

DONE IT AGAIN



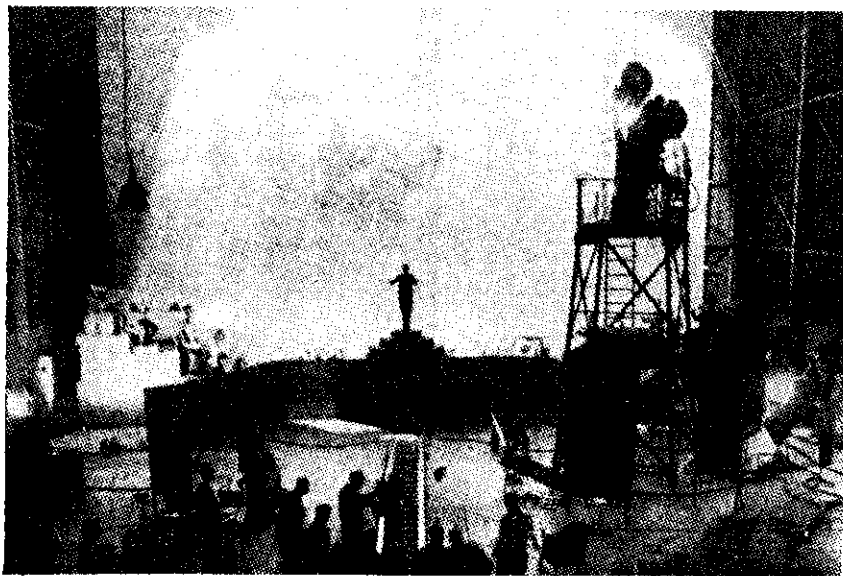
FOR MOUSSORGSKY a Walpurgis nightmare after "A Night on a Bare Mountain"

New characters appear under the Disney hand. Hop Low is a little mushroom who tries to do the Chinese Dance from "The Nutcracker Suite," and can't quite keep up with the big mushrooms. Ben Ali Gator is premier danseur of an ostrich ballet set to the music of Ponchielli's "Dance of the Hours." Susan is a hippopotamus ballerina who cavorts like a blimp through a *pas de deux* with Ben. Bacchus and his donkey

insky's piece of musical distortion.

Stravinsky himself had a look at the illustrations for "Rite of Spring" and vowed they were exactly what he had had in mind when the work was composed. More than that, he was so impressed he signed a contract to do more work expressly for Disney.

The New York Academy of Sciences asked for special showings because the directors believed many of the animal



STOKOWSKI, silhouetted against the hazy outline of the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra. A still taken during the filming of Bach's "Tocatta and Fugue"

Jacchus trip through Beethoven's "Pastoral Symphony."

Atmosphere

The artists were as keen to perfect "Fantasia" as the technicians who worked such wonders with Stokowski's sound. One of them, found studying lightning flashes by reclining on a Los Angeles kerbstone in pouring rain, was arrested.

Famous paleontologists were called in to advise about the monsters for Strav-

pictures were better science than trainloads of fossils and taxidermy.

Musicians and sound engineers claimed that the recording had never before been approached.

Professors of music vowed that "Fantasia" would save more ears for great music than a century of lectures.

Disney, looking back on a production bill of two and a-quarter million dollars, crossed his fingers and said: "What we strive for is entertainment."

A New Zealander Had The Same Idea

NEW ZEALANDERS have already seen something of the attempts of movie makers to put the sense of music on the screen. Five years ago Len Lye, New Zealand born, turned out some "shorts" in which music was visualised impressionistically.

Some of these have shown here during the past year, and most theatregoers must have come across them somewhere.

Staccato music he represented by dots and dashes in a sort of syncopated technicolour. Largo movements were graceful, wavy lines. Flashes like lightning, cutting through thunder clouds, represented *tempestuoso*, and *maestoso* would be pictured with drums turning one in upon the other and grandly out again.

Disney uses some of this technique in "Fantasia," although most of his musical picturisation is carried out in the simpler terms of object-drawing. But for Bach's "Fugue" there is a strangely beautiful wave and cloud sequence, and there is true artistic neo-impressionism in a queer series of explosive music visualisations performed by a worried and disembodied sound track, posing diffidently on the screen like a reluctant wire.

In the opening feet of the film both music and picture are abstract. Stokowski appears silhouetted against the hazy outline of the huge Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra. There are sounds of instruments being tuned. Then the music flushes out from the picture, the hazy orchestra begins to dissolve, and weird ripples and filaments begin an unearthly ballet in technicolour.

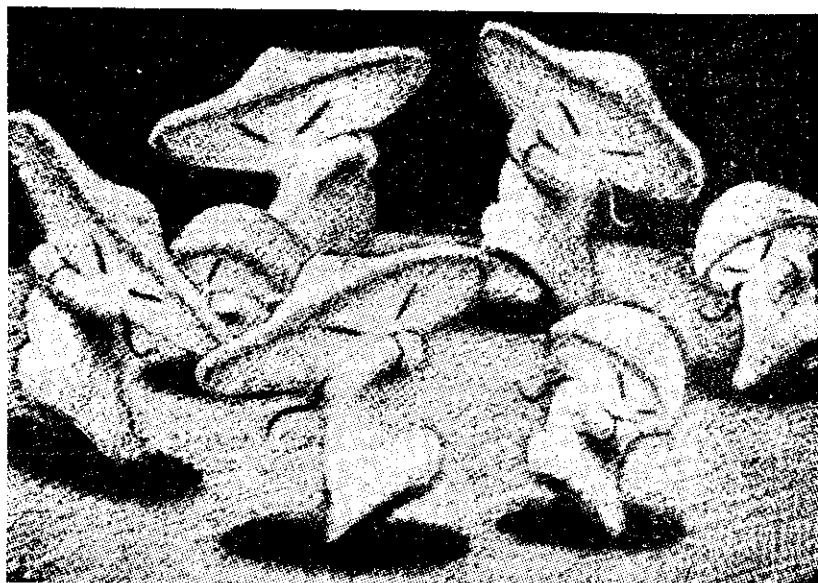
Most impressionistic painters concern themselves mainly with their own ideas, but occasionally one has attempted to interpret the ideas of others in poetry or music. The Spanish painter Segrelles, for example, has painted his conception of Beethoven symphonies. By a coincidence, this artist has also done a great deal of work illustrating fairytales.



STOKOWSKI, Disney's apprentice

It is clear, however, that Disney has not himself been "highbrow," although he has taken the most highbrow theme he could find. Where he has felt himself unable to do full artistic justice to the matter in hand he has been content to make fun.

Critics may deplore what seems to be lack of taste, but Disney will be given this much praise; that he has advanced boldly into an art form that immortals from Aeschylus to Wagner, have dreamed of.



HOP LOW, THE LITTLE MUSHROOM, does not manage to keep up with the big ones dancing to Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker Suite"