

incantatory vocal idioms of Indian music, of Japanese Nōh, and the Korean P'ansori. They allow the performers full flexibility for interpretation while defining their terms of reference with traditional precision.

Here is the central problem: Scelsi's terms of reference are utterly eccentric to those of contemporary musical life. It is difficult to find any modern composer whom he resembles. His music is melodic, yet with such a daring conception of melody that the appellation seems wholly inadequate; timbre and texture interpenetrate, yet the result is totally unlike Ligeti, rich and pungent; he makes us listen to the single note, yet the *Canti del Capricorno* are possessed of an almost demonic energy; the rhythms are those of eastern dance (perhaps of whirling dervishes), yet at their centre is a transcendent calm. This is meditation, but in its dynamic mode. The text is phonetic and apparently meaningless, yet here is no world of Dada play-pens: Scelsi's syllables conjure up children of an Idumean night whose wild prattle trembles on and beyond the normal borders of the expressible. When interpreted by such a persuasive *sirène* as Miss Hirayama we have at least the illusion of melting the 'transparent glacier of flights unknown'.

Like Ives before him Scelsi is an *amateur*, in the best and truest sense. What he does is for the thing itself, devoid of the insinuating corruption of compromise. He presents the emergency of creation raw, intuitively, and without guile. His work is primitive, in the exact meaning of the word: it proposes a dawn. He forces us to ask again the definition and function of music, and to reconsider its boundaries. These are the attributes of great art.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

from ANDREW BYRNE

In her article on Stravinsky in TEMPO No. 141, Clare Hogan makes some rather confusing remarks (p. 28) concerning *Requiem Canticles*.

Referring to the article and charts by Claudio Spies in his analysis in *Perspectives of New Music* (duly acknowledged) she says of the *Lacrimosa* movement: 'the change-over from IRa to IRb (vertical) in the strings [should this not be flutes?] at bar 245 occurs just as the contralto changes from IRb to IRa (linear); her common note G acts as a pivot'.

Actually the change from IRb to IRa in the alto does not occur until bar 250 by which time the flutes are well into IRa verticals and, in fact, starting the fourth of them. The pivot G is actually the first note of the alto's IRb—not, as is implied, the pivot to IRa.

Clare Hogan then continues: 'The identical pitch content of Ia-4, IRb-2, and Ra-4 is exposed at bar 257 . . .'. A glance at Spies's full chart in his article shows that there is not identical pitch content between these three, only between the first two. His analysis quotes the whole section from bar 254 to the end and, of course, gets the sets right. These kind of articles are complicated and perhaps I have misunderstood the nomenclature in Miss Hogan's article. However the Spies analysis, which she is obviously familiar with, seems correct.

There also seems to be a misprint on p. 28 line 4 where 'It-1' should surely be 'Ia-1'? [Agreed—Ed.]

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