Sargent, on 2 April 1958, which — when it is ever referred to nowadays — seems to be condemned as having been a poor performance under a conductor who evidently did not understand the work.

However, the BBC possesses a recording of the broadcast of this première, which has been re-broadcast in the past 18 months. This re-hearing of a performance which has come to be dismissed suggests that, at very least, the first three movements in this première were exceptionally well interpreted by Sargent: only in the last movement, surely taken too quickly, would one agree with those who condemned him. I was present at this première, and have retained my original impression that in this work RVW was moving into a new creative phase which he sadly did not live to pursue in successive works — although it would be fascinating to hear the Cello Concerto, which was completed by him in draft.

My original impressions of this Symphony have been borne out over the years, and it was refreshing to be reminded of the first time I heard it, under Sargent — whose talk on the Symphony in the BBC’s Music Magazine the preceding Sunday, i.e. before the work was heard, spoke of it as being ‘great music’. Perhaps it was the work’s first reviewers, rather than the conductor, who failed to grasp the Symphony’s originality and importance.

1 Exford Road
London
SE12 9HD

News Section

Composers

JOHN ADAMS. Century Rolls (European première)—18 April/Amsterdam, Concertgebouw/Emanuel Ax (pno), Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra c. composer.


JULIAN ANDERSON. The Crazed Moon (German première)—17 January/Berlin-Dahlem/Radio SO Berlin c. Stefan Asbury.

SIMON BAINBRIDGE. 3 Pieces for Orchestra (premiere)—7 February/Bristol/Brunei Ensemble c. Christophe Austin.

GERALD BARRY. Hard D (US première)—8 April/John Hopkins University/Peabody Wind Ensemble.

GEORGE BENJAMIN. V solo, viola (Italian première)—4 April/Milan. Sometime Voices (French première)—28 April/Paris, Théâtre des Champs Elysées/Halle Orchestra and Chorus c. Kent Nagano.

HARRISON BIRTWISTLE. Harrison’s Clocks (premiere—19 April/Manchester, Bridgewater Hall, ISCM World Music Days/Joanna McGregor (pno).

GEFFREY BURGON. Fantasia on R.E.X. (premiere—14 February/Santa Barbara, California/Santa Barbara SO.

DIANA BURRELL. Christo Paremus Canica (premiere)—2 May/London, Holy Trinity, Sloane Street/Allergi Singers c. Michael Nicholas. Breeze (premiere)—20 June/Bristol/Brunei Ensemble c. Christopher Austin. Burrell is composing a song-cycle on Danish texts for soprano, cor anglais and orchestra and a work for the New Zealand String Quartet.

ELLIOTT CARTER. Symphonia (premiere of complete trilogy)—25 April/Manchester. ISCM New Music Days/BBC Symphony Orchestra c. Oliver Knussen. Laiinen (premiere—31 March/Amsterdam, ParadoX/Next Ensemble c. Ed Spanjerß. Carter, who celebrates his 90th birthday this year, is writing a Piano Quintet for Ursula Oppens and the Arditti Quartet, and has begun a one-act comic opera, What Next?, to a libretto by Paul Griffiths, for Daniel Barenboim and the Komische Oper, Berlin.

RICHARD CAUSTON. A Shaft of Sunlight reaches Mansion House Station (premiere)—25 February/London, Imperial College/Sinfonia 21 c. Martyn Brabbins.

JAMES DILLON. Book of Elements (UK première)—1 June/London, Queen Elizabeth Hall/Roger Woodward.


EDWARD ELGAR (d.1934)/ANTHONY PAYNE. Symphony No.3 (public première)—15 February/London, Royal Festival Hall/BBC Symphony Orchestra c. Andrew Davis.

BRIAN FERNYHOUGH. Phantas for six players (premiere)—10 February/San Diego/Sor Ensemble dir. Steve Schick. Unsichtbire Farben for solo violin (premiere)—Irvine Arditi (vn).


DETELY GLANERT. Katolik (première)—16 March/Mannheim/Mannheim National Theater Orchestra c. Jan Markl.

MARTYN HARRY. Fantasy Unbosted (première)—21 February/London, Queen Elizabeth Hall/London Sinfonietta c. Markus Stenz.

