

CRI-206

Robert Ward

Symphony No. 3 (1950)  
Iceland Symphony Orchestra  
Igor Buketoff, conductor

Sacred Songs for Pantheists (1951)  
Sylvia Stahlman, soprano  
Polish National Radio Orchestra  
William Strickland, conductor

Recorded By Polski Nagrania, Poland

**Robert Ward** (b 1917, Cleveland, Ohio) received his early musical training in Cleveland's public schools. After attending the Eastman School of Music where he majored in composition under Bernard Rogers and Howard Hanson, he went on to the Juilliard Graduate School, studying composition there with Frederick Jacobi and conducting with Albert Stoessel and Edgar Schenkman. He obtained his Juilliard degree in 1946. Prior to his induction into the Army in 1942, he worked with Aaron Copland at the Berkshire Music Center.

Graduating from the Army Music School at Fort Meyer, Virginia, Ward became Warrant Officer and leader of the 7th Infantry Division, with which he spent several years in the Pacific Theater. While stationed at Fort Riley, he wrote music for an all-soldier show, *The Life of Riley*, and during the campaigns on Leyte and Okinawa he composed his first symphonic work to gain a wide hearing, the *Jubilation Overture* (recorded on CRI 159).

Since World War II, Mr. Ward has taught at various academic institutions including Columbia University and The Juilliard School of Music, where he was also assistant to the president from 1954 to 1956. From 1952 to 1955 he served as music director of the Third Street Music School Settlement. He is presently executive vice-president and managing editor of the Galaxy Music Corporation and Highgate Press and has been chairman of the Board of Governors and a past president of the American Composers Alliance. He is a member of the music committee of the Henry Street Settlement Music School, and a member of the Advisory Committee for the Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University. In 1964 he was named to the Joint Committee of the Contemporary Music Project for Creativity in Music Education established and administered by the Music Educators National Conference.

Mr. Ward's catalog of works is an extensive one, including four symphonies, numerous shorter works, and the three operas, *He Who Gets Slapped*, *The Crucible*, and *The Lady from Colorado*. Two years as a Guggenheim fellow, a grant from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, plus numerous special commissions have made it possible for Mr. Ward to remain creatively productive, despite numerous executive and academic obligations.

Robert Ward's Third Symphony was commissioned by William Strickland and the Friends of Music of Dumbarton Oaks where it was first heard under the composer's direction on March 31, 1950.

The original version was for single string players and lacked the trumpet part, which was added for the expanded scoring and revision that was premiered by The Juilliard School of Music Symphony Orchestra under Jean Morel in 1953.

The first movement Fantasia is cast in modified sonata form with introduction and coda in slower tempo built on the two initial thematic fragments.

The Arioso slow movement is through-composed, save for a hint of the opening melody at its close. A distinct concertante element comes to the fore in this music through the composer's use of solo piano and also to a lesser degree the solo winds.

In sharp contrast to the brooding agitation of the Fantasia and the nocturnal meditation of the Arioso comes the high-spirited rondo-finale, which one critic described on the occasion of the premiere as "swift, brittle, witty, the season's best musical joke."

*Sacred Songs for Pantheists* was commissioned by the Quincy, Illinois Society of Fine Arts and its conductor, George Irwin. The young American soprano; Carolyn Raney, was soloist at the premiere.

Notes Mr. Ward: "The over-all title for the cycle states the unifying element that binds together within the cycle the poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Emily Dickinson, and James Stephens used here.

"The individual songs take their form from the poems, and it seems to me that the line of thought embodied throughout all the poems finds its fitting conclusion in the last lines of 'God's Grandeur.'"

Notes prepared by D.H.

**Igor Buketoff**, born in Hartford, Connecticut, conductor of the Fort Wayne, Indiana, Philharmonic Orchestra, studied at the University of Kansas and at The Juilliard School of Music. He taught at Juilliard from 1935 to 1945, then at the Chautauqua School of Music through 1947, taking up his present post at Fort Wayne in 1948. During his years at Fort Wayne, Mr. Buketoff has achieved singular success in making his audiences favorably aware of the finest in contemporary music, especially that by American composers. He has also guest-conducted widely throughout the world, and during the 1964-65 season was conductor of the Iceland Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Buketoff's other recordings for CRI include Jacob Avshalomov's *Taking of Tuag Kuan* and Norman Cazden's *Three Ballads from the Catskills* (CRI 117)—both with the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra.

**Sylvia Stahlman**, lyric-coloratura soprano, is a native of Nashville, Tennessee, trained at the Ward Belmont Conservatory of Music and at The Juilliard School of Music. Following successful concert and opera appearances in this country, Miss Stahlman became a leading soprano at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, and since 1958 she has been a leading soprano of the Frankfurt City Opera in Germany. Among her many distinguished recordings have been the finale of the Gustav Mahler Fourth Symphony (London), the role of Nitocris in Handel's *Belshazzar* (Vox), and the soprano solo in Haydn's Nelson Mass (London).

**William Strickland**, following a distinguished career in this country as founding conductor of the Nashville Symphony Orchestra and director of the New York Oratorio Society, has been conducting in Tokyo, Manila, Oslo, Reykjavik, Helsinki, and Warsaw. Through his performances, he has made his audiences aware of an extraordinarily wide range of outstanding American music and carried out an extensive recording program for CRI encompassing the works of more than two dozen composers, including Ives, Barber, Cowell, Riegger, Becker, Beeson, Bergsma, Moore, and Ward. Mr. Strickland's 1950 Columbia recording (ML 5843) of Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with Eleanor Steber still remains a classic of the disc repertoire. Among the most momentous of his CRI recordings have been disc premieres of the complete Ives *New England Holidays* (CRI SD 190/CRI 190) and the Ives *Robert Browning Overture* (CRI SD 196/CRI 196),

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(Original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)