

NEW RAVEL MUSIC IN A BOSTON CONCERT

Trio in A Minor Makes Deep Impression in Kneisel Program—Flonzaley Quartet Also Introduces a Novelty—Casals-Deyo, Gabrilowitsch and Marcia Van Dresser Recitals—Schönberg Music Excites Merriment

Bureau of Musical America,
120 Boylston Street,
Boston, March 19, 1916.

ONE of the most interesting novelties of the season, so far as chamber music is concerned, was presented by the Kneisels, with the assistance of Rudolph Ganz, pianist, on Tuesday evening, the 14th, in Steinert Hall. This was Ravel's Trio in A Minor, for piano, violin and 'cello. It is undoubtedly one of the most brilliant compositions of a composer of very exceptional talent. It is difficult to understand how any one can believe Ravel's earlier musical development to have been independent of Debussy, but it is undeniable that in late years he has gone on an enterprising way of his own. He has been an indefatigable explorer of modern harmony; his workmanship is amazing, even in these days. He works in what often appears at the outset as a very artificial idiom, but in this realm of his own choosing he is supreme. Such sounds may never have been heard on land or sea, but perhaps Ravel would point to this fact with special pride. He would say, "I have created a new language, a plastic, wonderful medium that you never heard before," and with this language he certainly works magic.

It may be admitted that whereas with Debussy a new idea appears to flash upon him and upon us, the effects of Ravel often seem to have been arrived at through constant and curious experimentation, and because of a never-sleeping critical sense which seems to select with infallible judgment the distinctest harmony and color. But he composes with astonishing originality, and he never seems to repeat himself, which is a thing of which the greatest composers

have not always been guiltless. The Trio is a very brilliant piece of writing, in four movements, the first an ordinary *allegro*; the second a "Pantomim," so called after the Arabic dance; the third a *Passacaglia*, on a theme somewhat suggestive of folk music, but perfected and elaborated with consummate art, and the last again rapid and very effective. In the performance of this Trio, with an exceedingly difficult piano part, of which the rhythmic complexities were a more taxing problem than the technical passages, Mr. Ganz gave one of the finest performances he has ever given in this city. He held the work together with a grasp that never faltered, and lacking this mastery on the part of Mr. Ganz the Trio would have been far less intelligible and logical in the impression it made than was the case. Mr. Kneisel and Mr. Willeke cooperated admirably in this excellent performance. The other music of the evening was Mozart's Quartet in D minor, one of the most beautiful and significant of the Mozart quartets, and the great Quartet of Beethoven in C Sharp Minor, Op. 131, in the performance of which the Kneisels capped the climax of their performances of the season.

Casals-Deyo Recital

On Wednesday afternoon Pablo Casals, the 'celist, and Ruth Deyo, pianist, gave a concert of sonatas for 'cello and piano, and presented important new works. The first of this was a new Sonata by Debussy, played for the first time in this city, one of six sonatas which Debussy is now writing for various instruments, and which was voted unsubstantial in its material and rather purposeless in development. The second was a new Sonata by Alfred Casella, pianist and composer, played for the first time in this country, which proved eminently worthy of performance. All agreed that this Sonata in its material and its workmanship made an exceptionally valuable addition to the 'cellist's repertoire. Of Mr. Casals' art there is now nothing to be said that can add to the authoritative and laudatory appreciation of his art already printed. Enough that he was fully himself on that afternoon. The body, brilliancy and warmth of his tone; the infallible finger board technic, were the means to an expression of the finest taste and musicianship. Miss Deyo is an intelligent player of chamber music. She did not diminish the interest of the performances. The audience was of good size and warmly appreciative.

The Flonzaley Quartet, playing in Jordan Hall on Thursday evening, the 16th, introduced in this city Sergei Taneieff's Quartet in C Major. The workmanship of this quartet is solid enough, but its content seems uneven. There are strong passages, interspersed with conventional repetitions and sequences. Accompanying figures are reiterated rather than developed. Passages of strength and distinction, such as the savage opening of the *scherzo*, are followed by commonplace or sentimental themes, such as the theme which makes the middle portion of this movement. Mr. Pochon, second violinist of the Quartet, played very beautifully the Prelude and Fugue from Bach's Suite in G minor for the violin alone.

Gabrilowitsch Series Concluded

On Friday afternoon Ossip Gabrilowitsch gave the last of his historical piano recitals. The occasion was a triumph for him, for the hall was sold out and as many were seated on the stage as could be crowded there. The audience listened with the most absorbed attention. The breadth and the sanity and the beauty of Mr. Gabrilowitsch's art were inescapably in evidence. Most of the teachers in the city, in most cases accompanied by one or more pupils, were present. Indeed, the teachers did very

well in this. There are pedantic musicians who are considered "safe" for young girl pupils to hear, because they can be relied upon to play in time and not alter phraseology. They will not upset the conceptions which the conscientious teacher has already implanted in the young girl's mind. Yet in many of these cases it would be better by far if an iconoclast with the tempi of madness and the inconsistency of a charlatan came along in place of the pedagogue, the worshipper of the letter that killeth. The latter would contribute more, we verily believe, to the pupil's musical awakening. Both extremes are dangerous. Mr. Gabrilowitsch is the reverent but inspired interpreter of the composer.