JONATHAN HARVEY. Wheel of Emptiness (première)—22 January/Brussels/axis Ensemble c. George-Ellie Octors. Death of Light, Light of Death (première)—10 April/Colman Ensemble InterContemporain.


OLIVER KNUSSEN. Horn Concerto (German première)—20 April/Berlin/Stefan Dohr (hn), Berlin PO c. Roger Norrington.

BARBARA KOLB. Virgin Mother Creatrix (première)—19 March/Indiana University of Pennsylvania/IUP Chorale.

BENJAMIN LEES. Silent Voices (première)—31 May/Washington DC, Holocaust Museum/Hongberg Trio.

STEPHEN MACKEY. Ravenshead (première)—10 April/Princeton University, NJ/Runde Eckert (ten), Paul Dresher Ensemble.


COLIN MATTHEWS. Dowlands (première)—18 April/London, Queen Elizabeth Hall/Birmingham Contemporary Music Group c. Nicholas Keck.

DAVID MATTHEWS. Burnham Wick (première)—10 March/Birmingham/Britten Sinfonia c. Nicholas Cleobury.

NICHOLAS MAW. Sonata for solo violin (première)—18 January/Minneapolis, Minnesota Public Radio/Jorja Fleezanis.

SIR PETER MAXWELL DAVIES. A Reel for Seven Fishermen (première)—7 May/San Francisco/San Francisco SO c. composer.

DOMINIC MULDOWNEY. The Bonne’s Suite (première)—9 March/London, St John’s Smith Square/Orchestra of St John’s Smith Square c. John Lubbock.


THEA MUSGRAVE. Phoenix Rising (première)—18 February/London, Royal Festival Hall/BBC Symphony Orchestra c. Andrew Davis.

HELmut OEHRING. 4Real (première)—21 March/Berlin/Joachim Daix (organ).

MATTHIAS PINTSCHER. Figura (première)—24 April/Witten, New Music Days/Tedore Angelotti (accordion), Arditti Quartet. a twilight’s song (première)—28 April/Munich Biennale/Eva-Marta Kahrau (sop), soloists of the Bavarian State Orchestra c. composer.

PAUL READE (d.1997). Bassoon Concerto (première)—11 February/London, St John’s Smith Square/Laurence Perkins (bsn), English Chamber Orchestra c. Peter Broadbent.

STEVE REICH. Handenburg (première of complete work)—26 May/Spoleto, USA/Steve Reich & Musicians.

PETER SCULTHORPE. String Quartet No.12 (première)—5 March/Launceston, Tasmania/Goldner Quartet. Cello Concerto (première)—29 April/Manchester, International Cello Festival/Steven Isselis (vc). BBC Philharmonic c. Yan Pascal Tortellet. Sculthorpe is writing a new work for the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra.

HOWARD SKEMPTON. Double Take (première)—22 January/London, Tate Gallery/Andrew Sparling (cl), Thalia Myers (pno).

ULRICH STRANZ. String Quartet No.4 (première)—22 April/Cologne/Keller Quartet.

WILLIAM SWEENEY. An Tues (The Journey), chamber opera in Gaelic (première)—2 February/Inverness/dir. Gerda Stevenson; Yvonne Barclay, Lynn McMurry, Alan Oke, Robin Greenway, Paragon Ensemble c. David Davies.

MICHAEL TORKE has been appointed Associate Composer by the Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

DAVID DEL TREDICI. The Spider and the Fly (première)—28 May/New York, Avery Fisher Hall/Heidi Murphy (top), NYPO c. Kurt Masur.


UNSUK CHIN. Three Studies (UK première)—26 February/London, Imperial College/Sinfonia 21 c. Martyn Brabbins.

GRAHAM WILLIAMS. 3 Fantasies for wind quintet (première)—22 February/London, Jackson’s Lane Theatre/Marais Ensemble.

JOHN WOOLRICH. Oboe Quintet (première)—20 June/London, Royal Festival Hall/Heidi Murphy (top), NYPO c. Kurt Masur.

MATTHIAS ZEYL. Baranu (première)—8 February/London, Jackson’s Lane Theatre/English Horn Trio.

Books Received

(Items in this list does not preclude a review in a future issue of Tempo)

Twenty Israeli Composers: Voices of Culture by Robert Fleisher. Wayne State University Press, £35.50.