

25 CENTS

# Symphony



*Fritz Mahler*

conducting the ERIE PHILHARMONIC at a Young People's Concert attended by 4,000.

February 1952



## Professionals Meet Educators

LOS ANGELES — Although not immediately pertinent to symphony orchestras or their programs, the widespread part time employment of orchestra personnel in teaching warrants a vigorous interest in current trends in music education. Too, the public school music program is, after all, the primary source both of future audiences and instrumental performers.

A noteworthy manifestation of interest in public school music education on the part of professional musicians here was the educational clinic held last December 28 and 29 under the co-sponsorship of Local 47, A.F.M. and the Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association. Not that there is anything new in the idea of clinics, but it seems a new departure for a union of professional musicians to assume part of the financial and organizational obligation to assure success to a school undertaking.

Sam Rowland served as co-ordinator and the general chairmen included Clarence Sawhill, U.S.C., woodwinds; Ralph Rush, U.S.C., strings; Maurice Faulkner, U. of C., Santa Barbara, brass. Vincent Dagort, President of the Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association, was the representative of that group, and representing Local 47 were John Te Groen, Maury Paul, and Kelly Shugart. The percussion committee was headed by Saw Rowland and Nick Fatool. Professional performers conducted all of the demonstrations and lectures. They were: Lloyd Rathbun, oboe and woodwind ensemble; Harry Keller, reed production; Buddy Baker, woodwind ensemble; Robert Gross, violin; Harriet Payne, viola; George Neikrug, cello; this writer, trombone, baritone, and trombone ensemble; Rafael Mendez, trumpet; Max Pottag, (Chicago) and Wendell Hoss, horn, with an incredible twenty-two piece horn ensemble; Robert Hicks, Nick Fatool, and Lou Singer, percussion.

That the clinic was eminently successful is evident from current plans to make it a per-

manent annual affair.

Alfred Wallenstein's policy of featuring personnel of his orchestra as soloists brought forward Kalman Bloch in a performance of the new Concerto for Clarinet by Aaron Copland, and concertmaster David Frisina as soloist in



Kalman Bloch

**Solo clarinetist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic who recently played the Copland Clarinet Concerto with the Orchestra.**

the Concerto Gregoriano for violin by Respighi. Also, our new tuba player, Herbert Jenkel, was featured on the Symphonies for Youth broadcast in a performance of a new novelty, Intermezzo for Tuba, written by bass-trombonist Louis Castellucci. All these performances were noteworthy, contributing to the success of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra's season. ROBERT L. MARSTELLER

## Guest Conductors for Baltimore

BALTIMORE — President Alan P. Hoblitzell of the Baltimore Symphony Association has announced that guest conductors will be engaged to direct the Symphony's 1952-53 season. The Orchestra's regular conductor, Reginald Stewart, resigned January 18. Members of the Orchestra were assured by Mr. Hoblitzell that there would be no need "for dusting off any concertos for auditions, for there would be none."

In the wake of Dr. Stewart's resignation Orchestra members sent a petition to the Association asking that it urge Dr. Stewart to reconsider his decision, that the season be lengthened, and that a sustaining fund be built as a means of providing a measure of security for the musicians. The musicians have also requested "permission" from the local Union to organize a committee in order to

safeguard the musicians' interests, and to help in the present dangerous situation.

The one hopeful prospect is that the Orchestra will at least remain intact as far as the management is concerned. It is the finest sounding orchestra Baltimore has ever had.

Bloch's Israel Symphony was performed February 6, and at the same concert Kirsten Flagstad was the soloist in works of Beethoven and Wagner.

"The Tenor," an opera written by two Baltimoreans, was given its first performances February 11, 12, and 13 at the Peabody Conservatory. The composer is Hugo Weisgall, who also conducted the performances, and the librettist is Karl Shapiro.

FRANCES KESSLER

## Beecham Entertains

PHILADELPHIA — Sir Thomas Beecham is not only a superb musician but he also has developed the art of entertaining audiences with spiced speeches. Sir Thomas conducted three performances of the Philadelphia Orchestra's seventeenth program. During the course of the February 2 concert he made three speeches to the huge delight of the audience. At the February 1 concert, to the chagrin of latecomers, Sir Thomas seated himself on the podium and waited until the unfortunates could squirm into their seats.

On the musical side, Sir Thomas delighted listeners with the Sibelius Sixth Symphony and Lord Berners' Suite from the ballet The Triumph of Neptune.

Victor de Sabata directed the fifteenth and sixteenth sets of programs. The program of January 18, 19, and 21 included the first performance of the entire suite of Menotti's Apocalypse; the sixteenth set of programs included a suite from Casella's ballet La Giara, Two Choric Dances, Op. 17 by Paul Creston, and the surefire Pines of Rome.

Flutist John Krell of the National Symphony has filled the vacancy occasioned by the absence of Burnett F. Atkinson who is finishing the season with the Minneapolis Symphony. Oboist Marcel Tabuteau, who either plays or not as he wishes, may rest for the remainder of the season.

Other local concerts included a violin recital by Maurice Wilk on February 7, and a concert of the New Chamber Orchestra conducted by Dr. Ifor Jones on February 10.

