

neglected. The new illustrative and documentary material is especially welcome in the context of the Evergreen Theater in Baltimore.

More important than the text are the many good quality color and monochrome illustrations of works, several of which have not been reproduced before. Although more space might have been given to Bakst's early oils and graphics and to his book designs, his sensuous costume and set designs with their "exaggeration, the tendency to push everything as far as they could go and a little further" convince us of that profound sense of theater which Bakst possessed. This visual hyperbole, as it were, identifiable with pieces such as the Bacchante in *Narcisse*, the Sultanas in *Schéhérazade*, or Nijinsky's costume in *Le Spectre de la Rose*, arises not only from Bakst's combination of lavish colors but also from a supreme tension and mobility generated by the folds, veils, feathers, pendants, and so forth. It was in this idea of allowing the costume to extend and express the bodily movement that Bakst, for example, anticipated a guiding principle of fashion design in the 1920s and beyond.

The sumptuous illustrations testify once again to the originality and productivity of Bakst's artistic genius and to his appreciable influence on many aspects of twentieth-century stage design. Bakst said once: "I would like to be the most famous artist in the world." Yearning for a sensuous excess, the audiences of the world's capitals breathed deeply the perfume of Bakst's exotic fantasies and, for a brief moment, at the height of the Decadent era, his wish was granted. Now that our historical cycle has returned to an orbit of extreme sensibility, Spencer's book should sell well.

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DIE SOWJETISCHE POLITIK AUF DEM GEBIET DER BILDENDEN KUNST VON 1917 BIS 1934. By Hans-Jürgen Drengenberg. FORSCHUNGEN ZUR OSTEUROPAÏSCHEN GESCHICHTE, vol. 16. Osteuropa-Institut an der Freien Universität Berlin, Historische Veröffentlichungen. Berlin: Otto Harrassowitz, 1972. 423 pp. Paper.

This is a careful, meticulously detailed investigation of the development of the plastic arts in the Soviet Union from the Revolution to the imposition in 1934 on all artistic endeavors of the "precepts" and norms associated with the term "socialist realism." As an introduction to his research Herr Drengenberg provides a brief, well-informed statement on those modernist tendencies in all the arts which came into prominence in Russia in the early twentieth century and which continued to exert some influence in the twenties during Lunacharsky's tenure in the Commissariat of Public Education. He provides also a brief discussion of Marxist ideas on art and literature in which he demonstrates conclusively (it has been done before, but no matter) that there never was, and perhaps in the nature of things cannot be, a Marxist "aesthetic" (pp. 51-112). He traces carefully that dismal Soviet ideological enterprise—connected largely with the name (*nebezvzvestnyi*) of Mikhail Lifshits—aimed at fabricating out of fragmentary statements of Marx, Engels, and, later, Lenin, some kind of authoritative aesthetic doctrine. We find also, on the other hand, a revealing study of Lunacharsky both as a writer on art problems and as the commissar directly involved in much of the art activity of the twenties.

The main body of Drengenberg's work is a detailed examination of the Soviet

art world during the twenties, which manages to be fascinating even when it involves only the dry recital of facts about the organization and encouragement of the arts under Lunacharsky's regime. Even though, as the author points out, the Soviet sources for such a study are incomplete and at times misleading, Drengenberg still has much to tell us about such matters as art education, art research, the protection and restoration of art monuments, as well as a kind of "socialist realism before the fact"—the encouragement during the twenties of *monumentalpropaganda*, especially in the plastic arts. Appendixes present both documentary material and many interesting photographic reproductions.

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RUSSIAN MUSIC AND ITS SOURCES IN CHANT AND FOLK-SONG.

By *Alfred J. Swan*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1973. 234 pp. \$12.50.

Born in St. Petersburg of English parents, the late Alfred J. Swan became the acknowledged dean of Russian music studies in the United States. His intense dedication to the subject led to research which ranged from the Russian Middle Ages to the twentieth century and encompassed such diverse topics as Znamenny Chant and the nature of Russian folk song to biographical studies of Rachmaninov, Scriabin, and Medtner. His authority was impressively supported by personal experience as a student at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, his early association with the Scriabinists, his field work as a collector of Russian folk music, and his friendship with men like Rachmaninov, Medtner, and Viacheslav Karatygin (the founder of the remarkable Evenings of Contemporary Music in St. Petersburg—the epicenter of musical modernism in Russia before World War I).

In this book, not quite ready for publication at the time of his death in 1970, Swan coordinates the several areas of his special expertise, placing them in a wider historical context planned to substantiate his personal view of Russian music. The importance of the book lies precisely in this expression of a personal view, even if it is not always borne out in an absolutely convincing fashion by the evidence adduced.

Swan sees Russian music as growing out of folk song and liturgical chant. He believes, "All subsequent developments are, in a sense, the projection and supplementation of song and chant as original cultural sources, and . . . all Russian composers, even those who have shown little interest in them and gone on an alien, westernized way, are in some form indebted to these. The narrative of the subsequent pages is conducted in this light" (p. 17).

Swan's thesis may well fall into the category of the axiomatic. To document and demonstrate such a complex evolutionary process, when so little certainty exists about either Russian song or chant before the seventeenth century, poses virtually insurmountable difficulties. Nevertheless, he provides the most complete account in English of the history of Russian liturgical music, its manuscript sources, and the scholarly debates over the facts and the mysteries of its notational and theoretical systems. His review of Russian folk-song collection and research also fills a lacuna in English-language histories of Russian music.

Since the foreign musicians who dominated music at the Russian court through much of the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century presumably did not partici-