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TAILORED FOUNDATIONS

Contemporary Music

ON Tuesday, December 6, the recently-formed New Zealand Section of the International Society For Contemporary Music will present the first public concert since its inauguration. Included in the broadcast portion of the programme will be a Sonata for Violin and Piano by the young British composer Bernard Stevens; Sonata for Piano by the New Zealand composer Douglas Lilburn; and Trio for Clarinet, Violin and Piano by the Soviet composer Aram Khachaturian. In this article BESSIE POLLARD discusses the last-named work in outline.

Trio for Clarinet, Violin and Piano Khachaturian

THE Trio for Clarinet, Violin and Piano, composed in 1932 when Khachaturian was 28, was the work which made him famous. He based the composition on Armenian themes, and because the clarinet suggests the tonal colour of certain wind instruments peculiar to that region, Khachaturian deliberately made the clarinet part important. The form is not on strict classical lines, but rather suggests variations, in true Eastern style; the idiom of writing is fresh and concise with a fundamental basic strength, and as a whole, the Trio is a splendid example of Soviet chamber music.

The opening movement—*Andante con dolore*—has been described by one reviewer as "typically Transcaucasian," because of its sinuous, florid melodic line. It begins with a three-bar Introduction, then the clarinet and violin play a lyrical duet—



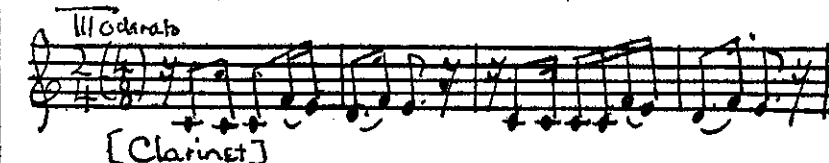
The piano supplies a spacious background of tranquil chords—



The second movement—*Allegro*—in certain respects suggests the whirling excitement of Eastern dancing. It begins with a melody doubled by clarinet and violin, over a very rapid broken chord figure in the piano part ("A" below); after a slower episode, the clarinet leads off with a quick theme ("B" below), answered a bar later by violin—



The *Finale—Moderato*—is based on an Armenian folk song. The rhythm is complex, and combined with the polyphonic style of writing, it makes this movement difficult to play. Here are the opening bars—



Trio for Clarinet, Violin and Piano, by Khachaturian, will be presented at the first public concert of the New Zealand Section of the International Society For Contemporary Music, by K. Wilson (clarinet), Francis Rosner (violin), and Dorothy Davies (piano). (See also page 12.)

N.Z. LISTENER, DECEMBER 2, 1949.