other fields as well: to politics, economics, the sciences, etc. Why always believe that the end has been reached? We know from experience that the history of the world is full of catastrophes. Yet we are bound to admit that they did not stop the world from continuing to exist. To be sure, sometimes the scenery gets rearranged, but this does not mean the play is over! Besides, there also are climaxes and low points to be taken into account. For every country, the history of music or any other field of endeavor has always been subject to fluctuations. No country can boast of a

continued . . .

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program notes for the concert. A reception followed in the Bender Room of the Mills College Library where the Milhaud Collection is on display.

The following observations were made by a concert listener:

Milhaud's *Quatre Poèmes pour Baryton* are written to Paul Claudel's *Corona benignitatis anni Dei*, deeply-felt poetry of strong spiritual imagery. The cycle ends with *Obsession*, an emotionally moving text that is an impassioned plea to God, set by Milhaud in a slow tempo and with much intensity. These songs, composed shortly after *Sept Poèmes de Paul Claudel de la Connaissance de L'Est*, show stylistic similarities to the earlier work, both in their treatment as miniature monodramas and in their cumulative emotional impact. The musical structures of the *Quatre Poèmes* are often but not always tri-partite, and dramatic changes of texture, tempo and nuance enhance the messages of the texts. The tessitura of the piano is frequently low-lying, which gives a sombre, even dark, cast to the total sound field, with moments of higher-lying passages that create contrast. The *Quatre Poèmes* are cohesive in style, yet varied in tempo, mood and atmosphere - the result, a compelling group of songs. Allen Shearer, though a bit tense in physical demeanor, sang with clear, well-projected tone and easily understandable French enunciation. Barbara Shearer was in complete command of the demanding piano part, never overshadowed the voice, consistently supported at the most appropriate dynamic level, and performed in sensitive ensemble with her husband. Both are artists of great intelligence and mature musicality.

The six piano pieces of *Printemps* form a series of introspective pianistic ruminations. Although very demanding musically, they are never showy. Often the music moves in contrasting contrapuntal lines which require clear delineation and balance levels, and most important, need only touches of pedal to enhance legato or resonance. Mrs. Shearer never made the mistake of over-pedalling, and she projected melodies with excellent clarity, chose tempi with care and achieved subtleties of balance and nuance that made each piece an exquisite gem.

The long cycle for baritone, *Tristesses*, with texts by Francis Jammes, was written in Paris and premiered at Aspen by Mack Harrell and Victor Babin. It expresses yet a third aspect of Milhaud's personality as a composer. The opening segment is a piano solo introduction, commencing with three motivic gestures, each using four different tones and contrasting rhythms, so that the very first measure introduces musical ideas to be used in songs later in the cycle. The last song deals at length with the materials of the introductory piano solo, while the vocal part moves freely without reference to these. Thus the opening and closing portions of the cycle form a unifying framework for it, and the voice floats as a contrapuntal independent layer in the texture.

These twenty-four descriptive poems are lyrical evocations of a beloved young girl in various guises, with much imagery relating to the natural world. The music reflects the expressive lyricism of the poetry and in addition to the organized structure of each song, contains at various points the motives of the opening segment, linking the songs and giving connective form to the whole. Once again, the performers gave a highly musical and intelligent reading of the work, which is demanding due to its length as well as to its performance challenges. The French text was clearly projected, the ensemble outstanding, the beauties of nuance, coloration and balance well-handled.

The program represented Milhaud in three different aspects: dramatic, contrapuntal and lyrical-expressive. The choice of

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leading genius at all times. But that is no cause for despair. No nation is during all epochs, or exclusively, preoccupied with music. During the golden age of German music, which is to say the Romantic period, France produced the Revolution, the Civil Code, Napoleon, and much else, but very little music. After the German golden age of music came that of the French Renaissance, brought about by Franck, Debussy, and all that their music implied. Isn't there a certain logic and harmony in such fluctuations? I repeat: despair seems not only unnecessary, but downright ridiculous to me.

Reason for hope can be found in the smallest detail, for instance in the incessant renewal of musical material through serial music and electronic instruments. These are signs of vitality. Of course there is no telling where all this will lead. It will ultimately depend on the personalities who avail themselves of the new means of expression. In the hands of a gifted, self-assured musician, they will result in valuable works, whereas an untalented or insecure musician will achieve no better results with serial music and electronic gear than what he would have achieved with traditional means.

As for me, I feel no need to use the new means of expression. Perhaps I am already too old! But I am eager to watch this development and to acquaint myself with the works it produces. The fact that musicians such as Olivier Messiaen or Pierre Boulez - to speak only of France - have perfected the new methods is enough to open promising perspectives.

In my opinion, it is precisely the wealth of new expressive means that may foster the maturing of a future genius. I know very well that we live in difficult times and that today's young composers have a devilish time struggling for bare survival: it is difficult to get one's music performed, difficult to get it published. Still, they have faith, and it would be a crime to discourage them. Besides, any attempt to discourage them would be futile, fortunately! They are so eager to produce, to explore, to discover. Everywhere, I see young people giving it their all. And what is being created with so much love will prevail, sooner or later. Take heart!

