

Prodigies evokes these presences, giving a ritual significance to the procession of fabulous masks and personalities conjured up by the inexhaustible resources of the orchestra . . .

Altogether a memorable work, which should have a wide diffusion. It was played in masterly fashion by the Lyons Orchestra under the inspired direction of Baudo. **Rollo Myers**

Israel

TESTIMONIUM, the Israeli Festival of contemporary music, took place this year for the fifth time. Once more, a number of composers was called upon to testify, in word and sound, to the history of the Jewish people. The scope of the commissions was the most ambitious one so far and all the composers, including Cristóbal Halffter, Mauricio Kagel and Karlheinz Stockhausen, delivered their scores in good time, but unfortunately Klaus Vetter and his choir cancelled their engagement at the very last moment and as a result the performance of the works of Alexandre Tansman, for mixed choir and orchestra, and of Cristóbal Halffter, for unaccompanied voices, had to be postponed indefinitely.

Stockhausen, unwilling to take such risks, brought his own group of performers and technicians to Jerusalem and nothing was left to chance. There were no imponderables, no hitches, no mishaps. Although the discipline, the precision, the co-ordination and the musical achievement of each participant — amongst them Markus and Marjella Stockhausen — were of the highest order, it was the electronic tape, running parallel to the live performance of 10 (three vocalists, three instrumentalists, three dancers and one pianist) that yielded the most memorable musical substance of 'Michael's Youth', the first act of the fifth day of *Light*, the 'magnum opus' of Stockhausen, a kind of new *Ring*, almost more Wagnerian than Wagner and planned to cover ultimately the seven days of the week. There are unmistakable spiritual connotations in his Heptalogy and these were enough to justify its place in a festival devoted to the Jews in Spain from the Middle Ages to their expulsion in 1492.

The one composer who treated the subject in the most literal way was Yitzhak Sadai, from Tel Aviv, who wrote an audio-visual piece of about 40 minutes' duration called *Trial 19* (Spanish Inquisition), describing the torturing and burning, at an Auto da Fé in Toledo, on 15 October 1492, of Leonor Gonzales. To the abstract stage-set of Eintan Levy the electronic, synthesised sound of Sadai added an extra-dimension of such elementary realism that it was easy to follow but hard to accept and to see beyond the simplistic sound images and their dynamic excesses.

Emmanuel Nunes, from Lissabon, wrote a symphonic movement called *Hesed* (Grace) based on a description of the death of the sage, R. Simson ben Yoahar, in the 13th century. For a text so inspired and so visionary the music is strangely subdued, uncommunicative, withdrawn, a standing sound, static in spite of its fluidity, with no other than dynamic devices to give it some shape and some continuity, but no Spanish connections that one could see, except for the text.

Gilbert Amy, from Paris, also chose a liturgical text from medieval Spain, a poem by Solomon ibn Gabirol, but in his setting for alto voice (the admirable French singer Benedetta Pecchioli), clarinet, cello and instrumental ensemble he struck a genuinely jubilant note, rich in vocal melisma and instrumental ornamentation of a highly virtuoso kind, with occasional outbursts of ritualistic bells and carillons — altogether an attractive, well-built and beautifully performed piece of liturgical music, full of urgency and expectation but of only indirect relevance to Spain and its Jewish past.

Only *Vox Humana*, a cantata for solo-loudspeaker, women's voices and orchestra by Mauricio Kagel (who was born in the Argentine and was steeped from his earliest youth in Spanish, Judeo-Spanish and hebraic language and thought) was truly representative of Jewry in Spain. Kagel chose a song found in an anthology and written in Ladino, an old hispano-jewish idiom, to which an anonymous poetess added a moving litany. The original tune was taken by Kagel through all the migrations from Jewish to Spanish to Arab lands, picking up on its way alien sounds and words tears and laments culminating in the universal wailing of bereaved mothers. The orchestra, deliberately traditional and hieratic, and the spoken and sung words of the choir, fragmented and torn to pieces, build up to a tremendous climax contained in a strict, watertight structure when, towards the end, the loudspeaker is heard, 'Madres. Non sospire más' — ('Mothers, Sigh no more') is the spoken message and a violent final 'No' is flung by the women's voices towards the stunned and speechless audience.

