ROGER GOEB
SYMPHONY NO. 4
Japan Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra
Akeo Watanabe, conductor

In examining programs given in today's concert halls, one might be led to believe that there is very little musical creativity happening in our country and our time. This is obviously so false that denial of it needs repeating. There are literally thousands of composers of concert music in the Americas, many producing large catalogues of good music in almost uncountable numbers of different styles and tendencies. Unhappily there is still a prevailing general belief that contemporary music (in order to be modern) is always harsh and generally unpleasant in sound and "negative" in expressive intention. Again such a generalization must repeatedly be denied.

There are many kinds of music being written today which present a challenge of a nature that is completely different from the music of the 19th century as well as that of the last fifty years. The "negative" attitude (example: "the theatre of the absurd") seems to be getting most of the headlines as the latest in fashions in the arts, but actually the whole picture in music and the other arts is another matter entirely. It is possible that the newest trend for the arts will be away from the "negative" attitude. More and more one encounters artists working with the basic notion that there is some hope for man and that there are new ways of looking at forms other than purposely seeking the most ungainly or grotesque. It is a pleasure to note that critics and reviewers in literature and the graphic arts are calling attention to this as an apparent trend.

Recent examples of serialization and other similar techniques lead one to become suspicious of those systems of composing. The techniques are so useful to the academically minded and the non-musical composer that the market is being flooded with superficial and totally unsatisfactory examples of this kind of music. Undeniably some composers have made use of these techniques with impressive results and they accomplish real individuality within the system. To a large extent, however, composers seem to allow themselves to be ordered and managed by the techniques, rather than the other way around, and the products are singularly academic. This applies to great names and beginners alike.

Serialization has for so long been the trend of the newest in music that it has become habitual for some to expect it in new music. Often rather comic irrelevancies are indulged in because of the habit. New music is expected to sound "atonal" and if a new piece doesn't sound "atonal" it is automatically classed as "tonal" and therefore not "challenging;" this, despite the fact that the sound used may be completely different from 19th century music for which the term "tonality" was developed. Understanding why this happens helps very little. Atonality, by definition, eschewed the use of harmony as it is generally understood and obtained change by other means. A sound pattern that does use harmonic change is therefore classified with earlier music, even if the kind of sound used is entirely unrelated to it. Harmony has been the one unique experience of Occidental music and one of its historic glories, and it should be one of the basic building blocks usable by composers. We would like to submit that a work using harmonic change may very well be equally as "challenging" as an atonal work, even if for different reasons.

The above essay has been included in these notes because the air around new music needs to be cleared of the many protestations by the sanctimonious. Both works on this record show that the composers are conscious of what has been happening to music, but they show also that the composers are interested in disengaging themselves from the recent past and going on to newer modes of expression. It is hoped that my Symphony No. 4 will be considered as an attempt in this direction. I had no express intention of writing a work with such an ideational background but it so happens that the work came out to fit the idea; and in all probability, I was reacting to much of the music I was coming in contact with when I wrote it (1954).

The first movement of the work is based on a "metric theme," the successive meters: 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 5/4 in a very quick tempo. This gives a sense of exhilaration and lift when the pattern is repeated with building chords. After the theme gets established, the whole orchestra enters with a brilliant and dramatic section that suffers no delay. Throughout the movement, the shifting metric pattern produces a sense of momentum and even in the calmer sections, the theme keeps re-entering to hurry things along.

The second movement begins with very simple ideas in a calm atmosphere. It soon builds, however, into a more declamatory statement with a sustained line played by the four horns in unison. After an interruption to the main flow, the brass instruments continue it in expanded form to a conclusion which resembles the opening.

The movement basically represents a tongue-in-cheek attitude with tunes based on patterns in predominantly woodwind coloring. Flat and repeated-note string passages are opposed by the woodwinds and a sense of lightness and pleasantry prevails even though more dramatic passages do occur.

The Symphony as a whole employs a more than usual variety of orchestrational coloring with the percussion section being integrated into the body of the sound instead of being used in the traditional manner as punctuation. I believe the work has a claim to the title, "Symphony," even though the general expressivity tends more toward the gay rather than the serious. I am one of those who are trying to change the habit of calling all concert music by the generic term, "serious music."

I wish to close these notes with an expression of thanks to Akeo Watanabe and the Japan Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra for what I, the composer, think is a brilliant performance of my work.

—*Notes by Roger Goeb*

Roger Goeb was born in Cherokee, Iowa in 1914 and educated in the United States, principally under Otto Luening. After fifteen years teaching in a number of universities throughout the country, he was appointed Executive Secretary of the American Composers Alliance and later became Secretary-Treasurer of Composers Recordings Inc. As a composer, Goeb has been mainly interested in orchestral and chamber music, and these have been performed in Europe, South America and Japan as well as in this country. His Symphony No. 3 appears on the CRI label (CRI 120) as does his Quintet for Woodwinds No. 2. (CRI 158)

JACOB DRUCKMAN
DARK UPON THE HARP

Jan DeGaetani, mezzo-soprano; Gerald Carlyss, vibraphone and percussion; Robert Ayers, glockenspiel and percussion; and the New York Brass Quintet: Robert Nagel, Fred Mills, Trumpet; Ralph Froelich, horn; David Uber, trombone; Harvey Phillips, tuba.