The Milhaud Society also expresses deepest appreciation to Madame Madeleine Milhaud for sending a copy of the program for the Society's archives.

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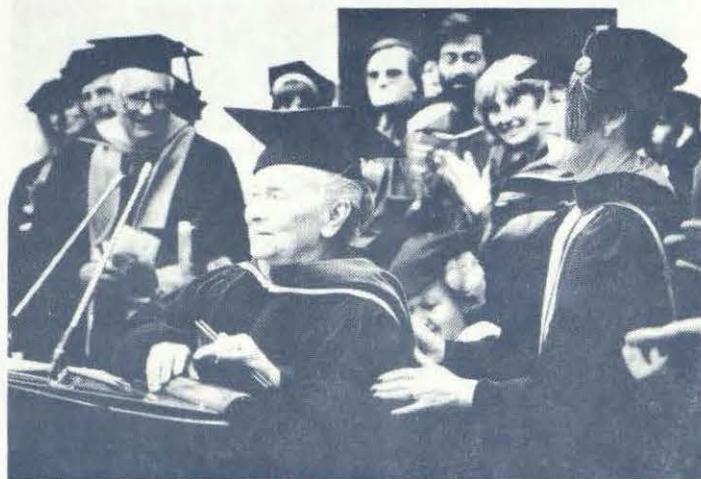
CHRISTOPHE COLOMB ON PRIZE-WINNING COMPACT DISCS Milhaud's opera, *Christophe Colomb*, Op. 102 (1928), first staged in 1930 in Berlin, recently has become available on compact discs. (See John Rockwell review in *News Through Reviews*.) Disques Montaigne has issued, as part of a series of archival releases from live Radio France broadcasts, a two-disc package of the performance of *Christophe Colomb* conducted by Manuel Rosenthal on May 31, 1956. The recording has won three different prizes. It was named winner of the *Grand Prix International du Disque* earlier, and more recently has received both the *Orphée d'Or* for 1988 and the award from the *Académie Nationale du Disque Lyrique*.

The compact disc package includes a booklet with the opera libretto in French and English, plus pictures. There are also articles by Darius Milhaud and Jean Roy. The recording (Disques Montaigne/INA Archives TCE 8750) is available from Harmonia Mundi, 3364 South Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90034, phone (213) 559-0802.

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repertoire thus offered varied programming as it exposed unfamiliar repertoire, the two song cycles not even being accessible on recordings. The piano pieces are recorded but have been heard seldom in concert. This first public program supported by the recently established Archive Endowment of the Milhaud Collection is an auspicious beginning for a possibly annual series to present less familiar repertoire by this world-renowned French composer who gave so many years of his time to students at Mills College.

* * * * *



President Mary Metz of Mills College, right, presents the honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree to Madame Milhaud, on October 9, 1987.

SOUTH DAKOTA COMMEMORATES MILHAUD ANNIVERSARY

On November 14, 1987, a concert of music dedicated to the commemoration of Darius Milhaud's 95th birth anniversary featured two works presented in Colton Recital Hall of the Warner M. Lee Center for the Fine Arts at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion. This faculty recital by Paul W. Cherry, Professor of music, included performance of *Suite*, Op. 157b (1936), with David Neely, violin, Dr. Cherry, clarinet and Arnie Sorrenson, piano. Dr. Cherry and Mr. Sorrenson also played the 2nd movement from the *Concerto for Clarinet*, Op. 230 (1941), commissioned by and dedicated to Benny Goodman. Dr. Cherry, who earned his Ph.D. from the University of Colorado, wrote his dissertation on Milhaud's string quartets. [The *Clarinet Concerto* has been recorded by Cybelia CY 703 in a performance by Maurice Gabai and the Ensemble of Instrumentalists from the Paris Opera Orchestra. It is currently available from Qualiton Imports, Ltd., 39-28 Crescent St., Long Island City, New York 11101.]

FAXON LISTS NEWSLETTER Most libraries use a principal source for ordering periodicals and other serial materials. The Darius Milhaud Society has responded to two questionnaires sent by Faxon, a major ordering resource for music libraries. The Society has already received its first music library subscription. Other libraries will also be able to use the Faxon service in order to subscribe to the newsletter at the library rate, by writing to The Faxon Company, Inc., 15 Southwest Park, Westwood, Massachusetts 02090, phone (617) 329-3350.



Jean Cocteau made this drawing in black line with coloring of buttercup yellow and sky blue (the darker shading) within and surrounding the lyre. It was printed on translucent paper as the frontispiece for the program booklet used for the concert on January 19, 1962, when Darius Milhaud conducted a program of his music in Munich.

