

notes and a similar occasional dallying with the intonation by Kurt Boshme as the King, the recording gives an exciting account both of Wagner's music and his drama.

### Off the Beaten Path

Maria Luigi Carlo Zenobia Salvatore Cherubini was in his day a big shot in the musical world, composing prodigiously throughout his long life—he lived to be 81—and accumulating honours and material reward in Italy (his birthplace), France and England. Unfortunately, his day was also Beethoven's day and despite strong recommendations from the Viennese master, posterity has largely given Cherubini the go-by. A somewhat belated recognition of this injustice is made in a recording of Cherubini's Requiem Mass in C Minor. Too ornate and florid for liturgical use and not at all rich in the dramatic representation of the Requiem, one may wonder just where Cherubini fits in today; but maybe I am missing something, for Berlioz enthusiastically referred to the "sustained sublimity" of his style. The performance by the Orchestra Stabile e Coro dell' Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia (Columbia 33CX 1075) is beautiful.

And beautiful, too, is the playing of Menuhin and the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult of Concerto in D Minor, by Mendelssohn (HMV ALP 1085). Even glamorous presentation, however, cannot put much gloss on this music of Mendelssohn's adolescence which, practically rediscovered by Menuhin, might reasonably have been left to gather a mute glory among the Mendelssohn archives. Carl Nielsen's Violin Concerto, Op. 33 (HMV BLP 1025) is a different proposition. Unusual in design, this work is not in the tradition of the virtuoso concerto but clearly has a story to tell. Menuhin gives a poetic and lustrous interpretation in which he is ably supported by the Danish State Radio Symphony

Orchestra conducted by Mogens Woldike.

Whatever opinion one might offer, I am sure every woodwind player and the French horns, too, would plump for Richard Strauss's *Wind Symphony*. For myself, I find this music somewhat prolix, having too much to say about nothing very important; but there is no doubt at all about the excellent playing of the London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas (Parlophone PMA 1006).

### Coda

The ever popular Schumann Quintet in E Flat, Op. 44, is given a fine performance by Clifford Curzon and the Budapest Quartet (Columbia 33CX 1050), one definitely worth investigating. The Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra (conductor Mogens Woldike) make the most of two symphonies by Haydn, No. 44 in E Minor ("Travelsymphonie") and No. 48 in C Major ("Marie Theresa") (Decca LXT 2832). It is said Haydn wished the adagio of No. 44 played at his funeral. As played by the Danish orchestra this music would make any funeral a memorable occasion, and both the symphonies would add happiness to any other occasion—even a trip to a desert island!

## May Choice

**BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 3 in E Flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"), played by the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan—Columbia 33CX 1046.

**SCHUBERT:** Song Recital by Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Edwin Fischer—Columbia 33CX 1040.

**MOUSSORGSKY:** Boris Godounov — The Choeurs Russes de Paris and the Orchestre National conducted by Issay Dobrowen, with an impressive list of soloists—HMV ALP 1044-7. N.B.—They are all fine.

## To Direct Australian National Opera

AFTER leading one or two performances of the Australian National Opera in Wellington last week as guest conductor, Warwick Braithwaite has accepted an offer made him some time ago to become musical and artistic director of the company on its return to Australia. His term as conductor of the National Orchestra of the NZBS expires on August 19, and he will leave for Sydney a week later. His decision is likely to have a big influence on the

development of opera in Australia, because of his world reputation as a conductor in this field.

"As musical and artistic director I will be in complete charge of the choice of operas, the casting of operas, the arrangement of time allowed for rehearsal, the conducting of performances and the watching over of the standard of the whole company," he said when discussing his plans with *The Listener*. "The contract will be for two years in the first place, with the possibility of extension, but one has to consider whether one should remain away from London for too long," he said.

Mr. Braithwaite will live in Sydney, and one of the first steps he expects to see accomplished is the building of a permanent opera house there by the company, which has raised the necessary money for this purpose. He considers Australia to be the logical place for the establishment of a permanent opera, with its rapidly expanding population and its reserve of many excellent voices which in the past have had to go abroad to Milan and London or Paris to get recognition.

Mr. Braithwaite's long experience with opera includes nine years as conductor of Sadler's Wells (from 1931 to 1940), and four years as conductor at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (from 1948 to 1952). In symphony work he is equally experienced, having been a conductor for the BBC for nine years, and conductor of the Scottish Orchestra of Glasgow for six years.



WARWICK BRAITHWAITE

N.Z. LISTENER, MAY 7, 1954.



## Opera Recordings



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MANON (Massenet)

Complete recording with the following cast: Manon (Soprano), Janine Micheau; Pousette (Soprano), Claudine Collart; Chevalier des Grieux (Tenor), Libero de Luca; Lescaut (Baritone), Roger Bourdin; Comte des Grieux (Bass), Julien Giovannetti; De Bretigny (Baritone), Guy Godin; Orchestra and Chorus of the Opera-Comique, Paris, conducted by Albert Wolff.

LXT 2651-6  
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PARSIFAL (Wagner)

Complete recording made during the actual performance at the Bayreuth Festival Theatre, 1951, with the following cast: Gurnemanz (Bass), Ludwig Weber; Amfortas (Baritone), George London; Parsifal (Tenor), Wolfgang Windgassen; Klingsor (Baritone), Herman Uhde; Kundry (Soprano), Martha Modl; Bayreuth Festival Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch.

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MEISTERSINGER VON NURNBERG (Wagner)

Complete recording with the following cast: Hans Sachs (Bass-Baritone), Paul Schoeffler; Pogner (Bass), Otto Edelmann; Vogelgesang (Tenor), Hugo Meyer-Welling; Beckmesser (Baritone), Karl Donch; Von Stolzing (Tenor), Gunther Treptow; David (Tenor), Anton Dermota; Eva (Soprano), Hilde Gueden; Magdalene (Soprano), Else Schurhoff; Vienna State Opera Chorus and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch.

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Cast: The King of Egypt, Fernando Corena (Bass); Amneris, Ebe Stignani (Mezzo-Soprano); Aida, Renata Tebaldi (Soprano); Radames, Mario del Monaco (Tenor); Amonastro, Aldo Protti (Baritone); Ramphis, Dario Caselli (Bass); A Messenger, Piero di Palma (Tenor); with the Chorus and Orchestra of L'Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Rome, conducted by Alberto Erede.

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TRISTAN UND ISOLDE (Wagner)

Cast: Isolde, Kirsten Flagstad (Soprano); Tristan, Ludwig Suthaus (Tenor); Brangäne, Blanche Thebom (Mezzo-Soprano); King Mark, Josef Greindl (Bass); Kuwenzel, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (Baritone); Seeman (Soprano), Rudolf Schock (Tenor); Hirt (Shepherd), Rudolf Schock (Tenor); Melot, Edgar Evans (Tenor); Steuermann (Steersman), Rhoderick Davies (Baritone); and the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler, and Chorus of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (sung in German).

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