



**RICHARD HOFFMANN**—*"New music is never beautiful"*

the frequency modulation stations in the United States do have non-sponsored programmes and frequently broadcast non-profit, no-royalty tape recordings of new compositions. For example, Station WNYC (New York) recently ran for four months a series of new music programmes, each lasting one hour and a half.

Little new music is recorded commercially in America, said Mr Hoffmann. But the foundations sometimes subsidise the cost of publishing and recording a new work which might only sell 500 to 1000 copies. The cultural exchange division of Unesco also assisted in re-leasing new music. It is, however, at concerts and music festivals that new works are most appreciated. In Southern California, for example, the Ojai Festival, held near Santa Barbara, is almost entirely devoted to new music. It has a strong leaning towards Stravinsky. In Los Angeles a weekly series of chamber music recitals called *Evenings on the Roof* is strongly supported—Stravinsky is a member and Aldous Huxley writes the programmes notes.

Before returning to New Zealand this month Mr Hoffmann went to Germany to attend the International Festival of New Music at Darmstadt, at which a piano concerto of his was performed. He found that German publishers have a much better market for new works than their American counterparts, and that German radio stations were constantly on the lookout for composers of new music.

As a composer Mr Hoffmann is noted as one of the foremost exponents of the 12-tone system of composition developed by Schoenberg. But in talking with *The Listener* he dispelled the notion that the system itself was essential.

"A composer is a composer no matter whether he uses the 12-tone system, an electronic technique or a traditional method," he said. "It's quite possible to write bad 12-tone music, just as it's possible to write bad tonal music. The 12-tone system is merely a method of organising music. All thematic material is derived from a basic shape—and there's nothing new in that. Schoenberg, for example, is a composer in the true German tradition, and his works follow in a logical line of development from the later compositions of Beethoven. But," said Mr Hoffmann, "as Schoenberg said, new music is never beautiful. Only when we have it in our sub-conscious—when it is part of our flesh and blood—does it become an aesthetic pleasure."

During his vacation in New Zealand Richard Hoffmann is giving lectures in the universities of the four main centres. He will also be heard on the air in a discussion with Dr Ronald Tremain, lecturer in music at Auckland University College, on the 12-tone system and the music of Arnold Schoenberg. This will be broadcast soon by the YC stations.

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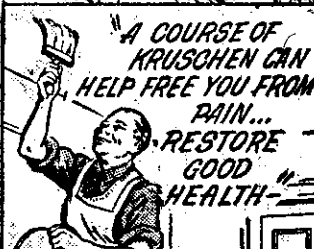
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—R.G.P.