TRIBUTE TO DARIUS MILHAUD In the program booklet for the concert Milhaud conducted in Munich on January 19, 1962, Jean Cocteau provided not only the beautiful drawing reproduced in this newsletter, but also the following:

Darius never let himself be pushed up a gentle slope. Even in his wheelchair, which his dignity transformed into the chariot of the great king whose name he bore, he spent every minute climbing rather than allowing himself to be pushed by fame, as so many others do.

I have known your recalcitrant heart for a long time, Darius. And when I close my eyes, I find myself once more in Aix-en-Provence, under the sycamores where a band of musicians, about as uncomfortable as those who had to play the *Siegfried Idyll* on the stairs of Tribschen, performed a piece we had composed for your mother. [Cocteau may have been referring to the performance at the hotel Sextius in Aix-en-Provence of *l'Hymne au Soleil*, a work Milhaud later destroyed because he considered it a failure. Because of the difficulty of recruiting musicians in the town, Milhaud had prevailed upon the town band for brass players, and hired percussionists and a bass drummer. Friends (Hélène Hoppenot, Louis Durey and the Marquise de Grimaldi Régusse) played some of the percussion parts. See *Notes Without Music*, p. 101.]

Your encounter with Claudel was written in the stars. You both had the same stubborn goodness of heart to which we owe *Le Boeuf sur le Toit*. Claudel provided the title, while you brought the rhythms for it back from Brazil "just as that other one brought the cedar in his hat." In those days, songs from distant lands did not yet reach us over the waves. Someone had to discover them, and let us have the thrill of surprise.

Your formidable mastery strengthened the bond of *Les Six* that I had tied with love. With regard to the Circus Medrano, which we all loved, you remained - in America and in France - the fierce and tender prophet of the Holy Scriptures, true to the rites of a faith that forms the roof of our own.

I once begged you to let me play the triangle in the *Choéphores*. Watching spellbound as your baton commanded the orchestra, I missed a note. Today I am returning that note to you as a token of my love for you, your wife and your son.

(Translated by Ursula Korneitchouk.)

EUROPEAN MILHAUD PROGRAMS The following occasions are those featuring Milhaud's music exclusively. There are also many listings of Milhaud works performed on programs in which other composers were included. (See the calendar listing for European performances.)

Leonard Bernstein, eminent American composer, conductor and member of the Honorary Committee of the Milhaud Society, spoke about Milhaud in July 1987 during the broadcast of his program in the Musical Mornings series for the Radio Course broadcast from the Fontainebleau Conservatory, entitled, "*The Presence of Jazz in Serious Music*." He also rehearsed the *Saudades do Brazil* and *Le Boeuf sur le Toit* during the program.

A double bill of Milhaud operas, *Le Pauvre Matelot* and *Les Malheurs d'Orphée* were performed in Nancy on February 17 by the Opera there. Charles Gangnerol directed the production, and John Darlington conducted. The program has been given in many other cities as well, and the final performance will be on May 29 in Savigny, six kilometres from Beaune.

Channel 6 TV in Paris presented twice on February 21 a writer, Louis Ducreux, who has been affiliated as Director with the Marseille, Nice and Monte Carlo Opera companies. M. Ducreux hosted a program of Milhaud works, including performance of *Le Boeuf sur le Toit* for piano, four-hands, by Edouard Ezerjean and Philip Corré, *Six Chants Populaires Hébraïques*, sung by 1986 Milhaud Prize winner Florence Katz, and the *Second* and *Third Chamber Symphonies*, plus excerpts from *L'Apothéose de Molière* and *Carnaval de Londres*.

On March 19, *Le Tryptique*, (the same concert organization that presented an all-Poulenc concert in December 1985), sponsored a program in Paris featuring works by Darius Milhaud. Robert Costarini, clarinetist, played *Duo Concertant*, for clarinet and piano, the work he had performed in 1956 to win the first prize at the Paris Conservatory. *La Libertadora*, for two pianos, was played by Mireille Varbadeau and her husband, Richard Phillips. The other Milhaud work heard on this program was the *Suite* for *Ondes Martenot* and *Piano*.

In Lyon on May 27, at the church Notre Dame de la Fourvières, the memory of the church's architect, M. Ste. Marie Perrin will be honored by performance of Milhaud's *La Sagesse*, forty-one years after its premiere performance in Rome. M. Ste. Marie Perrin was the father-in-law of Paul Claudel, whose text Milhaud used for this large work for four soloists, *récitante*, mixed chorus and orchestra.

RECORD UPDATE The Milhaud Society extends warmest gratitude to Mme. Francine Bloch Danoën for the following information concerning new record releases:

Chants Populaires Hébraïques, Op. 86 (1925): (Four of the six songs): *Chant hassidique*, *Chant du veilleur*, *Berceuse*, *Séparation*. Alberto Jona, baritone, Oscar Alessi, piano, LP. Giuntina G 10037 stereo (1987).

