

JOE'S JOTTINGS

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SPLATTERINGS ON THE RUN: ---

If nothing else, the 4th mailing was nice and large. Eighteen mags . . . Let's hope this keeps up . . . Tumbrils is top-deck again -- Blish does an effective job of being both thought-provoking and readable at the same time . . . Danner's rather pseudo-scientific effort is fast giving Temper and Agonbite a run for the money. A Vapa publication having a connection with the fantasy field (however faint) is indeed refreshing after the numberless attacks, counter-attacks, and assorted mayhem to be found elsewhere . . . The "Workshop" section of Renasence gives excellent promise . . . Discrete's pleasing informality easily compensates for the sloppiness. One damon knight's sketch of the plump bunny-rabbits proved uproarious. And personally wd happen to enjoy reviews of previous mailings . . . Daw's remarks on the subject of unintelligible poetry should be worthy of amplification, even if his burlesk of Sostman seemed pretty crude. . . . Crying Snowflakes: ahhh-h-h! What pretty blue paper! . . . Phantasphere: We detect the fine, unwelcome hand of H. Phillips Lovecraft upon "Annals of Arkya". Tho HPL for our money reigns beyond dispute among modern writers of weird fiction, most critics are agreed that the Old Man of Providence was never any great shucks as a poet. Witness most of the Fungi from Yuggoth series, in particular that dubious masterpiece, "The Well". And Lowndes has shown himself capable of infinitely superior stuff . . . The Constitution proves satisfactory in the main, although the authority of the Charter Members for making certain decisions seems questionable. Idly, we ponder the advisability of elsecting a board of advisors for the first official year. However, since a smooth-running organization is preferable to an elaborate constitution, we'll refrain from squawking too loudly .

The Phuturians have a feline at every rodent aperture . . .

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The following item appears through courtesy of FJackerman.

A RATING OF FANTASY MUSIC

-- by --

Milton A. Rothman

S t a n d a r d s

GREATEST MASTER- PIECES:	Beethoven Symphs. 3,5,6,7,9 Certain Beethoven Sonatas & quartets Bach B Minor Mass Chopin Etudes Brahms Symphs. Die Meistersinger
GREAT MASTER- PIECES	Tschaikowsky Symphs. Shostakovitch 1 & 5 Sibelius 2 & 5, Violin Concerto Tschaikowsky Piano & Violin Concertos Chopin Nocturnes, Polonaises, Concertos
LESSER MASTER- PIECES:	Mendelssohn: Italian Symph. Smetana: Die Mouldau Enesco: Roumanian Rhapsody Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue Verdi & Puccini Operas
WHITE ELEPHANTS	Mahler's Ninth Symph. Sain Saens' Third Symph. Scriabin: Song of Ecstasy Strauss: Ein Heldenleben
CHESTNUTS	Overture 1812 Liebestraum Wm. Tell Overture Dvorak's Humoresque Dance of the Hours

F a n t a s t i c

Rites of Spring Chopin B flat minor Piano Sonata Ring of the Nibelungen
Daphnis & Chloe Suite Scheherezade Fire Bird Suite & Petroushka Schubert: The Erl King Pictures at an Exhibition Afternoon of a Faun
The Sorcerer's Apprentice Debussy: The Submerged Cathedral De Falla: El Amor Bruce Adam: Giselle Swan of Tuonela, Lemminkai- nen's Journey, etc. The Flying Dutchman Prokofieff: Love for 3 Oranges
Holst: The Planets Berlioz: Symphonie Fantas- tique, The Damnation of Faust Tschaikowsky: Francesca de Rimini Rimsky-Kors. : Antar Rhespigi: Pines of Rome Strauss: Tod und Verklarung
Peer Gynt Things to Come Suite Night on Bald Mountain Danse Macabre Thru the Looking Glass

TRIPLE: Last Dream of the Virgin
Overture to Orpheus in Hades
Poet and Peasant Overture
Souvenir by Drdla

UNCLASSIFIED:

Mahler: Lied von der Erde
Gliere: Third Symph.
Liadov: Enchanted Lake
Loeffler: Pagan Poem

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EXPLANATORY NOTES :

The Simplest method of classifying fantasy music is to compare it with a standard scale of ordinary music. To that end I have prepared a scale, which is on the separate page. I freely admit that it is rough and ready, and that the exact position of any given piece of music on it depends upon the weather, what you had for breakfast, when you last heard the piece, and a dozen other factors -- but I think you will admit that it is roughly accurate in placing a composition in its position on the scale of musical value. Naturally, the pieces I mention are only the barest few samples to indicate the nature of the music that belongs in that particular section of the scale.