MAURICE A. BOKSER

## Indianapolis

INDIANAPOLIS — Returning from a twenty-eight-day-tour of the Eastern and New England states on February 4, the Indianapolis Symphony immediately began a heavy schedule at home. On February 5 the Orchestra again appeared on a telecast featuring the flutes and clarinets in Liadoff's The Musical Snuff Box. These telecasts are becoming increasingly popular, and plans are being made for an extended series during next season. The Allison Corporation sponsored a concert for its employees February 17 at which concertmaster Stanley Weiner was the soloist in Handel's Largo, and first flutist Byron Hester and this writer, first clarinet, were featured in Victor Herbert's L'encore. At the eighth pair of concerts February 8 and 9 the Casadesu family played the solo parts in the Bach Concerto for Three Pianos. The Orchestra played the seldom-heard Symphony No. 53 "Imperial" by Haydn, and the American premiere was given of Zandonais' Quadri Segantini, in which the difficult oboe solos were played extremely well by first oboist Robert Lehrfeld. A special pension fund concert will be given February 16 when Jan Cherniasky, Canadian pianist, will be the soloist. Wagner's Lohengrin will be given at the ninth pair of concerts.

HOWARD JOHNSON



# The Erie Philharmonic

— Outstanding in Community Service

by John Luther

They were 4,017 strong in snow suits, ear muffs, and anticipation. Erie's Gannon Auditorium was packed with kindergarten-through-high-school youngsters of Erie City and County, gathered to hear the Erie Philharmonic Orchestra. Conductor Fritz Mahler — Friend Fritz to the small fry — led his sixty musicians through appropriate numbers by Victor Herbert, Grieg, Ponchielli, Saint-Saens, Wagner, and Irving Berlin, much to the enjoyment of his youthful fans whose final verdict was that a song to the "Evening Star" can hold its own against "Stardust" and that the "Carnival of the Animals" is a whole "Hit Parade" in itself. And the Children's Concerts are free. They are underwritten by business and the Musicians Union; and Gannon Auditorium is made available without charge.

Aside from its symphonic aspects, this fourth Children's Concert was an important event for budding artists. In a county-wide art contest sponsored by the Education Committee of the Erie Philharmonic, two hundred and fifty students submitted paintings interpreting various sections of the Saint-Saens work. Originally scheduled for six days, the exhibit in the Public Library's Art Gallery drew such crowds that the run was extended to ten days. Philharmonic President Melvin Zurn presented the awards to winners at the concert.

Mr. Mahler's policy is to stimulate interest in music by every available means. The Orchestra serves the community, not merely with a well attended subscription series, but as an educational medium as well. The art contestants, for example, first heard "The Carnival of the Animals" in music classes; subsequent work in art classes was then focused on the contest. Art and music departments found a new stimulus; and the Erie Philharmonic furthered its position as an integral part of school and community life.

But this was only one of many diverse activities. The first step was taken five years ago with the inception of the annual Music Contest sponsored jointly by the Philharmonic and the Erie Music Teachers Association. Local music students competed for the grand prize — an appearance with the Erie Orchestra that has accompanied Heifetz, Kapell, Spivakovsky, Merriman, Enesco, Piatigorsky, Trau-

bel, Bampton, Keene, Magnes, Mischakoff, Foldes, Janis, and others of similar professional stature. Thus Mr. Mahler actually practices a theory to which many may subscribe but about which few enough do anything: that a musician must be heard if he is to be of real worth to himself or anyone else. Many talented youngsters are heard during the annual music contests, and the opportunities offered by the Philharmonic have encouraged many to continue their studies.

Nor have Mr. Mahler and the Philharmonic Education Committee stopped there. Still

another project is The Erie Youth Orchestra. This fifty-piece group rehearses in Academy High School for two hours every Saturday morning during the school year, playing only the best of symphonic music. In addition to directly benefiting the young players, the practical Mr. Mahler, who conducts the group himself, has had his eye on the future of the Erie Philharmonic, and the Youth Orchestra has already proved itself as an excellent training ground for future Philharmonic players. As the Youth Orchestra developed, the out-of-town scouting for Philharmonic musi-



Section leaders discuss a musical point with Fritz Mahler. L. to r.; Alphonse Gailiewicz, concertmaster; Dimitri Erd, cello; Herbert Neurath, viola; and Mr. Mahler.





## The Erie Philharmonic

It is well known that Pierre Monteux has a phenomenal ear and can also steer his way through the most complicated score with relative ease. One of the compositions with which he has amazed musicians by his conducting is Stravinsky's "Sacre," which he also directed during his recent visit to the Boston Symphony. During one of the concert intermissions Monteux was warming up backstage by shadow beating some sections of the work. He paused, and noticing a group of musicians watching him asked, "How's the intonation?"

And during a rehearsal for the same composition the E-flat clarinet player decided that he wanted to be free and struck out for himself. The result was that Monteux stopped the Orchestra and asked what the trouble was.

"Maestro, I don't know what you're doing up there," the player complained.

The conductor raised his eyebrows, beat a miniature count of four, shrugged, and replied, "Just beating time!"