Christophe Colomb, Op. 102 (1928): Janine Micheau, Queen Isabella; Robert Massard, Columbus; Jean Marchat, narrator; Jean Davy, spoken alter ego of Columbus; Marthe Coustey, Columbus' mother; Claudine Collart, Duchess Medina Sodonía; Xavier Dépraz, Columbus No. 2 and other parts; Lucien Lovano, King of Spain and other parts; Jean Giraudeau, major-domo, the cook and other parts; and others. Disques Montaigne/INA Archive TCE 8750, compact discs, with booklet containing libretto, pictures, and texts by Milhaud and Jean Roy (1987).

La Création du Monde, Op. 81 (1923): London Sinfonietta with John Harle, alto saxophone, Simon Rattle, conductor. EMI VSM EL 747991-1 stereo; EMI VSM EL 747991-4, cassette; EMI VSM CDC 747991-2, compact disc (1987).

Elégie, Op. 251 (1945): Simca Heled, cello, Jonathan Zak, piano. Vox cum Laude MCD 1005 1 (1987). Reissue of In Sync C 6156 (1986).

Works for Piano: *Première Sonate*, Op. 33 (1916); *Printemps*, Op. 25, 66 (1915-1920); *L'Automne*, Op. 115 (1932); *Quatre Esquisses*, Op. 227 (1941); *Sonatine*, Op. 354 (1956): Billy Eidi, piano. Cybelia Cy 837.

MILHAUD IN THE EARLY MORNING The nationally syndicated radio broadcasts of Karl Haas are heard in many cities throughout the country. The programs are aired on dates and at times that vary at the discretion of the local broadcasting station. Ruth Lamm of Cleveland reports having heard such a broadcast between 5:00 and 6:00 a.m. on radio station WCLV on February 4, 1988 when Darius Milhaud was featured as the "mystery composer". When Mr. Haas described the composer as one who had spent two years in the diplomatic service in Brazil, Mrs. Lamm identified him, and *Scaramouche*, played for musical identification, was easy to recognize.

DUO PERFORMS Barbara Rowan and Content Sablinsky, who performed *Le Boeuf sur le toit* for piano, four-hands, in Cleveland last October when the Milhaud Society sponsored a program to commemorate the composer's 95th birth anniversary and to honor the presence of Madame Milhaud, gave a veritable festival of performances of the work in February in North Carolina and Virginia. *Le Boeuf sur le toit* was heard four times, each performance being presented in a different location. (See calendar No. 3 in the Fall 1987 newsletter)

Margaret S. Johnston, new member of the Milhaud Society, made the following comments concerning the performance by Mmes. Rowan and Sablinsky on February 21, 1988, in Charlottesville, Virginia: "It was exciting to see two people play so well together that they were able to take all the liberties a single pianist would take to express the music fully and still sound as one player. Their ensemble is as near perfect as humans can get."



Barbara Rowan and Content Sablinsky.

THANKS TO INFORMATION SOURCES Much appreciation from the Darius Milhaud Society goes to the following, who have sent information for the Spring 1988 newsletter: Michael Blume, Paul Cherry, Eleanor Cohen, Einion Dafydd, Francine B. Danoën, Tom Evert, Ruth Gillard, Joanne Harada, Marian J. Lott, June D. Johnson, Margaret S. Johnston, Amy Kekst, Ruth Lamm, Mme. Madeleine Milhaud, Robaline J. Meacham, Stephen Miller, Margaret W. Nelson, David Romaine, Content Sablinsky, and Alice M. Treseder.

Our apologies to those who sent information for the Fall 1987 newsletter, where their names were inadvertently omitted. They included Jocelyn Chang, Marietta Cheng, David Daniels, Francine B. Danoën, Jane Galante, Dawn Haylett, Frederick Koch, Jean-Louis LeRoux, Fred Loeffler, Mme. Madeleine Milhaud, Stephen Miller, Walter Strauss, F. Kate Warne, Carolyn G. Warner, Nancy W. Work.



Madame Madeleine Milhaud and Katharine Warne surrounded by members of the Tom Evert Dance Company: front, Kay Ricks and Lynn Nolan; center, Tom Evert; back, Nick Carlisle, Linda Ferrato, Jim Holloway. Photo by Susana Evert.

EVERT AND COMPANY IN NEW YORK Tom Evert, choreographer of Milhaud's *Second Symphonic Suite*, Op. 57 (1919), (which Milhaud created from his incidental music for Paul Claudel's play, *Protée*), included this work on a program presented on February 26 and 27, 1988 in New York at the Marymount Manhattan Theater. Anna Kisselgoff, dance critic for the *New York Times*, reviewed the concert on February 29 and commented that Evert's choreography, *Cuisine*, "delightfully catches the composer's own whimsical sense." The work, premiered on May 15, 1987 in Cleveland as part of the Milhaud Society's festival, *Milhaud's Early Theatre and Dance Creations*, has been performed frequently in concerts in Cleveland and elsewhere. (See Calendar listings.)

