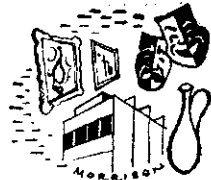




THE AUCKLAND FESTIVAL



THIS year's Festival of the Arts in Auckland is wider in scope than any of its predecessors, and, says Julius Hogben, Chairman of the Executive of the Auckland Festival Society, it will be "of a standard which would be regarded as high in any town in Great Britain. It is Auckland's good fortune that artists of world fame have been willing to come here. It is a matter, too, for particular pride that such large contributions to the Festival are being made this year by New Zealand artists who, by their talent and by years of work and striving, have achieved position and fame in the world of art overseas." Mr. Hogben was overseas for several months last year and attended a number of festivals in Britain, including that at Edinburgh.

The Festival programme, extending over three weeks, embraces ballet, drama, films, music, poetry-reading, the annual exhibition of the Auckland Society of Arts, an exhibition of flower books called "Flowers of Five Centuries," a special Festival exhibition of works by Frances Hodgkins, and an exhibition of work by students of the New Zealand University School of Architecture, with the theme of "The Art in Architecture."

All Festival events considered suitable for broadcasting will be broadcast, and the remainder will almost certainly be discussed on the air, while in addition many of the people taking part will be heard from time to time, in interviews, talks, or other special programmes. In some cases recordings will be made and played after the actual event. The official opening, for example, which will take place at 12.30 on Thursday, May 27, will be heard at 10 o'clock that night from 1YC. It will include a talk by Andrew Gold on *Music and New Zealanders in London* (see also pages 10 and 11). Music from the ballet will also be recorded for later playing, as will some of the Festival lecture programmes, which include talks symposia on *Elgar and the Dream of Gerontius*, and *Aspects of a Ballet*.

NZBS microphones will be taken to the official opening of the Frances Hodgkins Exhibition, which will take place in the Auckland Art Gallery on Saturday, June 5. This programme will include a critical review by Vernon Brown, a description of the scene and possibly brief interviews with one or two, of the people present. It will be broadcast on Monday, June 7.

Auckland listeners will already have heard a good deal about Festival projects, in *The Arts in Auckland*, from 1YC at 9.30 p.m. on Fridays; and on Saturday, May 29, from 1YA at 8.6 p.m., there will be a more comprehensive preview, called *Let's Make a Festival*, in which Rex Savers will talk about Festival ideals and organisation, and will introduce some of the principal contributors as well as excerpts from rehearsals. A similar procedure will be followed with the architecture exhibition.

There will be a unique opportunity for people who enjoy the regular *Critics* panels broadcast from 1YC, for during the Festival this session will be recorded before an invited audience in

the Auckland Art Gallery. They will meet on May 27, and June 3, 10 and 17. On each of these occasions the Talks Department of the NZBS hopes to provide an evening's entertainment for those who attend. Proceedings will open with an informal friendly discussion in which panel and audience may get to know each other, the actual recording will follow, and then, as soon as the microphone has been switched off, the subject will be thrown open for public discussion. The first of these panels, chaired by Vernon Brown, will discuss the art displays, opera, ballet and drama, music, and a general summing up of the whole Festival will follow in that order, chaired by John C. Reid. Tickets may be obtained on request to 1YA. They are free.

For music lovers the highlight of the Auckland Festival will certainly be the playing of the renowned Polish pianist Jan Smeterlin. After hearing one of his performances, the composer Virgil Thomson was moved to quite lyrical heights of praise. In the *New York Herald-Tribune* he wrote: "Every piece was a masterpiece, and each one as a flower dripping with dew. Starry, pearly, iridescent, brightly varied from deepest black through all the colours known to modern pianism, roots deep in the fertile loam of Franco-Polish romanticism. None can toss Chopin so lightly and rhythmically as he. A brilliance, a clarity, a sustained sweep such as only a master pianist and a master musician ever achieves."

Smeterlin is, in fact, universally recognised as one of the most brilliant interpreters of Chopin, and during his New Zealand tour he will perform several works by that composer. He is also a staunch supporter of the modern school, and has given first performances of numerous works by such composers as Dukas, Ravel, Albeniz and Szymanowski.

Smeterlin's first Festival performance will be on Tuesday, June 1, when,

with the National Orchestra of the NZBS, he will play Rachmaninoff's Concerto No. 2 in C Minor. This, however, will not be Auckland's first hearing. A studio recital on Thursday, May 27, and a concerto performance on Saturday, May 29, both in Wellington, will be broadcast by all YC stations. The concerto will be Chopin's No. 2 in F Minor.

