

MUSIC IN PROSPECT

IN our topsy-turvy Southern Hemisphere fashion we tend to think of April still as the time of April showers; more likely it turns out to be the time when southerly busters try out their lung-capacity for a really big blow from the South Pole. Dreary as the prospect may sound, it brings one consolation. The entertainment season really begins, the mothballs get shaken out of dress suits and balanced budgets get a little unbalanced taking in the price of a

Highlights of the 1955 Orchestral Season

new evening gown. However, all this brings with it the promise of a new season's music from the National Orchestra when the Subscription Concert series begin in the four main centres.

Wellington leads off on April 23 with a programme which includes the New Zealand pianist Colin Horsley playing Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Minor. He will repeat this in the first Dunedin Subscription concert on May 4. The series in Christchurch opens on May 12, and here Colin Horsley will play the Rawsthorne Piano Concerto No. 2. The Orchestra is to give three concerts during the Auckland Arts Festival, on May 28, 31 and June 2. In the first concert the Orchestra will accompany the Festival Choir and its soloist Robin Gordon in Finzi's *Intimations of Immortality*. Colin Horsley is to be the soloist in the second programme in the Rawsthorne Concerto No. 2, and Franck's *Symphonic Variations*. On June 2 the visiting British

violinist Max Rostal will play Beethoven's Violin Concerto.

With the season well begun, some of the big names of the world's concert halls will arrive in fairly regular succession. There is Larry Adler, the harmonica virtuoso, who is to play the Vaughan Williams Rhapsody for Harmonica and Orchestra and a Concerto in Auckland on August 6, and Wellington on August 2. Then there are the pianists Irene Kohler, Jascha Spivakovsky, and Ventsislav Yankoff, who come respectively from England, Australia and Europe.

The New Zealand pianist Janetta McStay who has recently been touring Japan giving recitals with Maurice Clare has been signed since her return to give several performances with the Orchestra. She will appear in Dunedin on May 19, playing the Mozart "Coronation" Piano Concerto, K.537, and Falla's *Nights in the Garden of Spain*, and in Christchurch on July 16, where she will again play the Mozart "Coronation" Concerto.

Francis Rosner, of the National Orchestra, is to play the lovely solo for Vaughan Williams's *Lark Ascending* at a lunch-hour concert in Christchurch on May 13, and he and Eric Lawson (viola) will perform Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* in Auckland on August 10. Winifred Stiles, one of the finest viola players in the country, is to play the solo part in Berlioz's famous symphony for orchestra and violin obbligato, *Harold in Italy*. This work was inspired by Byron's romantic account of Childe Harold's wanderings down through the Italian peninsula. *Harold in Italy* will be given its first New Zealand performance by the Orchestra at Christchurch on May 14, and will be repeated at Wellington on May 21.

The Concert Section of the NZBS recently carried out an extensive analysis of the Orchestra's programmes for this year, excluding the "Prom" series. They found that for the season as far as it is planned, which means all but the last one or two months of the year, the Orchestra will play 83 separate works by 46 different composers. The number of items they will play amounts to 173, including repeats. There are seven composers in the list of those who will have three or more individual works played, with Beethoven heading the list at nine works. Next come Delius and Mozart with six each, followed by Tchaikovsky (5), and Brahms, Haydn, and Gordon Jacob (3 each). Nine other composers are represented by two works of each.

Of the universally acknowledged great composers, J. S. Bach comes off perhaps least well, with only one performance—of his Chorale on Luther's hymn, "Ein Feste Burg," in Auckland on October 29 (with the Auckland Choral Union). However, as a recompense we are to hear the Third, Fourth and Fifth Piano Concertos of Beethoven, his Violin Concerto and the Symphonies Nos. 1, 8 and 9 (the Choral). This last is to be given in Dunedin, Auckland and Wellington in October and November.

Some critics of the Orchestra say its programmes are too modern; others that they are not modern enough. To satisfy the people who like contemporary music 28 of the composers represented lived at least part of their lives in this century, and many of them are still living. Some are new to us, such as Reznicek, Sutermeister the Swiss, and Carl Nielsen, the Danish Symphonist whose work has become very popular overseas. The Orchestra will play his "Four Temperaments" Symphony.



MAX ROSTAL will play Beethoven's Violin Concerto

Modern Music

COLIN HORSLEY (right), who will begin his tour at Wellington on April 20 with a solo concert (see YC programmes) will once again be introducing new compositions to New Zealand audiences. The English composer Lennox Berkeley has written a number of piano works for Horsley, including the Piano Concerto played during his New Zealand tour in 1950. Berkeley has, incidentally, enjoyed a great measure of success during the past year with the production in London of his two operas, *Nelson* and *The Dinner Engagement*—the latter written at the request of Benjamin Britten. A Lennox Berkeley work for piano and orchestra now in preparation will be given its first performance by Horsley next year.

Colin Horsley has, of course, made it a special feature of his concert work to introduce the works of living composers to audiences all over the world. An example of contemporary English composition which will be heard during his visit is Alan Rawsthorne's Second Piano Concerto. He first played this work with Sir Thomas Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall, and has repeated it at the Henry Wood Promenade concerts during the past two seasons. During this season's visit to New Zealand Colin Horsley will also play one of Nicholas Medtner's *Fairy Tales*, a piece which he should present with authority. Medtner was a great admirer of Horsley's playing and when, in the last years of his life, he was unable to accept engagements because of ill-health, would ask that Horsley be engaged to play in his place.