In addition to frequent concert performances, the Tom Evert Dance Company also has shown the opening section of the work as part of the Company's Young Audiences presentations in schools all over Cleveland and the rest of northeastern Ohio. Mr. Evert comments that children love it, because its imagery is literal rather than abstract, and they identify with the fish, the fisherman and the humor.

In October 1987, when Madame Madeleine Milhaud was in Cleveland for the reunion and concert commemorating her husband's 95th birthday, Tom Evert and the Company presented a run-through performance for her, at Cleveland State University.

NEW RECORD OF PIANO WORKS The recording by Billy Eidi (Cybelia CY 839) of a variety of Milhaud's piano works was partially sponsored by the *Société de Crédit Marseillaise*, the bank that organizes the annual competition, (now three years old), for the *Prix Darius Milhaud*. Mr. Eidi was featured soloist in June 1987 on a program that was part of the Darius Milhaud Festival in Ville d'Avray. Piano works featured on the recording and (except for the *Sonatine*) included on the June program are: *Première Sonate*, Op. 33 (1916); *Printemps*, Op. 25 and Op. 66 (1915-1920); *L'Automne*, Op. 115 (1932); *Four Sketches*, Op. 227 (1941); *Sonatine*, Op. 354 (1956). The works are performed with outstanding musicality and an astute comprehension that renders Milhaud's ideas with satisfying clarity. The quality of the recording is excellent. Mr. Eidi was kind enough to forward an archive copy of this LP disc to the Darius Milhaud Society, for which the Society is both pleased and grateful.

BOOK ABOUT MILHAUD PUBLISHED Announcement has been made by the San Francisco Press that June publication is planned for the English translation by Jane Hohfeld Galante of Paul Collaer's book, *Darius Milhaud. The Catalogue* of Milhaud's works made by Madame Madeleine Milhaud and revised by Mrs. Galante will be included. The book is available at the pre-publication price of \$35.00, after which time it will be \$45.00. Send your order accompanied by a check (or your organization's formal purchase order), plus \$2.00 for postage and handling (California residents add sales tax) to: San Francisco Press, Inc., Box 6800, San Francisco, California 94101-6800.



Marla Berg, soprano, recipient of the 1988 Darius Milhaud award at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

DARIUS MILHAUD AWARD RECIPIENT

Recipient of the 1988 Darius Milhaud Award is Marla Berg, soprano, who receives her Artist's Diploma from The Cleveland Institute of Music on May 14. The Milhaud Award is presented annually to the CIM student considered to be the most talented, creative, sensitive and accomplished, as well as a person with an outstanding academic record.

Ms. Berg, who also holds a Master of Music from CIM, is a student of George Vassos. She is performing professionally with The Cleveland Opera from May 13-21, playing Maria in Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story*. She was an Associate Artist with The Cleveland

Opera from 1985-1987 and participated in the production by the company in 1986 of Virgil Thomson's *Mother of Us All*. She also has sung numerous roles for Lyric Opera Cleveland, including the world premiere in July 1987 of *Haydn's Head* by Larry Baker, a new work commissioned by Lyric Opera. Ms. Berg has also appeared with the Ohio Chamber Orchestra and The Cleveland Institute of Music Orchestra, and she has given many recitals in and outside of Cleveland.

The Darius Milhaud Award, presented to Ms. Berg by CIM President David Cerone, was established in 1986, and was given in that year to David Wolfson, a composer now residing in New York. In 1987, the Award went to Yolanda Kondonassis, harpist, who has just recently completed six weeks of performance as substitute first harpist with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, and was grand prize winner this spring of the Naftzger Young Artist Auditions and Awards of the Wichita, Kansas Symphony. She was signed by Affiliate Artists in New York last fall, and gave a recital in New York on March 10 under their auspices. Ms. Kondonassis also played Milhaud's *Harp Sonata* at CIM on October 18, 1987 as part of the commemoration of the composer's 95th birth anniversary.

JOEL SACHS, *The Juilliard Journal*, Vol. III No. 4: Article FOCUS: Crosscurrents, December 1987/January 1988.

Juilliard's FOCUS! Festival celebrates its fourth birthday from January 22 to January 29, [with the topic] "Cross Currents-Classical Music and the American Popular Tradition,"... inspired by the success of last year's event, which explored the influence of immigrant composers on the musical life of this country. [Ed. note: last year's FOCUS! included performance of Milhaud's *A Frenchman in New York Op. 399* (1962).] In five concerts at Alice Tully Hall and Juilliard Theater, "Cross Currents" will play upon the fruitful interaction between the "serious" and the "popular" musical traditions in 20th century America. Several kinds of musical interaction will be explored, including classical composers influenced by popular techniques, popular composers consciously striving to incorporate classical methods, and some composers who belong to both worlds at once.

Some of the composers to be represented in the festival will be obvious choices to students of music history - Copland, Milhaud, Ives, for example...

Ragtime and later jazz also made their mark upon Europeans... Have you heard transformations of ragtime by Stravinsky, Hindemith, and Milhaud? They are among the many Europeans who composed under the spell of American popular culture... [FOCUS! 1988 featured Milhaud's *La Création du Monde, Op. 81* (1923), conducted by Paul Zukofsky.]

