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## RADIO REVIEW

# Australian Music

RENE INGRAM'S two talks on *Music in Australia* (1YC) were certainly informative, even though they sounded rather like annual secretarial reports. The second talk told us who was composing what but, except for a quoted remark by Alfred Hill that "Australian music must arise out of the Australian landscape," it evaded discussion of the problem of musical composition in the Dominions. Still, it was valuable for its account, not only of the work of Alfred Hill, Percy Granger and others of the older generation, but of exciting-sounding younger men like David Morgan and John Antill. I was a little disappointed that we were not told more about Roy Agnew, who appears to me to be the most daring as well as the most important composer Australia has yet produced. But here surely 1YC missed an opportunity for an unusual programme. That evening, if ever, we could have been given at least an hour of Australian music. Much is recorded; and it should not have been difficult to find local artists to play some that isn't. As it was, the talk, dealing largely with anti-Romantic composers, was sandwiched between Mendelssohn and Schumann—a contrast which, if piquant, could hardly have been intentional.

—J.C.R.

do?" To listeners it provides good entertainment and a chance for some parallel self-questioning which may prove instructive, the interviewed (a nicely-varied lot) take it in good part, and the compère must be grateful for a type of interview that keeps her client on the rails, no matter what.

—M.B.

## Voice Under the Wind

A PART from the fact that 20 minutes of poetry reading by one person is too much, the 3YC session given by John Gielgud forces one to make distinctions which actors do not always make in the interpretation of verse. Although it may seem strange to suggest that an actor may not be able to adapt himself to different emotional forms, it is none the less true. When a man surcharges the slightest things, as for example W. H. Davies's "Leisure," with a quiver which should be reserved for the starkest soliloquies, then the listener must either squirm in his chair or give some expression to his feelings. Perhaps because I like Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind," this is the poem in which John Gielgud gives me most offence, and after hearing him read it I usually stage a little rehearsal on my own account in order to put back into place that which has been so deliberately set aside. For me the poem sweeps and cries with the wind, and Shelley's cries move with it, but when John Gielgud reads it the wind flags to a standstill beneath the weight of an inappropriate personal anguish.

## Questions Answered

THIS *Fancy Free* series featured in the 2YA Women's Session on Tuesdays is an excellent device for bridging the gaps between ordinary listener and persons interviewed. The general idea of the ordinary radio interview is, I suppose, to widen our horizons by introducing us to interesting people doing interesting things, which occasionally has the regrettable effect of making our own four walls look narrower and narrower. But in *Fancy Free* we have our interesting people answering questions on which we are equally qualified to speak, questions such as "What are your pet aversions?" or "If you could live your life over again, what would you choose to

## Superman Who Saves

"A MAN CALLED . . . SHEPPARD" can be exasperating as he does his little bit of good with that naive Galahad voice, making one prod him round to find the phoney "armour of God" and wondering why one cannot always see what it is that gives such a feeling of dissatisfaction. In the first place, what is wrong with the title with that long pause in it? Perhaps it annoys because it is a weak way to develop a sense of mystery. There is nothing wrong with the idea of trying to see Christ in among the crowd today, but Sheppard is not Christ and never could be. Why? Is he too much of the superman who saves but does not suffer? To date, many of the figures who circle

## "I KNOW WHAT I THINK . . ."

### CONVERSATION PIECES

THE happy spirit that led Arnold Wall to compose, for a recent "Book Shop," dialogues from the standard repertoire of conversation sweets, must be the guiding genius of that programme. It is nearly always compered in a gracefully casual manner that shows a maturity and lack of pompousness rarely before captured by our radio set. I say "nearly always" because not so long ago we were ushered out of the shop by the manager himself, who sounded as if he had just realised that next week's brew had boiled dry in the back of the shop and he could hardly wait to put up the shutters in our face. But generally we are received most courteously and we meet the most interesting people. I sometimes wonder if it is just the setting that allows them to hold our attention—the Dane who wrote travel books, A. R. D. Fairburn on the "ethics" of borrowing books—but I think it is probably the fact that none of them talks to us for very long before the manager appears at our elbow with some new attraction, sometimes a little thing he has tossed off himself. So that I am listening now for more conversation pieces—perhaps a proverbial dialogue, or one composed entirely of school mottoes.

—DONNACHY

(Readers are invited to submit comments, not more than 200 words in length, on radio programmes. A fee of one guinea will be paid after publication. Only one paragraph can be used each week. Contributions should be headed "Radio Review." Unsuccessful entries cannot be returned.)