

AVERY CLAFLIN :
TEEN SCENES for String Orchestra
Alfredo Antonini and the Orchestra of the
“Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia - Roma”

Now and then there appears on the American scene a man who pursues two careers which are ordinarily considered quite contradictory to each other: business and art. Such a man is Avery Claflin, retired bank president and definitely not retired composer who had one of his compositions reviewed on the front page of the *New York Times*, a unique experience for a contemporary composer. The work in question was a madrigal with special appeal to American taxpayers, the *Lament for April 15th*, which Howard Taubman reviewed after its premiere performance in Tanglewood in the summer of 1955. (The work is recorded by CRI.)

Teen Scenes is a tender and sympathetic little suite depicting in seven episodes various possible adolescent situations: *Confident Freshman*, in which the composer, with tongue in cheek, throws in just a hint of fugal pomposity; *Baby Sitting*, with its appropriate lullaby; the hustle and bustle of *Job in Supermarket*; the bleakness of *Delinquent*; *Blind Date*; *Joe's in Love*; and finally, a catapulting *Hot Rod*.

Avery Claflin was born in Keene, New Hampshire and was educated at Phillips Exeter Academy and Harvard, where he studied with Archibald T. Davidson. He won the Croix de Guerre for service at Verdun during World War I, studied music in Paris with Erik Satie, and upon his return to the United States, went to work in New York's financial district, composing in the evenings and on weekends. He obtained a job with the French American Banking Corporation and thirty-five years later retired as its president to devote himself full-time to composing and other musical activities. Mr. Claflin has composed three operas, the latest of which is *La Grande Bretèche*, based on the Balzac story (CRI-108). His catalog also contains two symphonies and numerous works for other instrumental combinations.

ROBERT McBRIDE:
PUMPKIN EATER'S LITTLE FUGUE
WORKOUT FOR SMALL ORCHESTRA
Camarata and the New Symphony
Orchestra of London

Robert McBride is a composer who is thoroughly comfortable in writing for the orchestra and who delights in playing about with his material to convey a gay mood, a lazy mood, a jazzy blue mood, or else just plain fun.

His *Pumpkin Eater's Little Fugue* (which has a mere suggestion of real fugal treatment) takes "Peter, Peter, Pumpkin Eater" and "I love Coffee, I Love Tea" and blends them into a charming, skillfully wrought short bit of orchestral good times. His *Workout for Small Orchestra*, which was originally commissioned by the League of Composers, is divided into three parts: *Go Choruses*, *Sweet*, and *Fast Swing*. It brings the jazz idiom nicely into a small symphonic set-up, and adds a bit of bright jazz piano for flavor. The use of the word "workout" is particularly apt here, because the composer passes his themes from instrument to instrument (especially among his favored woodwinds) and then enjoys them in combination. It is no surprise that this work has been of great interest to dance companies, because it suggests a variety of form and movement within a modern context.

Robert McBride, who was born in Tucson, Arizona on February 20, 1911, started his musical career by playing clarinet in a school band; he later added saxophone, oboe, English horn, piano and pipe organ to the roster of his musical accomplishment. He was the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, and an award from the American Academy and National Institute of Arts and Letters. He has been a teacher of theory and wind instruments at Bennington College, and is now on the faculty of the University of Arizona. His compositions include works for orchestra, ballet, chamber groups, band, and some for solo voice and chorus. Some of the country's major conductors have performed his works including Stokowski, Reiner, Fiedler, Barzin, Wallenstein, Hendl and Hanson.

**ULYSSES KAY:
ROUND DANCE AND POLKA FOR STRINGS
Camarata and the New Symphony Orchestra of London**

In his *Round Dance*, Ulysses Kay has derived from the American folk tradition a beautifully reflective theme of his own, which he first treats canonically, then soars with it lyrically and finally comes back to his original, muted home ground. The second piece of this pair mellows down a country fiddle type tune into a fuller string setting, using a theme reminiscent of children's street-play songs for its middle section and then, in a-b-a style, taking up the fiddle tune again. These two short dances are part of a larger suite of American Dances which were written for the CBS String Serenade in 1953-54.

Ulysses Kay, like Robert McBride, was born in Tucson, Arizona, and is a graduate of the University of Arizona. After receiving his M.A. in Music from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, he studied with Paul Hindemith at Yale and the Berkshire Music Center. In addition to works of lyric simplicity, such as those represented here, Kay has produced works of much broader scope and complexity for orchestra, chorus and chamber combinations. He has composed two operas and is the recipient of many awards, including a Prix de Rome for residence in the American Academy in Rome for two successive seasons, a Julius Rosenwald Fellowship, and a grant from the American Academy and National Institute of Arts and Letters.

— Notes by J. Steiner

(Original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)