This, indeed, is the 'sacred manifesto' that Testimonium had in mind when giving the commissions. Without the commitment, devotion and tireless effort of the women from the Rinat Choir and the girls from the Rubin Academy of Music this performance would not have been possible. Pablo Izquierdo, the Chilean maestro from London, conducted with remarkable authority and musicianship and Testimonium V bore witness not only to a chapter of Jewish history but also to the truly inspiring work of Recha Freier, founder, organiser and animator of the tri-annual contemporary music-days at Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

Brigitte Schiffer

MERURIO, 13 Junio, 1980

Aplausos para Canal 7 por Clase Magistral de Izquierdo

■ Anoche, en la Franja Cultural

A su propio escenario —el estudio que tiene en Chile Films— llevó Televisión Nacional a la Orquesta Filarmónica

para grabar un especial. La idea no pudo estar más acertada porque el resultado, que vimos anoche en la Franja Cultural, fue excelente. Dirigida por Juan Pablo Izquierdo, éste hizo algunas observaciones sobre las obras interpretadas muy al estilo de lo que le hemos visto a Leonard Bernstein.

La dirección televisiva de Paulina Fernández estuvo muy lograda, aunque hubiéramos deseado una cámara fija en el rostro de Izquierdo: tremendamente expresivo, se va transformando junto con la música. Se mostró el mismo programa de una de las veladas del Teatro Municipal, repertorio mandado a nacer para la televisión, ya que incluía temas tan diversos como la Sinfonía número 38, "Praga", de Mozart; la Suite N.º 2 para orquesta, de Stravinsky, y la Ópera de Tres Centavos, de Kurt Weil.

Izquierdo se reveló como un eficaz maestro cuando hizo resaltar las notas "falsas" de una parte de la suite de Stravinsky, las que mostró con un trazo de interpretación; y al advertir que no hay diferencias entre música clásica y música popular, sino entre la buena y la mala música.

PATRIMONIO CULTURAL

Music/arts

Conducted summer festival orchestra

Izquierdo returns to IU

By ANITA HEPPNER
PLOTINSKY

H-T Reviewer

Juan Pablo Izquierdo returned to the Indiana University podium Thursday night to conduct the second of three concerts by the summer festival orchestra.

Izquierdo, who has conducted major European orchestras, was a member of the IU music faculty from 1967 to 1969. He was a favorite of students and audiences alike, and those who remember him had been looking forward to this concert with particular pleasure.

The concert included two works by Ravel — the song cycle *Sheherazade* and the choreographic poem *La Valse*. The three songs in *Sheherazade* (1903) are settings of poems by Ravel's friend, Tristan Klingsor. The cycle has little in common with the overture to the composer's unfinished opera of the same name, which was as resoundingly ill-received at its premiere in 1899 as *La Valse* was

The music beat

By Anita

Heppner Plotinsky



enthusiastically received 21 years later.

La Valse was originally called *Wien (Vienna)*, a title that had to be abandoned after World War I. "I had intended this work to be a kind of apotheosis of the Viennese waltz, with which was associated in my imagination an impression of a fantastic and fatal kind of Dervish's dance," Ravel wrote. "I imagined this waltz being danced in an imperial palace about the year 1885."

Izquierdo's reading of *La Valse* was inspired. He emphasized the contrast between the work's elegant rhythms and grotesque harmonies, and he infused it with a pulsating dynamism.

The soloist in *Sheherazade* was Blanche Foreman, a promising voice student who sang one of the solos in Mahler's Eighth Symphony last season. Her singing was warm and expressive, with only occasional unevenness. Foreman's fine performance was complemented by flute professor Harry Houdeshel's in *La Flute enchantee*.

The remaining work on the program was Franck's Symphony in D Minor. In the symphony, closer attention was paid to detail than in the Ravel pieces — presumably because more rehearsal time had been devoted to it.

A dark, blended tone, a rich legato, and a controlled tension characterized its performance.

The edges were clean, but the notes were never clipped. As a result, there was fullness without loudness, and loudness without harshness.

Izquierdo summoned wonderful swells of orchestral sound, but he did not stretch the melodic lines out of shape. He conducted the first movement's triad-centered third theme in the kind of strict tempo that heightens tension, and in the third movement, his orchestra played expansively, savoring each note.

There is no shortage of conductors who seem to regard broad theatrical gestures as an acceptable substitute for thorough knowledge of the score, musical taste, and aural sensitivity. Izquierdo, however, whose gestures are relatively economical, derives his immense authority as a conductor almost entirely from the power of his musical intelligence. Thursday night, as so often in the past, he again demonstrated that the ear is quicker than the hand.