Joel Sachs is Chairman of the Music History Department, Coordinator of Contemporary Music, and Director of the FOCUS! Festival at the Juilliard School.

NEWS THROUGH REVIEWS

STRING QUARTET REVIEWS The Darius Milhaud Society is deeply grateful to Madame Madeleine Milhaud for sending copies of the following reviews.

Darius Milhaud's eighteen string quartets are available on LPs (Cybelia Cy 651, 652, 653 and 681), and on compact discs (Cybelia CY 804-808). Quartets No. 1, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 16 and 18 were recorded by the Aquitaine Quartet: Micheline Lefebvre and Laurent Pellerin, violins; Pierre Lefebvre, viola; Robert Bex, cello. Quartets No. 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 12, 14, 15 and 17 were recorded by the Arcana Quartet: Dominique Barbier and Hubert Chachereau, violins; Serge Soufflard, viola; Willie Guillaume, cello (Nos. 9, 12, 14); Michel Poulet, cello (Nos. 2, 3, 4, 6, 15 and 17). Both sets of Cybelia recordings are available from Qualiton Imports, Ltd., 39-28 Crescent Street, Long Island City, New York 11101.

PIERRE HUGLI, Diapason: Review of Vol. IV LPs (Quartets No. 7, 8, 5, 1, 13, 18), January 1987, p. 106. Translated from the French.

Why does Milhaud seem today to be in purgatory? The abundance of his production... prevents us from knowing well even the best of his works, for theatre as well as chamber music, particularly in a medium which was dear to him, the string quartet: Milhaud appears as important for Latin lyricism in this respect, as does Janacek for the Slavs, for example. He [Milhaud] had decided at the age of twenty-eight to write eighteen string quartets - one more than Beethoven. He acquired such skill in the mastery of counterpoint that he succeeded, in the *14th* and *15th Quartets*, composed in 1948, in making them very different, yet similar enough that superimposed, they form an octet.

If the contrapuntal game with Milhaud is rich, sometimes complex, he always has a clarity which makes him look toward the heights, toward the Mediterranean sky: everyone has said and re-said that Milhaud was a great melodist - but he is also a polyphonist who doesn't like to confine harmonies to [those implied by] the bass. Take one of his most accomplished successes, the *Fifth Quartet* dedicated to Schoenberg, from 1920. Everything happens in the high register, in a manner totally different, for example, from the German romantic language: sunny music, often coming from the dance, in which the steps are even underlined in the top, in the *Vif et léger* [movement] of this *5th Quartet*.

That doesn't prevent seriousness: the last quartet, the *18th*, makes one think of late Beethoven, in its personal style, of a Grecian clarity, of an inner serenity. What change of direction since the Ravelian *First Quartet* dedicated in 1912 (at age twenty) to the memory of Cézanne (and from which one finds an exact quote in the last measures of the last masterwork)! But also what continuity in the research in concision: in none of the quartets recorded here does Milhaud go on too long or repeat himself - his imagination seems inexhaustible.

This music allows no failure in interpretation: The Aquitaine Quartet offers us a very beautiful reading, clear, intense, in its vivacity, its spontaneity, its humor and its transparency. A very good offering - the recording is supported by the *Domaines Barons de Rothschild*, which certainly would not have displeased the author of *Boeuf sur le toit*.

JOHN D. WISER, Fanfare: Review of Volume Three, LP (Quartets Nos. 10, 11, 16), January 1986.

The three quartets contained here are products of the decade from 1940 to 1950. No. 10 is a harmonically acrid work... polytonal with a vengeance, but retains a good deal of traditional character. Nos. 11 and 16 are altogether more gentle in harmonic flavor, and while there is no shortage of polyphony, their phraseology is intended to be understood in two parts.

... [The Aquitaine Quartet is] lean in tone... energetic, accurate, and more than ordinarily stylish. Cybelia's recording is close up and clean, LP surfaces excellent...

STRING QUARTET REVIEWS CONTINUED . . .

JOHN D. WISER, *Fanfare*: Review of Volume Two LP, (Quartets No. 2, 6, 15), January 1985.

The second installment of Milhaud's 18 quartets - done by a group of completely prepared young musicians . . . [leaves] us a bit short of the numerical halfway mark in the series. If Milhaud can be said to have "periods" . . . then we have here one specimen each of his early, middle, and late quartet music. The *Second Quartet* is big, wide-ranging, sharply emotive. It demonstrates that the composer in his late 20s already had a comprehensive grasp of compositional technique and no shortage of feelings to express at the outset of World War I. The work is dedicated to Leo Latil, an early victim of the war, some of whose poetry Milhaud . . . [later] set in his memorial piece for Latil, the *String Quartet No. 3*.

