

**WERNER JOSTEN:
JUNGLE**

Leopold Stokowski, conducting the American Symphony Orchestra

CANZONA SERIA

Members of the American Symphony Orchestra, supervised by Leopold Stokowski

GAIL KUBIK: SYMPHONY CONCERTANTE

(Pulitzer Prize, 1952)

Arthur Hanneuse, trumpet; Marie Thérèse Chailley, viola; Frank Glazer, piano

French Radio Orchestra, conducted by the composer

WERNER JOSTEN (1885-1963) was born in Elberfeld, Germany. Despite an education in finance planned by his father, Josten's interest in music prevailed. He received early training in harmony and counterpoint in Munich from Dr. Rudolph Siegel, a master pupil of Humperdinck, and studied with the famed founder of eurhythmics, Emile Jacques Dalcroze, in Switzerland. He first conducted in Paris and before coming to America in 1920 he had been appointed assistant conductor of the Munich Opera House. Immediately upon arriving in the United States, Josten began concert appearances as composer-accompanist for some of the best known singers of the day. From their first programming, his songs began to attract favorable attention from publishers as well as Olin Downes and Deems Taylor.

In 1923, Josten joined the faculty of Smith College, where he became Professor of Composition and where he was to remain for 26 years; it was there that he came fully into his own as a composer and executant musician. In the latter capacity, he founded the Baroque Festivals at Northampton producing and directing the first American stage performances of half-forgotten masterpieces including Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *II Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*, and *Orfeo*, as well as Handel's *Julius Caesar*, *Xerxes*, *Apollo e Dafne*, and *Rodelinda*. He conducted the Monteverdi *Combattimento* at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York under the auspices of the League of Composers. The productions attracted nationwide attention and leading metropolitan critics journeyed to Northampton and praised them in enthusiastic reviews.

Josten continued to compose – and musicians to perform – a variety of vocal, instrumental and orchestral works, among them the ballets *Batouala*, *Joseph and his Brethren*, *Endymion*; a string quartet, performed by, among others, the Pro Arte and Gordon String Quartets; and sonatas for solo piano, violin and piano, and cello and piano. At Serge Koussevitzky's invitation, Josten conducted the Boston Symphony in the world premiere of his *Symphony in F* which brought him his second Juilliard award. *Symphony in F* was played at a concert in Poland, conducted by William Strickland, and recorded by him and the Polish National Radio Orchestra for CRI. The violinist, Mischa Elman, for many years featured the Josten *Sonatina*, and recorded it in England for London Records.

The symphonic poem, *JUNGLE*, recorded here, seems a drastic departure from the musical ambiance of his previous major works — the *Concerto Sacro* (CRI SD 200) and the *Ode for Saint Cecelia's Day* (both composed in 1925), commissioned by President Nielsen for the 50th anniversary of the founding of Smith College. In its original form, the *Ode for Saint Cecelia's Day* was written for organ and piano, with flute and harp obbligatos and soprano and baritone solos.

Josten once remarked that he was influenced by the Bible, Greek mythology, Mediterranean culture and primitive African life. On one hand, his compositions reflected a pre-occupation with the musical traditions of the baroque era, and on the other, as in *JUNGLE* his fascination with the sensuous and exotic -- the primitive mysticism of the African continent, then just beginning to stimulate parallel interests in the fields of literature, art and anthropology.

As with the *Concerto Sacro*, inspired by the Grünewald Altar tryptich at Colmar, Alsace, the composer derived his inspiration from a picture, the *Forêt Exotique* of Henri Rousseau, now hanging in the Philadelphia Museum of Art. According to the composer, “the music tries to portray the emotions and sensations which assail a white man

entering the jungle, with its lures, terrors, primitive love and ferocious death." Scored for full orchestra of strings, woodwinds and strong percussive instruments, it also called upon unusual ones, as tam-tams, castanets, slap stick and, in what one reviewer called "the terrific climax," a realistic lion's roar.

The Boston Symphony, Serge Koussevitsky conducting, gave JUNGLE its premiere performance October 25, 1929. It was presented by the Chicago Symphony under Frederick Stock, December 12, 1931. In both cities, the reviewers were enthusiastic. Describing the premiere under Koussevitsky as "a brilliant one," Philip Hale of the Boston Herald wrote "From the beginning to the end there is a savagery, a wildness in tones that does not at all depend on laboriously sought out dissonances or ear-splitting tonal explosions. A huge orchestra is employed. Probably the instrument 'the lion's roar' appeared for the first time in the orchestra. But the effectiveness of Mr. Josten's score does not rest on attempts at realism . . . the work gives the impression that the melodic figures, the developments, the harmonic schemes, the contrasts — note the haunting sensuality of the love episode were all conceived as a whole . . . An uncommonly interesting work."

