

right, in the face of countless moments which evidence the contrary, to find that, of the two, only Adolf could "express the feminine elements in music."

None of this, nor the unavoidably utilitarian production of the book, with a rather unattractive typeface, will deter the enthusiast from obtaining this work which augurs well for the author's biography of his subject.

Christopher Dyment

The only notice that I have yet seen for Tully Potter's Adolf Busch is a listing in The Gramophone's classified ads. It seemed to be one of those brave but dubious projects that come out of the world of self-publishing, far from the gimlet eye of the editor and the constraints of commerce. Increasing my distrust was the fact that the book was being sold for a mere six bucks American--which in a display of mad fatalism I sent across the ocean as naked cash. About two months later the book arrived, and I am happy to report that my lack of faith was utterly unfounded.

Indeed, the work promises in its acknowledgements and delivers in fact the richest gathering of material about Busch from the widest array of authoritative sources that I have ever encountered. Among those consulted are a good percentage of the (still living) major musicians with connections to the man and his art: Rudolf Serkin (the dedicatee), Yehudi Menuhin, Artur Balsam, Eugene Istomin, Paul Doktor, Antal Dorati, August Wenzinger, (the late) Reginald Kell, and many others. A good many familiar figures from the world of recordings and sound archives are also included among the sources--Richard Warren, Barbara Sawka, Thomas Clear, Leo Mack, Fred Maroth, Thomas Heinitz--as well as all the relevant institutional sources and, of course, a large number of family members, students and friends--and such was the character of Adolf Busch that the last group included Sir Isaiah Berlin, Sir Ernest Gombrich, and Sir Karl Popper among the many friends thanked in the acknowledgements. It would have been easy, no doubt, just to construct such an impressive catalog for the image, but the substance of the book belies any such suspicion; this volume is a magnificent start to what could well be the definitive account of the life and achievement of, in Menuhin's words, "a man and a musician of the highest value."

This is the first of two volumes, the second of which ought to be out shortly; however, it stands very well as an independent work. The author's original intention was to publish a biography with appendices. As he puts it, "the appendices are being published first." But this is more than a collection of appendices: it covers "aspects of Busch's character and career, with short biographies of his princi-

pal collaborators, full histories of his ensembles, details of his repertoire and his compositions, and a complete discography..." Tully Potter is a poet and a journalist (for the Sunday and Daily Mail in London), and his essays on "Busch the Man" and on Busch as violinist, violist, teacher, and interpreter do him honor in both of these roles.

Potter's general approach is to weave a tapestry of personal reminiscences culled from many interviews, of contemporary accounts and criticisms, and of his own description and analysis. The result, even in these short essays, is extraordinarily rich in telling detail, physical as well as emotional and intellectual. We learn from Lady Barbirolli, for instance, that Busch "was like a large, benign bear, slightly shaggy, always with his hair falling over his face--a round, highly coloured face and bright, piercing blue eyes." In the chapter on "Repertoire and Taste" his love of Don Quixote and Goethe, Manet and Picasso, and lentil soup and cheese is mentioned along with his musical tastes.

That chapter includes a list ("undoubtedly incomplete") of Busch's repertoire that runs for nearly seven pages. For all the admitted limitations to Busch's repertoire, especially in the latter part of his career, the list is impressive, containing a number of modern works and pieces by Vieuxtemps and Paganini along with more expected fare. I suspect that an additional work by Donald Francis Tovey was played by Busch, his Sonata eroica in C for unaccompanied violin (1913), which I believe is dedicated to Busch; given their mutual esteem, it seems unlikely that Busch would have neglected to perform it. He may also have played the Schumann Violin Concerto, according to a letter written by Elizabeth Joachim (granddaughter of Joseph) to The Listener in the Thirties, in the heat of the strange battle over the Concerto's disinterment, claiming that Adolf Busch had performed the Concerto once (maybe) at Zwickau. But the emotional atmosphere may have affected the accuracy of her memory. (A fascinating chapter of Joseph Macleod's The Sisters d'Aranyi is devoted to this thoroughly odd passage in musical history.)

The chapters on "The Busch Ensembles" and "Colleagues and Contemporaries" contain a great deal of useful biographical information. Presumably, the account of the shifting fortunes and personnel of the Busch Quartet will be expanded upon in Potter's second volume, but there is much arresting detail here, not least the brief description of the career of the great cellist Paul Grümmer and also the account of his separation from the Quartet, in part because of his enthusiasm for the Nazis.

