

CRI SD 259

ARTHUR BENNETT LIPKIN CONDUCTS

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

ALAN HOVHANESS: The Holy City

BERNARD ROGERS: Apparitions

ROY TRAVIS: Collage for Orchestra

ARTHUR COHN: Kaddish for Orchestra

WILLIAM GRANT STILL: Festive Overture

This outstanding recording is the result of dedication and untiring effort on behalf of American composers by Arthur Bennett Lipkin.

For years first violinist with the Philadelphia Orchestra and leader of the Philadelphia String Quartet, Mr. Lipkin travels widely on an international level on behalf of the U. S. Committee to Further American Contemporary Music, and appears as guest conductor in many parts of the world.

Believing that new works must be added to the repertoire if the art of music is to be healthy and vigorous, Mr. Lipkin has commissioned and premiered works, among others, by Walter Piston, Ulysses Kay, Daniel Pinkham, Alan Hovhaness, as well as Vincent Persichetti, Akin Euba, Mario Zafred and Elliot Schwartz.

THE HOLY CITY was commissioned by Mr. and Mrs. Lipkin through the U. S. Committee to Further American Contemporary Music. It is one of the composer's most eerily beautiful scores, making extensive use of multiple subdivisions of the string parts, a sensitive investment in slow glissandi and the sweet-sad cantorial tones of a solo trumpet (here played by the RPO's leading trumpeter, Elgar Howarth). ALAN HOVHANESS is, of course, one of America's most prolific composers. His music appears on CRI 221, 212, 186, 134 and 109.

APPARITIONS was Bernard Rogers' last composition for orchestra and one of his own favorites. It consists of six brief scenes based on Flaubert's *The Temptation of St. Anthony*, representing the visions and thoughts of the saint as he spent a night on the plateau. The short, atmospheric movements are titled The Desert: Sunset; Spirits of the Air; The Basilisk; Herodias; The Feast of Nebuchadnezzar; and The Desert: Sunrise. The composer was known for his long association with the Eastman School of Music, in Rochester, N.Y. Much of his output was created for orchestra and chorus, but he has composed in many media; his opera, *The Warrior* was produced by the Metropolitan Opera. His teachers were Ernest Bloch, Frank Bridge and Nadia Boulanger. He died in 1968.

ROY TRAVIS was born in New York City in 1922, and studied with Otto Luening, Felix Salzer, and Bernard Wagenaar. He holds master's degrees from Columbia University and the Juilliard School of Music, and is now (1970) Professor of Music at UCLA. His *Symphonic Allegro*, awarded first prize in the Seventh Annual Gershwin Contest, was premiered by the New York Philharmonic under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos.

In 1965, while on appointment to the University of California Institute for the Creative Arts, he completed a full-length opera, *The Passion of Oedipus*, based upon his own libretto freely adapted from Sophocles' Oedipus Rex. In 1969 he completed a Piano Concerto in three movements of which the finale is based on rhythms borrowed from West African (Chad) dances. In addition to his activities as a composer, Mr. Travis has contributed articles to the Yale Journal of Music Theory and Perspectives of New Music and the Columbia University Music Forum. Mr. Travis writes:

"COLLAGE FOR ORCHESTRA was completed in early January, 1968. The title is intended to convey a spontaneous, quasi-improvisatory approach on the part of the composer to the formal problem of associating varied textures and materials, including fragmentary quotations from traditional West African music, and resonant twelve-tone sonorities in various fixed systems of registration suggested by the superimposition of two or more partial tone series. It received its premiere by the Seattle Symphony under Milton Katims."

ARTHUR COHN has been active in key areas of the music profession. He has taught technical subjects in his native Philadelphia, delivered lectures in schools and colleges, appeared on television and run his own musical radio shows, written articles and books on a variety of musical subjects; in addition, he is a prolific composer and conductor. From 1934 until 1952, he was the first curator of Philadelphia's famed Fleisher Music Collection. His current position is Director of Serious Music at MCA Music, New York City.

KADDISH is a symphonic evocation of the traditional prayer which is both a praise of God and a prayer for the dead. The composer writes:

"The ancient Jewish prayer, the KADDISH, has always been intoned with reserve and acquiescence. I consider it quite differently. My orchestral KADDISH is principally a depiction of protest against the unfairness of death, while understanding the requirements for its acceptance."

WILLIAM GRANT STILL was born on May 11, 1895 in Woodville, Mississippi and educated in the public schools of Little Rock, Arkansas, at Wilberforce University and at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. He studied privately, on scholarships made possible by their own generosity, with George W. Chadwick and Edgard Varèse. He learned to orchestrate by playing many instruments (among them the violin, cello and oboe) in professional orchestras, and by orchestrating for W. C. Handy, Don Voorhees, Sophie Tucker, Paul Whiteman, Willard Robison and Artie Shaw. For several years he arranged and conducted the Deep River Hour over CBS and WOR.

He became the first colored man to conduct a major symphony orchestra in the United States when in 1936 he directed the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra in his own compositions in the Hollywood Bowl. In 1955 he conducted the New Orleans Philharmonic Orchestra at Southern University and thus became the first colored man to direct a major symphony orchestra in the Deep South. He is the recipient of extended Guggenheim and Rosenwald Fellowships, of the honorary degrees of Master of Music (from Wilberforce University, 1936), Doctor of Music (from Howard University, 1941), Doctor of Music (from Oberlin College, 1947), and Doctor of Letters (from Bates College, 1954).

The composer writes:

"I began to write the FESTIVE OVERTURE because, at various times, conductors (one of them being Sir John Barbirolli) had said to me that there was a great need for a robust, joyful American overture to serve as an opener for symphony concerts. I was well into the composition when the announcement of the Cincinnati Orchestra's contest came to my attention. I studied the rules of the contest, and found that my concept of the work fitted them, so of course I decided to finish it and enter it in the contest. It did win, and since then has been played from time to time by major orchestras."

This recording was made possible by a grant from the U. S. Committee to Further American Contemporary Music.

(Original Liner Notes from CRI LP Jacket)