Jacob Druckman has furnished the following notes for his work: "**Dark Upon The Harp**" was composed during the winter of 1961-62 in answer to a commission for a work dedicated to the memory of the publisher, Leo Feist. It is scored for mezzo-soprano, two trumpets, horn, trombone, tuba, and two percussion players. The texts are from the Psalms, the title coming from a line in the 49th Psalm, which reads: "I will open my dark saying upon the Harp."

The musical organization of the work is inseparable from the choice and order of the texts. They develop and unfold in a highly personal dramatic sequence leading to the complete acceptance inherent in the final line: "Surely He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." This line was, in fact, the starting point from which evolved the final order, an order revealing itself in a series of dramatic prerequisites and the natural energies of the musical material itself.

The first section, Psalm XXII 12-17, 20, Allegro, establishes the contrast between the fragmentary instrumental writing and the comparatively extended lyricism of the vocal lines, which gradually progress to a more homogeneous texture during the progress of the entire work. The jagged opening measures are serially identical to the setting of the final line.

Psalm LVIII 4-9, Lento, focuses, textually, on the sources of the fear and anger of the first section and, instrumentally, on the more snarling and maledictory qualities of the percussion and brass.
The third section, Psalm XVIII 4-9, Afrettando, dealing with the wrath of God, moves through four rhythmically proportioned tempo changes, the first advancing and the last three retarding the metronomic pulse.

Section four, Psalm XXX 12, 13, Poco scherzando, in giddy release, plays with the sounds of the words: the "cing" in "dancing" is mimicked by the instruments — the phrase "and not be silent" is followed by a frenetic section in which the sequence of events is unimportant, and in which several wildly bacchantic motives exhaust themselves in their own time. In its bemused state the movement turns in on itself to the only recapitulatory statement of the entire work.

Psalm CXXXIII, used in its entirety for the fifth section is a visionary statement of a universal serenity. The instrumental interlude which surges beyond the line, "And there He commanded the blessing, even life for ever," is a set of ten variations.

Turning again to the completely personal, the sixth section, Psalm XVI 6-8, Moderato, restates tranquility and acceptance in the first person. The attenuated lines employ canonic treatment of a series in which the proportional durations are predetermined.

—*Notes by Jacob Druckman*

Jacob Druckman was born in Philadelphia in 1928. His early musical studies were in violin and piano, and during the late forties he performed in string quartets and, as trumpeter, in jazz groups. He received a B.S. and M.S. (1955), from the Juilliard School of Music, additional studies with Aaron Copland at Tanglewood and in France on a Fulbright Grant. Since his graduation he has been on the faculty of Juilliard, where he teaches Literature and Materials, and orchestration,

and in addition, since 1961, composition at Bard College. His commissions and awards also include a Guggenheim Fellowship, 1956-57, the Berkshire Music Festival's Wechsler Commission for its Concerto for Violin and Small Orchestra, the Tanglewood Alumni Association commission for Concerto for String Orchestra, and a Juilliard commission for music for Jose Limon's Performance.

JAN DEGAETANI is a graduate of the Juilliard School of Music and a former member of the theory faculty of that school. She is a member of the New York Pro Musica Abbey Singers and has performed as soloist with major musical organizations in Europe and the United States.

THE NEW YORK BRASS QUINTET is one of the leading brass ensembles of the United States. In performance their ability is of solo caliber, as this recording excellently proves. And singly, they often appear as soloists, and have held or now hold outstanding orchestral and teaching positions. Their seriousness is further exemplified by the founding of a publishing house, Mentor Music, Inc., alone devoted to brass music. The presence of so farsighted a group is reassurance of the healthiness of the current musical scene.

The founder and permanent conductor of the Japan Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, AKEO WATANABE, has shown an exceptional musical talent from his earliest days. At the, age of six he made his concert debut as pianist in a performance of Beethoven's Second Concerto; later he studied violin with considerable success, and still later became a graduate conducting student at the Tokyo School of Music. He is currently active as a chamber performer and conductor, having founded the Tokyo Chamber Music Society and leading, with distinction, such orchestras as the Tokyo City Symphony, the Tokyo Philharmonic and, more recently, the Japan Philharmonic, with which he appears on this record.

With a population slightly greater than that of New York City, Tokyo boasts five major symphony orchestras. The JAPAN PHILHARMONIC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, founded by its permanent conductor Akeo Watanabe and Shigeo Mizuno, Director of the Nihon Cultural Broadcasting System, Inc., is one of the world's outstanding ensembles. In addition to its commissioning program of new Japanese works, the orchestra has introduced to its public an impressive number of first performances, both classical and contemporary.

(Original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)