

BAROMETER

FINE: "The Wages of Fear."
FAIR TO FINE: "Hunted."

cutting from shot to shot and at times its sheer invention. To take one instance, I doubt whether the cinema has ever seen anything more tense than the incident when the big truck has to be backed on to some timberwork to negotiate a sharp bend—it's hard to believe it's all done with little more than a camera and a pair of scissors. The sound throughout is also extraordinarily effective. On the other hand I'm not sure that we could not have been spared some of the sheer horror of the later scenes which concern the fate of Jo. Nevertheless, when all has been said that could be said about its shocking and frightening aspects and its director's view of life, *The Wages of Fear* remains, as cinema, a remarkable piece of work.

HUNTED

(Rank—Independent)

IT'S a relief to turn from M. Clouzot's piece to *Hunted*, another film of suspense, but this time warmly human in spite of having a man who has killed another as its hero. This is a crime of

passion: a young sailor (Dirk Bogarde) kills his wife's wealthy lover. At the scene he encounters a small boy (Jon Whiteley) who has run away from his step-parents after setting fire to the curtains. From then on, in London and on a long flight north through the countryside, they stay together; and though it's essentially a chase story its great humanity springs from the quality of the relationship that develops between the child and—as police and Press see him—the desperate "killer." At the end the film lies open to the future like a Chekhov short story, leaving our imagination something to work upon.

Jon Whiteley, one of the child stars of *The Kidnappers*, is seen here in his first film (made when he was about six) in a truly wonderful performance; and Dirk Bogarde does what is probably his best job yet. The film moves through some first-class locations, with capable direction by Charles Crichton making the most of the friendship between two unhappy people and maintaining the suspense all the same time. With something less brilliant to compare it with this week I would have been tempted to grade it higher. As it is, though its story makes it unsuitable for young children, it is a film I warmly recommend.

THE ORCHESTRA

In the Studio

YOU can't tell what goes on in a composer's mind; you really can't. Well, you'll say, that may very likely apply to you and me, too. But then, it is commonly held that a composer composing puts a little bit of himself into his music, that running through his symphony is something of the pulse of his life. Maybe, after all, that's true, as long as you are prepared to agree that the life that goes into the music is not necessarily the one the composer's friends and relatives have to bear with in the daily round. For all one knows, the artist fashioning his sounds may have withdrawn into a private world of his own.

For instance, take Beethoven's Symphony No. 8 in F Major, Op. 93, which the Orchestra is to play in a studio broadcast this week under the baton of W. H. Walden-Mills (March 15, 2YC and 4YC). You know this symphony, maybe, or perhaps you don't, for it is not played quite so often as some of the others. You couldn't wish for anything merrier—although Beethoven does allow himself a little fury in the last movement. Sir George Grove called it a "prodigious" work and "The Humorous Symphony." From the first puckish theme to what becomes outrageous laughter in the coda of the finale, Beethoven seems to be in the best of good spirits. And even if you discount the tradition that the repeated chords in the second movement represent Beethoven's ticking off the ticks in Malezel's metronome, there is no doubt about the playfulness of this scherzando.



BEETHOVEN

The moody Beethoven, it would seem, must have been in a boisterous good humour when he wrote this Symphony No. 8 in F.

The fact is that Beethoven completed and polished off this work in 1812 in Linz, where he was on a visit to his brother Johann. His brother set him up in a room with a beautiful view of the Danube and the surrounding countryside. It was a situation where any man might reasonably be expected to be contented. Judging by the music, Beethoven seemed to be; but when he wasn't writing notes, he was storming about the place stirring up trouble in his bachelor brother's household and taking umbrage at Johann's infatuation for Therese Obermeyer. Beethoven even went to the police to see if they would stop the goings on. Johann blandly took the view that it was none of Ludwig's business and countered by martyring the girl. By this time, Beethoven had completed, amid all this disagreeableness, some of his jolliest music. So, you never can tell.

Dvorak's overture, *Carnaval*, is another case in point; but a somewhat different one. First performed when Dvorak arrived, a happy man, in America, *Carnaval* started life as the second part of *Triple Overture: Nature, Life, Love*. *Nature* and *Love* have become part-time wall-flowers as *Life* goes on to grace many a concert programme. When life is as jocund as Dvorak's *Carnaval* love isn't in the picture. This is the gay Slavonic peasant on his Saturday night out. It is a memory which Dvorak was never to forget, however far from home he was, nor however exalted his stature in the musical world of America. This was part of his life.

—Owen Jensen

N.Z. LISTENER, MARCH 11, 1955.

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