

Festival concert charged with excitement

By PATRICIA BEACH SMITH

What could have been an incredible bore, turned out to be a prize concert Saturday at the Meadow Brook Music Festival.

The program was Mozart's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra No. 4 in D Major, K. 218 and Act 1 of Wagner's "Die Walkure." The two works were so different, that the evening seemed like a two-for-one-price event.

In his first solo appearance at Meadow Brook, Detroit Symphony Orchestra (DSO) assistant concertmaster Joseph Goldman played the Mozart work beautifully. The first movement was well-timed and the orchestra sounded especially good.

Goldman has an accomplished technique and plays very sensitively without undue flourish. He does not fall into the trap which so many ensemble players are prone to and that is not having the confidence to play aggressively when necessary.

He isn't as dramatic as he could be sometimes, although one doubts that is really a flaw at all when the sounds he plays are so beautiful.

GOLDMAN'S performance shows the depth of the DSO roster. If this is an assistant concertmaster, imagine the musical clout of those in higher chairs.

The trend of using local musicians at Meadow Brook, as one which I hope will persist as long as the talent is here to pick from.

It was obvious that Goldman was among appreciative friends, both on the stage and in the pavilion, but this discerning assemblage was not being merely polite with its applause at the close of the Mozart.

The second half of the program reintroduced to Detroit the superior Joseph Norman. This woman is the epitome of the Wagnerian soprano and

she made the program come to life even without the trappings of the opera. Whatever the reason, familiarity with the work, good rehearsal or inspiration from a real star in Ms. Norman, the DSO played splendidly. When the score called for a unison sound from any section, it was there. The effect was amazingly beautiful — what Wagner is all about.

ADJECTIVES to describe Ms. Norman's musicianship and voice include incredible, elegant, exhilarating, powerful and resonant. Coupled with a superb technique and sensitivity, the performance was a blockbuster.

It would have helped to have had her matched up with someone of her own vocal caliber, but that seems a more or less impossible request, considering her considerable talent.

Henry Grossman has a very beautiful voice, but it paled next to Ms. Norman's as many would have. He gave the first act a noble try, but it was apparent that he never could have made it through any subsequent acts at the vocal pace he was setting.

Perhaps when he matures more he'll have the credentials necessary for a hidden choroid tenor, the likes of which Wagner would have cheered, but now for Grossman getting through Act was an heroic feat of the wrong sort.

He pushed the capabilities of his voice too much, to result in a very strained and unhappy conclusion.

THE ANTAGONIST in Wagner's

Benefit slated for Beaumont

Gifts and teas combined with musical shows will be going on all summer at Oakland County's finest day care center who work out of William Beaumont Hospital leading up to a fall benefit for the Beaumont Hospital's new branch in Troy.

The program set for Sept. 18 in Oakland County's Redden Pavilion, featuring the Max Doves Singers with Roger Williams at the piano and Frank Watt as narrator, is being staged as a memorial for Martha Eichinger, a Farmington resident who died in March.

The benefit was initiated by Margaret Doves, a neighbor of Mrs. Eichinger on Kilnrich Court, who was looking around for something to do in her name. The show called "America I Love You Singing" is backed by the hospital administration, the hospital's volunteer guild, doctors, nurses and staff, the Beaumont Medical Auxiliaries and the Troy Jaycees who are doing all of the leg work. Mrs. Doves said.

MURRAY PRIEST, a member of the auxiliary, opened her Franklin Village home this week to introduce the idea of the benefit to some members of the auxiliary who will serve as a publicity contingent for the show.

Major donations from Longwood in Detroit's Avenue of Education and Gentleman's Quarters in Farmington will work with Mrs. Doves throughout the summer where coffee and teas are scheduled to promote the hospital and the fall benefit.

The United Hospital is scheduled to open in Troy this fall 1977. Ticket prices for the show are still in the talking stage, because this was one of Martha's ideas. Mrs. Doves told her audience this week. She believed that no one should be deprived of going to a concert because the cost was prohibitive and she fought for that.

MRS. EICHINGER earned on a battle with cancer for 12 years before her death and because of her volunteer work her philosophy, spirit and faith, she was named Lutheran Woman of the Year in 1975.

As her volunteer work became progressively confined to her home, she took on the job of ticket chairman for her husband's concert series. Ultimately she became bookkeeper, then full-time business manager for the Max Doves Concert Series working from her home.

In an interview with the Observer & Eccentric newspaper while she was knocking on doors working as a volunteer for the American Cancer Society and its Cancer Crusade in April 1975 she said she believed it to be essential that one has to do for others.

She was the most dynamic and courageous woman I ever knew," Mrs. Doves said.

scenario was performed by Ezio Flagello. He was excellent in the section where, as flooding, challenges the unwitting Siegmund to duel in the morning. Otherwise, his attitude to the performance was superb.

However, in spite of all this nipping, the performance was still sterling enough to be memorable. It could have been called "A little incest for the audience at Meadow Brook" and drawn a bigger crowd, but as soon as someone calls it opera, the doves stay away. Where do they think the expression

soap opera came from? The Thursday (July 15) and Saturday (July 16) will feature works of Russian composers, Rachmaninoff, Scriabin and Tchaikovsky with Laura de Fusco, pianist, as soloist. Aldo Ciccarone will conduct.

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