Potter insists that Busch was "completely apolitical," and he may have a point if this refers to Busch's lack of

political sophistication. But he also provides evidence to support the prevailing view that Busch was indeed political in a larger sense. "He stood for decency," was Ernest Gombrich's straightforward summary, but that simple stand had clear and growing political significance as, after 1933, Busch "rejected friends and even his own sister because of their Nazi sympathies," rejected letters with "Heil Hitler" on them, rejected Furtwängler--an "apolitical" artist, tragically so, in the more accepted sense--and, ultimately, rejected his own homeland. Potter provides a moving observation made by Rudolf Serkin that is relevant here:

What happened in 1933 almost destroyed him. Something broke inside him, though I don't think he realised it himself. He was so German--though he was never involved in politics--and when that shame came, he felt responsible, somehow. I think it would have been easier for him if he had been Jewish...

From the point of view of the record collector or historian (often distinctly separate species), the principal achievement of this book is its 60-page discography of recorded performances involving Adolf Busch as soloist, chamber musician, and conductor. The chronological listing of 204 sessions begins in Berlin in 1919 with recordings for Polydor of two of Joachim's Brahms Hungarian Dance transcriptions and ends in December 1951 with a tape of a concert performance in Basel of the Brahms Violin Concerto. From the record historian's perspective this arrangement offers a more revealing overview of a career than an arrangement by composer and work. (There is, of course, a composer/work index to the discography.) This is a critical advantage over the other major discography of Busch, that compiled by Jacques Delalande with the assistance of Tully Potter, which lists the recordings of all three Busch brothers. (The musician brothers, that is--are there recordings by brother Willi, the brilliant actor?) The Delalande/Potter work is contained in the final issue of the much-lamented Recorded Sound ("The Busch Brothers--A Discography," Recorded Sound 86 (1984), pp. 29-90); apparently it is still available as a separate publication from the British Library National Sound Archive.

Since the Delalande/Potter piece contains discographies for Fritz and Hermann as well, and since it is an excellent piece of work on its own terms, it is not superseded by the new volume. But Potter clearly has taken the opportunity to improve the Adolf Busch portion of the project in various ways, beginning with its superior arrangement. There are some additions--most importantly, that final performance of the Brahms Concerto--and additional releases of several performances. The Delalande effort does sometimes have more

detailed information about recording location. Potter seems to have had second thoughts about some of the information in the earlier work. For instance, that discography lists Bruno Seidler-Winkler as Busch's accompanist in the earliest Polydor sessions; the present work, and indeed the Pearl LP transfer (GEM 117), leave the pianist anonymous. Here's information that is on neither list about an additional LP avatar of the immortal Busch/Walter Busoni Concerto: Fred Maroth published a transfer of that performance for the Bruno Walter Society, backed by the similarly glorious Bustabo/Mengelberg Bruch G-minor, on BWS 1005-A and B/LLX-987-988, well before the Discocorp IGI release. The result was however so inferior to the source material that he suppressed the release immediately.

Like the Recorded Sound discography, Potter's work includes a generous listing of recordings of Busch's compositions by artists other than Busch himself. Again, the arrangement of the later work is superior, by opus number rather than by a rather confusing alphabetical sequence. Potter also includes a complete list of Busch's compositions--well over a hundred thereof--and a finely balanced essay on Busch the composer, whose style he describes as "by Reger out of Brahms."

In most of his essays Potter is a straightforward and full-hearted encomiast for his subject. For someone (such as myself) whose feeling for Adolf Busch is just short of idolatry, this tone is entirely appropriate. However, even those whose feelings about the man and artist are more mixed should derive a just sense of his achievement from this work because the author does not conceal criticism; he gives it ample coverage and then replies to it, granting both limitations and illuminating strengths, again with effective anecdotal support. Quoting Lady Barbirolli: "You don't get the kind of playing that Busch gave us without some roughness."

The subtitle of this book derives from a quotation of Charles Péguy that Potter describes as a favorite of his subject: "The life of an honest man must be a perpetual infidelity." It is a pungent observation which says more about Busch's idealism, his deep faith, than about the hard compromises that marked his life. Certainly, Potter's book is an act of the greatest fidelity, and the second volume promises to serve the memory of this great, honest man just as well. My only regret is that the author found it necessary to resort to the production and distribution compromises of self-publishing. The physical volume is decent enough, but the subject and the work itself deserve much better.

John Swan