

## New Concerto

AMONG the works performed at the Edinburgh Festival this year was the Concerto No. 4, for piano and orchestra ("Incantation"), by the Czech composer Martinu. Rudolf Firkusny, who was the soloist for this first European performance, also played the world premiere of this work last October in the United States, with the Symphony of the Air under Leopold Stokowski. This is the third Martinu concerto that this pianist has introduced to the public.

Bohuslav Martinu is one of the few contemporary composers of serious music who quickly established contact with a large audience. Although a Czech, his name and work are perhaps better known in the U.S., where he has lived now for some 17 years. Martinu left his homeland voluntarily in the middle twenties to live in Paris, where he was influenced by Stravinsky, Roussel, the French Impressionists and American jazz. When France was overrun by the German armies in the summer of 1940, he was forced to flee, first to Aix-en-Provence, then, with the arrival of a visa, to America, where he has lived ever since.

Living in America, it is said, has not made him an American composer. Instead of the Western elements in his music being reinforced, exile has instead meant a return to the deep-rooted sources of his native national feeling. As Firkusny has put it: "The mature master who wrote complicated scores in the French capital . . . mirroring an international milieu, has come home, musically, to the melodic simplicity and earthy rhythms of his homeland."

Martinu's Concerto No. 4 will be heard, played by Rudolf Firkusny with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik, in a Festival programme from all YCs at 7.30 p.m. on Friday, September 27. The other works to be heard in this programme are the Symphonic Variations, Op. 78, by Dvorak, and the Beethoven Fifth Symphony.

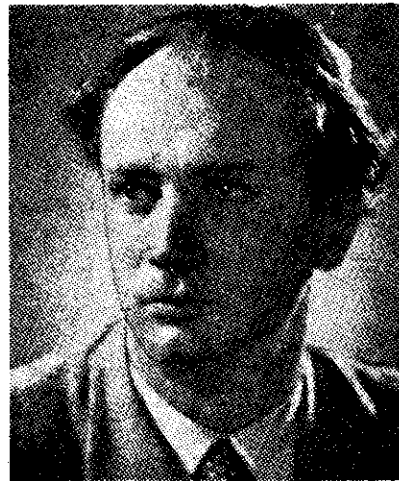
Another Martinu work in this week's programmes, the Sonata for violin and



ABOVE: Martinu at work. RIGHT: Rafael Kubelik, who conducted his Concerto No. 4 at Edinburgh

piano, will be heard from 4YC at 8.55, Monday, September 23, played by Francis Rosner and Janetta McStay.

Another programme from the Festival to be heard this week is a one hour recital of songs by the Spanish soprano Victoria de los Angeles, accompanied by Gerald Moore. After last year's highly successful tour of New Zealand this singer needs little introduction to listeners. Of her recitals at Edinburgh *The Times* music critic wrote: "Her Spanish songs are authentic, inimitable and irresistible . . . a beautiful performance. . ." This programme will be heard from all YCs at 8.0 p.m., Sunday, September 29.



## WELLINGTON YOUTH CONCERT

THE second National Orchestra Youth Concert of the season, to be held at Wellington on Wednesday, September 25, has a programme of interest and variety for mature as well as youthful concertgoers. Besides the first public performance in this country of Antill's *Corroboree*, the programme includes an Alfred Hill work not hitherto performed here, and a work by the New Zealander Larry Pruden. The soloist for the evening will be Ken Smith, who will play the Trumpet Concerto of the young English composer John Addison.

The Alfred Hill composition, *Overture of Welcome*, has had quite a vogue overseas, having been performed a number of times both in the U.S. and on the Continent. This Overture, the composer says, portrays his conception of "the orchestral concert in, say, 2000 A.D." The obsession of people with TV will by then have made conventional concerts a thing of the past, and at the same time orchestral players will be so much in demand for other work that little time will be left for public performances. If, however, a concert is attempted, then, according to Alfred Hill: "Old fashioned and simple works like this, which need no rehearsal, are

arranged so that, if necessary, one player can begin alone. When the less busy players take their places and begin playing, the more exclusive players appear—the leader last of all. Conductors have become so precious and costly that they can direct only the last few



N.P.S. photograph

LARRY PRUDEN

bars of the one work which makes up the programme."

During the series of broadcast concerts by the Alex Lindsay Orchestra last year, Larry Pruden was invited to provide an item for the last of the programmes. "Some time before," he told *The Listener*, "I had been looking at a set of Breton popular songs and dances collected and arranged for violin by André Mangeo, and had thought that some of the tunes could stand fuller treatment. When this chance came I decided to base the piece on three of these tunes, using at the same time, however, some tunes of my own in the French idiom."

The second and third movements of the resulting *Dances of Brittany* received their first performance last October, the remaining movement has been written since, and this performance will be the first performance of the completed work, as well as its first performance in public.

*Dances of Brittany*, conducted by the composer, will be heard in the second part of the Youth Concert to be broadcast from the Wellington Town Hall at 9.0 p.m. on Wednesday, September 25 (all YCs). The other works in this part of the programme are the Strauss Symphonic Poem *Till Eulenspiegel* and the Ballet Suite, *Corroboree*.

The first part of the concert, with Hill's *Overture of Welcome*, Trumpet Concerto, by Addison, and Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*, will be heard from YAs, 3YZ and 4YZ at 2.0 p.m. on Sunday, September 29.



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