On Friday, Mr. Gabrilowitsch included in his "modern" program well worn compositions of recent popularity, such as, for instance, Grieg's "Butterfly" and Nocturne and "To Spring," Rachmaninoff's C Sharp Minor Etude and Moszkowski's Concert Etude in G flat Major. We would have preferred less of this element and more of the practically unknown Scriabine or modern Spanish, French and English composers. But Mr. Gabrilowitsch by his playing glorified the old as well as the new. One exclaimed, after that bombastic prelude of Rachmaninoff's, "Why! It's a noble piece, and surely one of the finest Rachmaninoff wrote for the piano." Yet in cold blood I think Rachmaninoff wrote better things even for the piano.

Laughter for Schönberg

When it came to the six piano pieces by Schönberg, Op. 19, the audience tittered, and Mr. Gabrilowitsch, carefully as he played the pieces, wore a somewhat quizzical expression. After one of the pauses between the pieces with no beginning or end, the audience commenced to applaud. Mr. Gabrilowitsch said: "There

are six of these pieces. I have played only two." He played the other four, and this was known by the fact that the last pause did not lead to any more of the queer and dislocated music. The audience laughed again.

Shall I confess utter stupidity, conservatism, what not, when I say that for the life of me I can't distinguish between this music and the fulminations of Leo Ornstein. There are men, you know, who can't tell the difference between "Yankee Doodle" and "God Save the King." I suppose that, in the light of the wisdom of a hundred years hence, I belong in that category; but I can't help it, and if music like that is in the world a hundred years hence, it is my great comfort that by that time I shall be out of it!

At the end of a very long program, chiefly memorable for the splendid interpretation of César Franck's Prelude, Choral and Fugue, placed apart and above all other music on the list, the pianist, after prolonged applause and many recalls, made a speech. He said that he had played his historical program in other American cities, that in none of them had he met with such deep attention and appreciation as in Boston and that he wished to tender his heartfelt thanks for this.

Marcia Van Dresser's Recital

On Saturday afternoon Marcia Van Dresser, dramatic soprano of the Chicago Opera Company, interpreted these songs, with the assistance of Kurt Schindler:

Auf dem See, Tausch mich nicht, Roslein dreie, Wehe, so willst du mich wieder, Des Liebsten Schwur, Brahms; L'Amour de moi (Old French), Tiersot; Lisette (Old French), Weckerlin; Tamborin, (XVIII.) Century Old French, Tiersot; Serenade Italienne, E. Chausson; Les Papillons, E. Chausson; Wenn du zu den Blumen gehst, In dem Schatten meiner Locken, Nachtzauber, Auf dem grünen Balkon, Begegnung, Hugo Wolf; Have you seen but a Whyte Lily grow (Old English); A Pastorale (Old English), Lane-Wilson; The Lost Falcon (Rosetti), Kurt Schindler; Lullaby, Cyril Scott; The Bird of the Wilderness, E. Horsman.

Miss Van Dresser displayed a voice of more than ordinary capacity. She is an experienced singer, and she was well received.

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PITTSBURGH PLANS STOKOWSKI SERIES

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for Eight Concerts—Tilly
Koenen's Visit

PITTSBURGH, PA., March 20.—Plans are under way here which, if consummated, will give Pittsburgh some good orchestral music during the season of 1916-17. It is proposed to bring the Philadelphia Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, conductor, to this city for a series of eight concerts and in recognition thereof to call the musical organization the Philadelphia-Pittsburgh Orchestra.

Arrangements are now being made to raise a guarantee fund of \$15,000 through the contribution of \$200 each of seventy-five Pittsburghers. T. De Witt Cuyler, a prominent resident of Philadelphia, is interested in bringing the Quaker City Orchestra here, and it is through his efforts that prominent Pittsburghers have undertaken to raise the guarantee fund. There has been talk here of reorganizing the Pittsburgh Orchestra, but that would necessitate a guarantee fund of \$50,000.

An excellent program was given last Friday night at Carnegie Music Hall by the Art Society of Pittsburgh, the soloists being Tilly Koenen, the Dutch contralto, and Angelo Cortese, harpist. Mme.

Koenen made a profound impression. She has a voice of excellent range, over which she has splendid control. Her Dutch child songs, by Catherina Van Rennes, gave splendid satisfaction. She excelled in Schubert's "Die Allmacht" and others. Mr. Cortese met with a warm reception because of his versatility and his command of dynamics. John Doane was a good accompanist for Mme. Koenen.

E. C. S.

Paul Reimers Closes Series of Lecture-
Recitals

Paul Reimers gave the third and last of his "lecture recitals" at the Princess Theater, New York, last Monday afternoon, devoting his program to songs by Schubert, Debussy, Fauré, Pierné and some less known modern Frenchmen, as well as Rachmaninoff, Tchaikowsky, John Carpenter, Cyril Scott, Roger Quilter and others. As at the previous events of this interesting series there was occasion to admire unreservedly the artistry of the noted tenor—an artistry which might be held up as a model to all aspirants for honor in the concert field. The various numbers were received with abundant applause and the preliminary talk much enjoyed.

H. F. P.

Emily Gresser, violinist, who assisted Mme. Guilbert in her recent tour of Canadian cities, states that the presence of German express labels on their baggage excited the suspicion of the authorities, who kept them under surveillance throughout their visit.

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