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MODERN ORCHESTRAL TEXTURES

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New Orchestral Society of Boston
Willis Page, Conductor

PACIFIC 231 — Mouvement Symphonique
- Honegger

DANSE — Debussy-Ravel

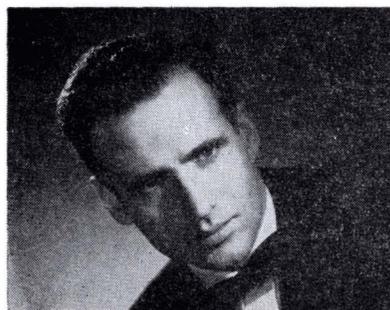
ADAGIO FOR STRINGS — Barber

Printed in U.S.A.



The BOSTON RECORDING FESTIVAL is the modern opposite of the Boston Tea Party of two centuries ago. The aim and object of the Festival is to PRESERVE — with the lasting validity of today's most advanced recording technics.*

Like the old-time harbor party, many of our musical riches are sabotaged today by technical obsolescence or just plain neglect. That is why the Festival program includes previously recorded standard works. Last year TIME magazine reviewed the Orchestral Society's MOZART G MINOR as — "the best available LP of the great work" . . . a remarkable pronouncement considering other distinguished versions. The Festival series will continue and extend the performance of this group to both new and old works.



WILLIS PAGE

Knowing Willis Page is to understand the key to the nature of the orchestra. A former protege of Monteux, thoroughly schooled in symphonic tradition, he brings a freshness to his musical material which is infectious. He is young but not brash; fiery but not unbridled. A graduate of Eastman, his early work with the major orchestras in this country was as a double bass player — an interesting coincidence which parallels the early career of Koussevitsky. Notably free from the old-school spectacular mannerisms, Willis Page conducts with a sure intensity of purpose, — a spirit reflected in the orchestra he leads.

A Study in Modern Orchestral Textures

PACIFIC 231 — Honegger

Honegger's locomotive is prominent in all the textbooks . . . but conspicuously absent from recording rolls. The awful stigma of being "dated" does not, however, weaken the fierce crushing power of this score. Honegger writes:

"What I have tried to depict in *Pacific* is not an imitation of the sound of the locomotive, but the translation into music of its visual impression and physical sensation. It sets forth the objective contemplation: the quiet breathing of the machine in repose, its effort in starting, then the gradual increase in speed, to the condition of strain of three hundred tons hurling itself through the night one hundred miles an hour."

ADAGIO FOR STRINGS — Barber

As one critic commented, "Barber isn't afraid of his emotions." Using the simplest lyric materials he builds to an impassioned climax. It is hard to imagine a more complete gamut of modern string textures — played by a string symphony of rare and old instruments (see above).

Honegger's PACIFIC 231 was recorded on the first "take!" (Musicians will recognize this as a kind of musical miracle considering the muscular complexity of the score. Listeners will hear an unedited performance with all its cumulative power.)

By a strange coincidence, the musicians brought their precious, most costly instruments for the string symphony (Barber, ADAGIO FOR STRINGS; Bach, BRANDENBURG CONCERTO NO. 3). It was in every sense a priceless ensemble . . . Stradavarius, Guaneri, Guadagnini, more than 100,000 dollars worth of strings.

*All equipment, including feedback cutters of our own design, is within 2 db from 16 cycles to 25,000. Our amplifying channel for mastering is within 1.5 db from 10 cycles to 45,000 overall.

DANSE — Debussy, orchestrated by Ravel

Debussy and Ravel are alternately accused of being very similar . . . or very different. But both are acknowledged masters. This bright little work is a rare product of the special talent of each: a merging of the Debussy harmonies and inventiveness with the Ravel orchestral sparkle.

DEBUSSY dreamed up many musical schemes which *didn't* come off. One was an opera with a character who whistled his part instead of singing it (the Devil in Poe's *Devil in the Belfry*, commissioned by the Metropolitan but never completed). He had one of the most incredibly original musical minds in history — and music has never been the same since.

THE REMARKABLE fact is that most of his musical daring *did* come off. Starting with ridiculously unmusical subjects like, *Serenade to an Elephant*, moonlight, lacquered goldfish, and fireworks, he transformed them into sublime tonal experiences unsurpassed by any composer for sheer beauty and originality.

DEBUSSY's music has a strange capacity for never wearing out — even with constant repetition brightening the introductions to radio soap operas. The selections on this record, though familiar, still retain their fragile magic with each hearing. The mysterious entrance of the processional in *Festivals* for example, never fails to create its relentless build to a breathtaking climax. One explanation may be that even though this is essentially mood music it is not superficial in content or structure. The dream-like wanderings of the solo flute in *Afternoon of a Faun* conceal a musical organization as strict as a classical sonata form — and an exactness of notation which preserves its elusive enchantment with each performance.

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