Let's consider these standards:

1. "The Greatest Masterpieces" are those of a large scale and great profundity, or of smaller scale and great perfection of form, or perhaps of great significance in the evolution of music.
2. "The Great Masterpieces" contains probably the bulk of the standard repertoire.
3. Lesser masterpieces are good music, but of a lighter nature, such as you'd hear at a pop concert.
4. White elephants are the toughest to classify. It is the class of music of a pretentious nature which for some reason or other has not been quite accepted as belonging with the greatest music. Much argument can ensue over this classification, as no doubt Townes will claim that Mahler's Ninth belongs in either #1 or 2, and so on into the night. But I think that most unprejudiced music students will agree that these white elephants are questionable. After you study them you either give them up as a bad job, or they capture your fancy and you promote them to group 1 or 2.
5. The chestnuts are pretty obvious. They may be pretty to listen to if they are well done, but I wouldn't walk a mile, or even a hundred yards to hear them.
6. Triple. This is where I turn off the radio. Now let's

examine the fantastic numbers which I have rated:

Group 1: "Rites of Spring" needs no explanation. It's terrific. The Chopin sonata, while pure music, has a fantastic atmosphere, and in fact, I recall reading some story attached to it, either real or fanciful, in which the funeral march is followed by the wind and spirits howling around the gravestones in the fourth movement. Contrary to Bloch, I classify the "Ring of the Nibelungen" as fantasy, because I am considering the operas as a whole, including the story, stage settings, etc. For the same reason, I put them in Group 1, because while certain parts of the operas are better music than other parts, as a total concept the Ring is one of the greatest pieces of work in Music.

Group 2: No discussion here, unless you argue about moving certain ones up or down a group. However, I think that with this classification system there is rarely a need to argue about a displacement of more than one group.

Group 3: Giselle is a ballet done occasionally in America, and about every two weeks here at the Paris opera. The music is mediocre, but the ballet is fine, and the story is a weirdy.

Group 4: As I said, here's where you have the arguments. This is music which is pretty hard to digest. After you digest it, you may either excrete it or decide that you like it. Personally, I'm not too impressed by "The Damnation of Faust" altho the Paris opera puts on a fine show of it. "Ankar" has a luscious musical theme, but gets nowhere with it. Respighi's stuff puts me to sleep, and "Tod und Verklarung" (Death and Transfiguration) was quite aptly described as being the final thoughts of a stuffed shirt. It doesn't wear well through repeated hearings.

Group 5: No comment. And I didn't bother to list any tripe.

As for the unclassified, that's the sad result of my years in the army. A few years ago I had reached the point where I could start to investigate things like Mahler and Gliere's Third, and then the army came along and made it rather difficult. So despite the years I've spent listening to music, there's an entire world of stuff I've never even heard yet -- which continues to make life interesting.

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PARAGRAPHS FROM PINOCHLE

"How I could laugh. Laugh and laugh and laugh. *** It is never a question of doing a good job of whatever, you hear? I said Whatever! one is doing! Such weakness! Such revolting sniveling! *** Eh, Mr. Michel It's the same old feeling of racing to get a thing said, racing to get it down. Has the boil erupted? 'The People, Yes.' Magnificent!" -- Elsie Balter Wollheim, in K'thlogm-m #3.

. . . ain't it tho?

We won't have to worry about copyright trouble
with this reprint -- it's 150 years old!

A SHORT TALK ON DRUNKENNESS

...From The New-Jersey Journal, Volume XII, No. 613,
for Wednesday, July 8, 1795. This was merely one of
a series of short articles purporting to have been
written by one Tomo Cheeki, a Creek Indian in Phila-
delphia. Following the custom of newspapers of the
time, this was undoubtedly a reprint from still an-
other publication. The exact author is unknown.....