String Quartet No. 6 is strongly neoclassical; much shorter, drier, and more densely energetic, one of a vast number of mid-1920s works cleaving to an anti-Romantic aesthetic position. There is a good deal of charm in its invention.

With the *String Quartet No. 14* (to be found in Volume One of this series), the *String Quartet No. 15* is at an extreme pole of constructionism. It is designed to work as a separate entity, where it is blandly lively and open-textured . . .

A change of cellist has not seriously modified the good tonal qualities or interpretive strengths of this ensemble. They are clean, tasteful, and keenly aware of the necessity for linear clarity in this music. The recording is . . . in good perspective, full of detail and solid in imaging . . . So far, considered for individual performances and as a series, quartet fanciers would be foolish to pass it up.

PAUL TUROK, *New York Times*: Review of Volume Three LP, April 20, 1986.

. . . In these, [Milhaud's eighteen string quartets], as in all his music, characteristically French songs and dances jostle with passages of a darkly troubled cast. Dissonant linear conversations between the instruments, often utilizing jazz and Latin rhythms, build to emotional peaks that surprise the listener beguiled by the innocence with which Milhaud lets his charming musical ideas unfold.

Volume 3 of a projected series devoted to Milhaud's complete string quartets includes three of his most attractive works in the medium, *No. 10* (1940), *No. 11* (1942) and *No. 16* (1950) (Cybelia DS 351). The *10th* contains a flowingly lyrical first movement, a perky scherzo, a pensive slow movement and an energetic finale. It is a thoroughly enjoyable work . . . The *11th* follows the same four movement scheme, with equally fluent first and second movements, but far more biting harmonies in the slow movement, and remarkably etched cross-rhythms in the finale.

The *16th* was the composer's gift to his wife on their 25th wedding anniversary. Couched in the same four-movement scheme, it is predictably tender, bouncy and lyrical. But the finale proves substantial, of a truly tough fiber, giving an air of importance and strength to what otherwise might have remained a sentimental gesture. The performance, by a quartet formed of faculty members of the Bordeaux Conservatory, is fluent and technically excellent . . . The recording is rather closely-miked and lifelike.

JOHN D. WISER, *Fanfare*: Review of Volumes 1 and 2, CD's (Quartets Nos. 1, 7, 10, 16, and Quartets Nos. 8, 11, 13, 5), March, 1987.

. . . Milhaud seldom in the quartet medium falls off a high plane of discourse . . . procedures are endlessly inventive and varied.

The [Aquitaine Quartet] is an accomplished, secure, timbrally attractive ensemble, worthy of comparison with the best French string quartets past and present.

There is plenty of room ambience in the CDs, but clarity is as primary a consideration of sound engineer Michel Pierre as it was of composer Milhaud and of these first-rate performers . . .

LIONEL SALTER, *Gramophone*, London: Review of Vol. 4 LPs, (Quartets No. 1, 5, 7, 8, 13, 18), October, 1986.

. . . [The recording of all eighteen of Milhaud's string quartets] does indeed fill a quite serious gap in the recorded repertoire . . .

With these six works, . . . there are absolutely no . . . reservations: this is an excellent team which plays with understanding, sensitive tone, tremendous attack and precision, and almost flawless intonation. (Though it may be invidious to single out any one of the members, a special word needs to be said for the first violin, unfailingly sure-footed . . .) The recording here, too, is lively but clean . . .

. . . [The *First Quartet*] is much the most diatonic of the eighteen, . . . and all three movements are thematically connected. Two other quartets are in three movements: the short No. 13, a fun work with an exuberant Mexican finale and a central Barcarolle in $\frac{7}{8}$ time which beguilingly keeps building up eight-part chords in open 5ths, and the deeply impressive No. 8, which has a flowing first movement interrupted by emphatic $\frac{7}{8}$ figures, a long, anguished and eloquent slow movement and a violent, passionate finale . . . the most familiar of the series, [is] No. 7, with its exquisite irregular-rhythm lullaby and witty finale (in which the composer shows his fondness for canon) . . .

JOHN D. WISER, *Fanfare*: Review of Volume 4, LPs (Quartets Nos. 1, 5, 7, 8, 13, 18), September, 1986.

. . . The string-quartet medium [Milhaud] held in special regard, and the 18 works he produced in that medium show signs of thoughtfulness in their general polish and heightened character. In this final installment of the first integral set, one might expect a certain thrown-in quality, but that is not the case. Every work here has something to engage one's attention, and two—the first and last—are special. The First, from 1912, is one of those essays in the antique that Milhaud produced at regular intervals, with the feeling for French Renaissance dance music uppermost . . . Milhaud's final quartet of 1951 . . . is one of the largest in scale, with atmospheric, often quite pungent slow movements framing two livelier movements labeled *Hymne*. This work may at first seem too subdued for comfort, but its profile expands with repeated listening.

The . . . [Aquitaine] quartet is stylish and generally clean in ensemble sound, as they were in their previous appearances in the series . . . quartet fanciers should find this production more than satisfactory.

