

Kurt Edelhagen and his Concert Orchestra: Concerto Polydor 237 630 (LP)

I have already mentioned that Kurt Edelhagen made his men not only play jazz. You had to earn your money with "Schlager" or so-called "useful music" in order to be able to play jazz, swing, or sophisticated concert music. Here Edelhagen probably joined forces with the Cologne Radio Orchestra, in order to assemble a production that wasn't commonplace for him.

The pieces for two pianos and orchestra feature his band-pianist Bora Rokovic and the great German concert-pianist Willi Stech (1905-1979), who on the strength of his fantastic recordings as a pianist and orchestra leader will one day get his own thread here (*in this forum*).

The program consists of the certainly familiar Rhapsody In Blue by George Gershwin, which in its debut performance by the orchestra Paul Whiteman in 1924 probably laid the milestone for american popular music, which was equally rooted in concertos as in new jazz-elements. It is played here in the way of the original orchestration by Ferde Grofé.

Two movie scores that became famous also belong to this LP. The *Warsaw Concert* was composed in 1941 by Richard Stewart Addisell (1904-1977) from Great

Britain, for the movie "Dangerous Moonlight", and it became the classic performance of "light music". The film tells of the war adventures of a Polish concert pianist, who expresses his feelings with the theme of the concert, which was to become far more famous than the movie itself. The theme song was also popularised through the version by Freddie Martin & The Fur Aces, who worked their way into the hit parades under the title "The World Outside" with lyrics by Carl Sigman.

When Leon Uris wrote his novel "Exodus", he of course had in mind to portray the "pains of birth" of the state of Israel and the terrible suffering of the people who were constipated on the ship of that name. But he could not anticipate that the picturization starring Paul Newman and Eva Maria Saint would become a major success, and that the film score by Ernest Gold (1921-1999) would reflect the atmosphere of the film perfectly and become a hit on its own.

When Claus Ogerman (German name: Klaus Ogermann), familiar to all of us, spent his vacation in Canada in 1962, he was so deeply impressed by the vastness of the untouched nature that he had to put down his emotions to paper immediately in the form of musical notes. With the recording of *Canadian Concerto* a wonderfully romantic and moving music emerged, seeing its world premiere. He describes a

day in the Canadian wilderness, from sunrise to sunset. For myself, this is the pinnacle of this LP.

Ogerman has arranged a lot for Edelhagen; on this LP besides his own concert also "Exodus" and the *Brownstone Concerto* by Larry Coleman. In 1953 he (Coleman) placed first and second in the US-charts with "Ricochet" and "Changing Partners". That year he also began working on this more serious opus, dedicated to the dreams and hopes of the people who live in so called "brownstone houses" in N.Y.C., which were erected during the turn of the century and can be seen mainly in Harlem, where today they get redeveloped extensively. Therefore Coleman called his opus *Brownstone Concerto*.

Tim

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