### SYMFUNNIES

Recently, after listening to a friend play the piano, I suggested that he take an audition with an orchestra, whereupon he said that there were a few technical passages and exercises that he had yet to master. I then suggested that he continue his studies under the guidance of a teacher. His reply was, "I am too good for a teacher, but not good enough to play with an orchestra."

Contributed by Dorsey Henricks, New York, N. Y.

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Robert Bagar, music critic of the *New York World-Telegram and Sun*, published the following story from a correspondent:

It seems that a Frenchman from the country visited Paris and in the logical course of events found himself at the Opera Comique. He regarded one of the trombone players fixedly, fascinated, unable to figure out the mystery of the back-and-forth slide.

At intermission time he walked up to one of the trombone men, asked to see the horn for a moment, and the player obliged. Our friend took a firm grasp with both hands, pulled in opposite directions and when he saw that the instrument was separated into two parts shouted gleefully, "Voilà, monsieur, tres simple!"

cians diminished. Today, after only five years, the Youth Orchestra has graduated and sent to the Philharmonic some ten or twelve players as the need arose.

Surveying these multiple activities sparked by the Philharmonic we find yet another accent on youth in the "Philmacs," a group of city and county high school students who assumed that novel title to abbreviate "Philharmonic Music Appreciation Club For Students." They meet Thursday afternoons, preceding each pair of concerts, and Mahler himself purloins time from a heavy schedule to give a preview of the forthcoming program. Philmac members are privileged, among other things, to attend the Orchestra's dress rehearsals and also discuss with our world renowned conductor the standard classics and works of contemporaries. Kapell, Merriman and Foldes are three of the artists who gave recitals especially for the Philmacs.

Among the works the Erie Philharmonic has introduced to the United States are Gustav Mahler's Tenth Symphony, Barraud's Suite Pour un Comedie de Musset, Kodaly's Theatre Overture, Alban Berg's Seven Early Songs, Prokofieff's Symphonic Suite 1941 and Cinderella ballet suite, Music For Children by William Walton, and the Overture to the opera The Beloved Voice by Weinberger. World premieres of American music include Robert Ward's Concert Music, Siegmeyer's From My Window; and as this is written Peter Mennin is finishing a work commissioned by the Friends of the Philharmonic for performance this spring. Concertato for Orchestra.

Conclusive proof of the growing stature which the Orchestra enjoys on the national music scene has been reflected in its national-wide broadcast on NBC's Pioneers of Music series in January of 1950 and participation in a Voice of America program broadcast in December the same year.

Though the Erie Philharmonic has fully justified its existence through its musical excellence and its varied contributions to the community, it was born with not inconsiderable pain and plagued with all and perhaps more than its share of growing pains, not the least of which was the matter of finances. Erie had long wanted a professional orchestra, a rather expensive item for a community with one of the highest cost-of-living indices in the nation. It called for much ringing of doorbells, worn soles, busy telephones, typewriters, aqua expenda, and a campaign of highly polished aggression, but one fine morning the citizenry awoke to find it possessed an Erie Philharmonic Society.

At this time the Women's Auxiliary was organized and has expanded its activities each season. The Viennese Ball, an annual affair,

nets a handsome sum for the orchestra fund and the solicitation of program advertising for the past two years represented no small effort on the part of the ladies. In addition they entertain the orchestra personnel, and in countless ways contribute to the continued operation of the orchestra.

In 1950 The Friends of the Philharmonic came into being. This energetic group sponsored a sold-out Pops concert last March and netted an attractive four-digit figure. They organized and continue to operate the refreshment counter at the concert—a very profitable business. As mentioned above, they have commissioned a composition by Mennin, to be premiered at the Philharmonic's concerts April 1 and 2 this season.

The Orchestra was reorganized and Fritz Mahler took over as Musical Director in 1947. Today Erie has a sixty-piece orchestra giving top-notch concerts, accompanies the best known soloists, breaks even financially without municipal subsidy, is amortizing the original organizational deficit, plays Children's Concerts to a house of four thousand at a time in addition to the regular series, and last but certainly not least, through its Education Committee has made itself a worthy adjunct to the established curricula of the city and county schools.

That most symphony orchestras wind up each succeeding season with several digits printed in red is hardly news. But the *New York Times* saw fit to mention that the Erie Philharmonic concluded its 1950-51 season in the black. This is all the more newsworthy in view of the fact that the Orchestra operates on what is probably one of the smallest budgets of any of the better orchestras in the nation, and has no broadcast or recording income, depending solely on subscriptions and gifts.

For the deft handling of financial matters credit is due the Philharmonic's business manager, young Harold Kendrick, a human dynamo whose savoir-faire with the dollar dates from his seventeenth year when he took over the money matters of his father's business. Kendrick, an accomplished organist who studied in Paris under Marcel Dupre, manages to keep one practiced eye on the budget and the other on new sources of a steadily increasing income.

The people of Erie have indicated growing appreciation for the accomplishments of the Philharmonic as related to both artistry and management. Consequently, in the brief period of five years Erie has risen from musical obscurity to become the home of one of America's recognized orchestras of high artistic standards and accomplishments.

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