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When I confider the variety of evils that nature has thrown into
the way of man, while a resident on this changeable theatre, the world
we inhabit, I cannot possibly blame him for having availed himself of
some of those choice extractions from the fruits of the ground, which
put a new foul into him, and bid him for a time not only forget the
miseries of his condition but also encourage ((Next line illegible))
*** where the measure is continually full, and no one who was ever
allowed to taste could truly say, "the quantity is diminished."

What an insignificant thing is this world to me if I am forever
restricted to the use of water! This element leaves me as it found me,
a poor, infirm creature, destitute of all elevation, as well as
incapable of great designs, or actions worthy the arm of valour.

The end and design of man is happiness. Hence then, ye cold mor-
alists, who upon the uncertain speculations of futurity would abridge
our joys of the present season. When once a man departs hence, he is a
man no more. His pleasures, if any he has, will be no longer the
pleasures of a man, but of a creature existing in some other mode of
being. Let me then in my own proper nature, while here, enjoy those
pleasures which are the peculiar portion of humanity.

The time must come when this liquor which now sparkles in the bowl
will avail me nothing! They will place the full bottle by my side,
but it shall not yield me a single ray of consolation; much less shall
it inflame me to generous and noble actions.

Nevertheless I pity that man, who in (***) this good thing is so
unfortunate as to convert it to an evil purpose. Such is our friend
Tufkenalah, the big lieutenant, No sooner does the strong spirit of
the juice of the grape begin to operate, than he in a moment becomes a
monster. Cruelty is in his eye and the resemblance of death is on his
countenance. He smites fiercely at all around him, and delights in
acts of violence -- for such the great man above the clouds did not

bid the grape to grow. For such he only meant the running stream, the standing lake, and the spring that issues constantly from the bosom of the mountain. To say all in a few words, he placed such men in the same rank with the most ravenous beasts of the forest.

Who that has a spirit within him partaking in ever so small a degree of the celestial nature, but will perceive himself becoming a better man by the operation of this divine liquid, the juice of the grape. Is he generous? It heightens his generosity -- Is he brave? this elevates him into a prodigy of exalted valour; all narrownesses and meanings of spirit, if any such he possesses, is thrown aside after a full draught of this enlivening liquor. He takes hold of the hand of the orphan and relieves him, and his benevolence extends to the comforting of the widow, and feeble daughters of distress. I was ever greatly afraid of that man who was never known to transgress the bounds of strict sobriety in drinking. Such a man is cold and unfeeling. His whole happiness is centered in himself continually. He never relaxes the fevered brow of care, but like a certain animal of our forests, is continually anxious to collect a hoard which it is most likely he will not long exist to enjoy. --- To be always serious is not true wisdom. Life should, in a certain degree, be chequered with folly, otherwise we disguise the feelings of nature, and under the severe mask of wisdom lose those pleasures which folly, when seasonably indulged, never fails to inspire.

What think you of the power called Nature? Tell me, philosopher, is she at all times in that sedate and reflective mood which you yourself would wish constantly to assume? Has she not vividly her passions and her whims, her fits of anger and her seasons of moderation? She has even her hours of play and merriment; and pardon me when I say, she at times commits some little freaks analogous to what we call F O L L Y in man.

There is a flower that grows in our forests which has particularly attracted my attention. In our language it is called Fonfha ataroah /in English, the Bee-flower/. Upon this flower the whimsical fancy of nature has planted a bee, as if in the act of extracting honey; so nicely as to deceive the most penetrating eye, till the imposition is discovered by applying the fingers to the flower to catch the bee.

This was evidently done with the idea of jocular deception. Is it profane to say nature had taken a glass of wine too much when she went to work at contriving this flower? If so, I hope I may be permitted to observe, without censure, that she could not have been otherwise than at least in a very good humour.

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JOTTINGS HOME TRAVELOGUE CORNER

"But fans go on their way -- walking circles around the hole into which they've stuck their heads." -- Kepner in Parnassus.
That's a swell trick if you can do it.