JOHN D. WISER, *Fanfare*: Review of Cybelia CY 806, 807 and 808 CDs, Vols. Three (Quartets No. 9, 12, 14, 6), Four (Quartets No. 3, 15, 17) and Five (Quartets No. 2, 4, 18), April 1987.

. . . Having lived for a time with this body of music, . . . some initial ambivalences have switched over to the positive. None has gone in the other direction.

There is no doubt that the man had as complete a mastery of the mechanics of composition as anyone living in this century. After a time, one gets past the prevailing fluency and characteristic busyness of interior voices to find that every movement in most of this music contains a core of unmistakable expressivity. All but a few of the quartets are markedly serious in tone, not music to be approached casually any more than the problems entailed in its composition were dealt with casually by Milhaud. Some of the quartets, I think particularly Nos. 9, 12, 3, and 18 - in that order of attractiveness - belong in the international standard quartet repertoire.

Cybelia has recorded the quartets more or less in reverse of their appearance on LP, but they take up as many CDs as they did LPs. The *Quatuor Arcana*, while not as luxuriant in tonal resources as the *Centre National de Musique de Chambre d'Aquitaine*, plays with verve and lean high definition, and the recording process itself has a dourly integral clarity and balance. All five volumes in the series are strongly recommended to chamber-music devotees; Volume Three, containing two of the most conspicuously friendly quartets (Nos. 9 and 12), may be of more general interest . . .

NEWS THROUGH REVIEWS

JOHN ROCKWELL, *New York Times*: Article, *Rare French Record From Radio Comes to CD*, March 13, 1988.

All over Europe, state radio stations have been busily recording and, often, producing major concert and operatic performances for decades. There is a lively network of collectors of such materials, usually broken down by specialty . . .

Now, a major new cache of French radio material has become available to patrons of specialty classical-music stores. It consists of 10 compact-disk sets, each containing two or three CD's of performances mostly from the 1950s and 60s recorded by the French national radio network at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris . . .

The material appears on a label called Disques Montaigne . . . Funded by a French bank, the series is the project of a man named Pierre Lebaillif, who unearthed the radio tapes and had them cleaned up and digitally remastered by Pierre Vêrany, a French recording engineer who has his own CD label. The resultant sound is consistently clean and natural, whether in mono or stereo (almost everything after about 1958 is in stereo).

There are some striking performances here, along with one major score never previously available on disks. That is Darius Milhaud's epic opera *Christophe Colomb*. One of the composer's many collaborations with the poet Paul Claudel, it was first performed at the Berlin State Opera under Erich Kleiber in 1930, but has been only rarely heard since. Other than its rather convoluted dramatic structure (two parts that cover some of the same ground) and extreme scenic demands, it's difficult to understand why this intensely theatrical, impassioned score has been so neglected (one half was given in San Francisco some 25 years ago, with great success). This French concert performance under Manuel Rosenthal's direction makes a stirring case for the music . . .

ROBERT COMMANDAY, *San Francisco Chronicle*: Review, March 15, 1988.

An attempt was made Sunday to do something for the sorely neglected Darius Milhaud . . . Milhaud's number came up because conductor Jean-Louis LeRoux has been his most loyal advocate here. LeRoux chose two of the popular Milhaud works, *Suite Française* (1944) and the fantasy on Brazilian ideas, *Le Boeuf sur le toit* (1920).

Suite Française is a folk music based characterization of five provinces originally composed for school band. Three lively movements are outspoken, familiar and delightfully brash with extra levels of Milhaud's "brute force" counterpoints. The second and fourth movements are touching, "Brittany" in a lament with a lovely oboe solo, "Alsace-Lorraine" starting out prettily but gradually become (sic) dark, proud and sombre. Unmistakably, war-time events and history colored Milhaud's thoughts, but I'd never heard quite this effect until LeRoux's performance.

Le Boeuf sur le toit (*The Bull on the Roof*), after a Brazilian song of that name, was turned into a ballet/pantomime score subtitled *The Nothing Doing Bar*, with scenario by Jean Cocteau, scenery by Raoul Dufy, masks and costumes by Fauconnet. (Wouldn't that be a natural for one of the Joffrey Ballet's historical reconstructions, or why not the San Francisco Ballet?) It's a lot of fun, rough and ready in nature, and in this performance . . .

ROBERT DERWAE, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*: Review, January 17, 1988.

Jazz was the theme of the Ohio Chamber Orchestra's superbly programmed and well-played concert . . . A sold-out house heard two jazz-influenced works from the classical repertoire . . .

The concert opened with [Music Director] Oltman leading an 18-piece ensemble through Darius Milhaud's *La Création Du Monde*, a 1923 ballet score depicting an African legend of creation. By eliciting clearly articulated, disciplined lines from the players, rather than striving for a more supple rhythmic approach, Oltman emphasized the classical aspects of the piece. The wind section and the various soloists played cleanly and confidently, and the entire ensemble handled the occasionally difficult rhythms with verve . . .

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