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Brief Reviews

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BRIEF REVIEWS

REVIEWER

David Beach

Two of the three publications included in the following discussion are designed specifically for use in standard college-level theory courses. They are *Anthology of Music for Analysis* by Albert Cohen and John D. White (New York:Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1965) and *Basic Principles of Music Theory* by Joseph Brye (New York:The Ronald Press Company, 1965). The third work, *The Symphonies of Ralph Vaughan Williams* by Elliott Schwartz (Amherst:The University of Massachusetts Press, 1964), is an analytic study intended for general reference use by teachers and students of composition and theory. The order of presentation will correspond to that mentioned above.

Anthologies of music for analysis are becoming increasingly popular as a solution to the problem of supplying many different scores to a large number of students for the purpose of detailed study. The most recent collection, compiled by Albert Cohen and John White, is designed as the basis for an introductory college-level course in form and style analysis and is limited primarily to works of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The specific works chosen are presented chronologically, without analytic comment, with the purpose of illustrating the development of formal and structural principles of the tonal era, and are divided into the following four categories: baroque fugue, preclassical and classical forms, music of the romantic era and music of impressionism. The value of such an anthology can be measured only in terms of its content as being

representative of the historical periods being considered. In this case, the works selected are generally characteristic of their times, yet the selection itself contains a number of curious omissions. For example, one might wonder why such an emphasis is placed on the baroque fugue while other formal structures, such as the sinfonia or concerto grosso, having as strong an influence on the eighteenth century, are completely ignored. It is also strange that the Lied, which occupies such a large and important segment of tonal literature, is scarcely represented. Clearly the aim of this collection is to illustrate selected formal structures of the tonal era without necessarily representing its music.

A traditional approach to the music of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is the basis for Joseph Brye's *Basic Principles of Music Theory*. Designed as a text for a two year college-level course in music theory, it covers the fundamentals of music as well as the primary elements of diatonic and chromatic harmony. The text proper is accompanied by numerous illustrations and musical examples, and ample exercises for analysis and standard harmonization are provided at the end of each chapter. Also included are exercises concerning melodic structure, an element of music too often ignored in texts on traditional harmony, which begin with simple analysis and composition and progress through two and three part counterpoint. Although a great amount of material is presented in this one volume, the coverage of basic concepts such as harmonic function and progression is often superficial. To compensate for this oversimplification of fundamental concepts, the author has fallen into the familiar trap of over-complex labeling, most evident in his presentation of non-harmonic tones. Generally, the material is well organized and clearly presented, yet it is disappointing that more time was not spent discussing basic principles and less time wasted on non-essential details.

Elliott Schwartz's study of the nine symphonies of Ralph Vaughan Williams is divided into three parts followed by an epilogue which contains the author's evaluation of these works in terms of their contributions to the "symphonic form". The first section presents the historical context, including a brief examination of the English musical tradition and the composer's education, and serves as a background for the analysis of the individual works. The actual analyses are presented in chronological order and the analytic method employed attempts to explain musical structure esthetically but not structurally, fol-

lowing "Ernest Newman's contention that the elements of a composer's style are related functionally to his esthetic purposes". Although the author denies it in the preface, the result is pure description under the guise of musical analysis; each symphony and each movement is dissected in terms of its formal motivic structure, yet the structure itself is merely described rather than explained. In the third section, the stylistic characteristics represented in these works are examined as they relate to the problem of musical meaning, here defined as the functional relationship between style and esthetics. Following the epilogue are two appendixes, the first of which is concerned with the educational implications of this study and the second consisting of six tables, each dealing with a different area of musical style. Unfortunately this superficial examination of Vaughan Williams' symphonies is little more than an extensive set of program notes, worth little to the student or teacher in its present state but useful, perhaps, as a guide to further study.