

Goldberg leads chamber orchestra in fine concert

By GRETCHEN McHUGH

Review

The Saturday, March 18 Detroit Symphony Chamber Orchestra concert at Ford Auditorium treated chamber music aficionados to some of the most beautiful solo and ensemble playing of the season.

Visiting violinist Szymon Goldberg played two Beethoven romances and the Schubert A Major Rondo while Donald Baker, principal oboe with the Detroit Symphony, performed the Mozart C Major Oboe Concerto. Goldberg was the conductor.

To balance the program, the last work was Schoenberg's "Verklarte Nacht," Transfigured Night, a romantic piece written originally for a string sextet and subsequently scored for orchestra by the composer.

WITH CONSUMMATE SKILL, Baker brought Mozart to life. His style includes arful phrasing and freedom of line that give a delightful sense of playfulness to the music.

At times he would hold back slightly at the beginning of a phrase and then deliver it with total coloring that was round, varied and subtle.

The dialogue between the strings and the clear, pure oboe sound was leisurely and gracious. Although the strings were occasionally a little ragged, Goldberg's conducting contrib-

uted expressiveness that sensitively complemented Baker's fine playing.

With the Beethoven and Schubert that followed, came the magic of a true master of the violin, Goldberg, now both conductor and soloist, presented the Beethoven Romances with a warm delicacy that was true to the gentle side of the composer.

TECHNICALLY, he was surely in command of the music although the opening solo measures in his phrase endings tended to be fuzzy.

With his glorious singing tone and dignified presence, he made the relatively transparent, and thus difficult, Beethoven melodies sound they way they should—like music to feed the soul.

String accompaniment was inspired and it neatly balanced this civilized,

true Beethoven interpretation. Franz Schubert, who died 150 years ago, was a prolific composer who died in obscure poverty in Vienna. He heard few of his own works performed.

The A Major Rondo for Violin and Orchestra was probably played at a "Schubertian," a kind of private musical arranged by faithful friends of the otherwise neglected composer.

Schubert's genius lay partly in having invented countless beautiful melodies. Goldberg and the chamber orchestra played the Rondo with the delicacy and sensitivity needed to make the most of the glorious melodies. And it was a performance to set an example for the ones we will be hearing at anniversary celebrations in the months ahead.

Schoenberg's romantic Verklarte Nacht received an expressive reading under Goldberg's direction. At times the strings weren't together, and in places of high pitch the sound was a little too thin.

However, this was partly because Ford Auditorium's acoustics aren't really alive enough for chamber music and partly, we suspect, because the

rescored piece should be played by full orchestra to realize fully the soaring drama of the long, emotional phrases.

Nonetheless, it was a moving performance—rather more energetic than as interpreted by some other conductors.

There was truly beautiful solo work in it by violinist Nathan Gordon and concertmaster Gordon Staples.

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An annual visitor to Youtheatre's Easter show, the Easter bunny's

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"Spring Fever" is a "Wiggle Club" show, especially designed for families with youngsters 3 years old and up. Infants under 3 years of age will not be admitted.

Easter birthdays will be given special attention at Youtheatre, with the name of the birthday child on the lobby sign, a party hat, invitations, party favors, a salute from the stage and a birthday present from the puppets. Birthday party packages may be reserved in advance priced for 10 youngsters and one adult, or for two adults and a party of 15 children.

Extra adult tickets may be purchased at group rates.

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