Toward the end of the Festival, on June 10 and 13, Smeterlin will give two recitals in Auckland under the auspices of the Festival Committee. These will include Haydn's Sonata No. 3, Brahms's Paganini Variations, Four Mazurkas by Szymanowski, Chopin's 24 Preludes (Opus 28), Sonatas No. 10 by Schubert and No. 5 by Scriabin, and Rachmaninoff's Etude Tableau in D Minor.

The Orchestra will present a lunch hour concert on Wednesday, June 2, and on Thursday, June 3, an evening recital during which Winifred Stiles (viola) will be heard in *Rhapsody for Viola and Orchestra*, by the Auckland composer Dorothea Franchi. This work was the prize-winning entry in a competition sponsored by the Patrons' Fund of the Royal College of Music, London, in 1951, for which all young composers living in the British Isles were invited to submit entries. Other works on this programme will include Dvorak's Symphony No. 2 in D Minor, Op. 70, the Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G Major, by Bach, edited by Sir Henry Wood, and Schubert's *Rosamunde* overture.

On June 5 the Orchestra will be heard with the Christchurch Harmonic Society, which will present Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*. The soloists will be Mary Pratt (contralto), Andrew Gold (tenor) and Kenneth MacAulay (baritone), and the conductor will be Warwick Braithwaite. The Society will be heard again the following afternoon, under its own conductor, Victor C. Peters, in a sacred recital.

A classic event in its own field will be the band concert, on May 30, designed as a welcome to Ken Smith, cornet and trumpet soloist, who has achieved a very high reputation in the United Kingdom and elsewhere during three years abroad. The programme will include an arrangement for bands of Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto*, with Ken Smith playing the solo part, and items by the Auckland Waterside Silver Band, conducted by James Dow, musical director of the All Star Band, Wellington, and of the Lower Hutt Civic Band.

The presence of Rowena Jackson and Bryan Ashbridge, New Zealanders now with the Sadler's Wells Ballet Company (see also pages 10 and 11), will be in itself sufficient to make the ballet programmes outstanding occasions. Most interest here is likely to be centred on *Auckland, 1860*, in which Mendelssohn's music has been used for a story by Eric Westbrook, Director of the Auckland Art Gallery, with choreography by Daphne Kirner. This work has been described as a light-hearted attempt to capture something of the atmosphere of the city in the middle of the 19th Century, and it introduces citizens, Maoris, sailors and ladies of the town, with Bryan Ashbridge as the Governor, and Rowena Jackson as the Governor's Lady.

A ballet warmly received at last year's Festival will be repeated. Called *Motif*, it is described as depicting four moods in abstract form. There is no story, the artist and choreographer portraying moods through line and colour. There will be two ballet programmes, both including *Auckland, 1860*. Two excerpts from *Swan Lake* will be presented on the first programme, with a *Pas de Deux* from *Sleeping Beauty*, while the second programme will include *Les Sylphides*, *Once Upon a Time*, and a *Pas de Deux* from *Don Quixote*. Music will be by the Auckland Radio Concert Orchestra, conducted by Warwick Braithwaite.

Among the other outstanding Festival events will be Henrik Ibsen's *The Wild Duck*, presented by the Wellington Unity Theatre; and the operettas *The Telephone*, by Gian-Carlo Menotti, and *The Man from Tuscany*, by Antony Hopkins, both produced by Andrew Gold. Mr. Gold (tenor) and his wife, Pamela Woolmore (soprano), with Donald Munro (baritone), will be the principals in *The Man*, while Pamela Woolmore and Donald Munro will be the stars of *The Telephone*. The operettas will be broadcast on at least one occasion, and the play will be fully discussed by *The Critics*. David Galbraith (piano), another New Zealander who has achieved a high reputation abroad, will be accompanist for the operettas, and will give a recital in the Art Gallery on June 4. This recital, and others from the gallery, will not be broadcast.

Full details of broadcasting arrangements will be found in the programme pages this week, and for the following two weeks. The Festival will officially close on Sunday, June 13.



JAN SMETERLIN, the Polish pianist who will be heard in solo recitals and in a concerto performance with the National Orchestra during Auckland's Festival. This sketch of the artist was made by England's most famous portrait painter, Augustus John

Letters from Listeners will be found this week on pages 18-19