In Chicago, under Stock, the performance was hailed as "superb" by Herman DeVries who said in the Chicago American, "Mr. Josten's symphonic poem was a surprise to most of us who knew: him chiefly for his songs which . . . reveal a talent of purely lyric caliber. Here, with JUNGLE, he burst forth a full-fledged modern, who has listened to all his contemporaries . . . without becoming a slave to any of them, mastered the esoteric secrets of orchestration and produced an original and brilliant manuscript."

Leopold Stokowski introduced JUNGLE to his critical Philadelphia audience and the Public Ledger said, "It is a very excellent piece of modern music . . . the work was very well received, as it should have been." Maestro Stokowski's interest in what another review called "this original and brilliant masterpiece," has never flagged. This record is evidence of his continuing enthusiasm, for it was made just after a successful performance of the work with the American Symphony in Carnegie Hall, New York, in March of 1971.

CANZONA SERIA, subtitled "A Hamlet Monologue," was originally conceived in 1940 for violas, cellos and basses, and was first performed two years later at the University of Rochester, N. Y. In 1957, the work was rewritten for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and piano, and received its premiere in this form later that year in the Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, by the Kreiselman Quintet, under the auspices of the National Association for American Composers and Conductors. The New York Times review commented, "So skillful is Mr. Josten's revision that one would have sworn he had conceived the music in the first place with these five instruments in mind. It is a sensitive, imaginative score, and Mr. Josten's color sense enriches his harmonic style as well as his instrumental palate."

This recording was supervised by Leopold Stokowski at the time of making the JUNGLE tape and was performed by the following musicians of the American Symphony: Paul Dunkel, flute; Arthur Krilov, oboe; David Shifrin, clarinet; William Scribner, bassoon, and H. Rex Cooper, piano.

GAIL KUBIK'S music combines two important trends in the contemporary scene. On the one hand he adheres to the neoclassical aesthetic that motivates his preoccupation with the large forms of absolute music. On the other he takes his stand with those who have cultivated the kind of functional music — such as motion picture and radio scores — that forces a composer to communicate with a mass audience.

The SYMPHONY CONCERTANTE displays Kubik's gifts at their most appealing: his colorful imagination in the choice of orchestral sonorities; his characteristic use of jazz rhythms and other popular elements in a style that is gay, full of movement and gesture, and carried off with enormous verve. The result is very American, yet wholly personal, the work of a musician of wit and sophistication.

The first movement is in modified sonata form. It opens with an imperious gesture and builds steadily to the exciting fugato passage that constitutes its climax. Rhythm is the form-building element here: a dynamic rhythm of a ballet-like vividness. The slow movement is, as the composer describes it, "a very long, increasingly dramatic song with a reflective epilogue at the end." Its contemplative lyricism unfolds in flowing lines. The third movement is a rondo that recaptures, in twentieth-century terms, the steady forward impulse of the concerto grosso of Bach's time. With its spare, transparent texture and its stylization of jazz rhythms, this finale is a splendid example of the lithe, sinewy writing of the contemporary American school.

The work was commissioned by the Little Orchestra Society of New York. It was introduced by that group, under the baton of Thomas Scherman, in January 1952 and brought Kubik the Pulitzer Prize.

GAIL KUBIK was born in 1914 in Coffeyville, Oklahoma. He studied composition with Bernard Rogers at the Eastman School in Rochester, continued with Leo Sowerby in Chicago, then with Walter Piston at Harvard and Nadia Boulanger. After two years on the faculty of Teachers College he became a staff composer for NBC. He served with the army air force during the war and wrote the scores for a number of documentaries — "The World at War," "Paratroops," "Memphis Belle," "Air Pattern Pacific" and "Thunderbolt." He has written numerous film scores, his music for the animated cartoon "Gerald MacBoing Boing" attracted wide attention for its rich fantasy and irresistible humor. On a more serious level his list includes three symphonies, the folk opera Mirror for the Sky, and a variety of choral and chamber works. His Thunderbolt Overture has been widely performed, as have his delightful choral arrangements of American folk songs.

(Original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)