

Full house applauds I Musici

By GRETCHEN McHUGH

As if Detroit needed any more music last week, the Detroit Chamber Music Society and Friends of WDET presented a renowned group of string players, I Musici, in Orchestra Hall on Friday.

Orchestra Hall, dressed in its new suit of pure white plaster, proudly hosted the largest crowd it has seen in 25 years.

This crowd heard two Bach concerti and Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons." Despite the culture shock resulting from an infusion of pure Italian-style Baroque "no-no" rarified tonemic air of the Schubert Vienna Festival, it was well gratified.

I MUSICI'S PRINCIPAL violinist, Pina Carmirelli, is a string player of

formidable versatility and interpretative power. The group of 12 musicians played with unified finesse—and the inspiration can be probably largely credited to her.

With energetic, almost exuberant bowing, she paired with Antonio Salvatore in a nice interpretation of the Bach D Minor Concerto for two violins.

It wasn't an overwhelmingly stirring rendition of this familiar work. However, it revealed I Musici as a group which can change from a forte to a piano, together in a split second, make excellent distinctions between solo and tutti sections, and create in sequential passage a fine dramatic buildup to climaxes true to the dynamic intelligence of each.

"The Four Seasons" was more suc-

cessful than the two Bach numbers. Vivaldi's popular work is unmistakably, in some places, program music. You can hear birds twittering, and a summer storm. Solo passage work by Ms. Carmirelli provided sometimes a marvelous robustness, and sometimes a delicacy so quiet it was the closest thing to silence. Throughout, the dramatic articulation was so engaging that the audience rose to standing applause.

I Musici is a polished sophisticated group in looks and sound. But for all its sophistication, interpretation of these classy Baroque works is hardly dispassionate.

These musicians know how to keep that sense of the dramatic; they're in good shape. As Mark Twain said of heaven, perfection can be boring.

Schubert opera opens

By CRAIG REYNOLDS

Oh, the trials of the in-between age—overshadowed by giants, huddled in a valley between ageless, familiar samarites.

Such is the fate of Franz Schubert, who rolled down the declining years of music's classical period, only to die too young, just as the lush romantic period was getting a fiery grip on musical taste.

It is an undesired fate, which Maestro Antal Dorati and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra sought single-mindedly to alter with a program of 14 Schubert concerti in as many days.

THE MUSICOLOGICAL high note of this extraordinary undertaking was hit last Saturday night in Ford Auditorium, when Dorati, the symphony, the Kenneth Jewell Chorale, the Detroit Lutheran Singers and a band of hardy soloists joined in the United States premiere of Schubert's rarely performed opera, "Alfonso und Estrella."

This massive feat was complicated by the need to simplify the expansive score, which, left uncut, might approach five hours in length. With surgical genius, Dorati lifted about 2½ hours of essential Schubert from the 1½-inch thick text with many a damaged note or scratched principal.

What resulted was a technically masterful, often exuberant concert performance that showed the dramatic Schubert at his best—and worst.

HERE IN "Alfonso und Estrella" is the consummate songfulness of Schubert as well as the over-extended and sometimes riffs convolutions of the composer's indiscreet love affair with melody.

There are times, even in opera, when it is necessary to dispatch one theme quickly and cleanly in order to get on with the plot.

The plot involves a deposed king, his son Alfonso and the usurpative Mauregato's daughter, Estrella. The only other fact of the story that need be known is that no one dies.

As the deposed king and son, William Parke and Curtis Rayam sang splendidly. Their voices, though somewhat lacking in dramatic heft, were admirably suited to Schubert's sometimes overstated lyricalness.

Steven Kimbrough's Mauregato sounded a bit weak compared to Parke and Rayam, while Elisabeth Soderstrom as daughter Estrella showed a rich but incoherently phony tone.

Smaller roles were taken by smaller but pleasing voices, including those of Bruce Hall, Catherine Grimshaw and Thomas Parker, whose German is far too stiff to bend to the requirements of a Schubert melody.

THE EVENING'S PRIZE was definitely Peter Lager, who sang the bass role of Mauregato's Gen. Adolfo with supreme command of both music and instrument. His is a singular voice that can billow past a full symphony, and chorus and soloists as well.

The only reason that such an evening took place, however, is Antal Dorati. Rare is the individual who can architect an event like "Alfonso und Estrella" with clarity and precision, and still maintain the spontaneity which transforms it into a vital performance.

It takes a genius to create a specific dialogue between composer and

orchestra from a series of performances that commands nationwide attention.

Visit King Tut

Did you miss the King Tut exhibit? You can see something maybe even better at Schoolcraft College at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 20.

Thomas Hoving, former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Arts, will bring Tut's treasures, some never seen before, on slides and present them with the story of their discovery.

Tickets for Tut and Tom are priced at \$2.50 and are available in advance at the Schoolcraft College bookstore. It is located at 1800 Haggerty, Livonia.

Hoving's recently released book, "Tutankhamun, the Untold Story" is fast becoming a best-seller. The author uses the same title for his lecture, taking the audience on a tour beginning in 1922 when archeologist Howard Carter found "a little blue faience cup" two years later with discovery of the magnificent solid gold funeral mask and sarcophagus.

The tomb of the young king contained some 5,000 objects, ranging from art and artifacts, to chariots and furniture, bedchests and cups. The ancient Egyptians believed in an afterlife for which they had to be well provided.


Hoving spent almost two years negotiating with Egypt for the right to bring the pharaoh's treasures to the United States and was instrumental in setting up the current tour that will end with an exhibit at the Metropolitan from December 1978 through April of 1979.

Contents: Christmas Party
For: All Local Children
From: Jacobson's


Our package of Christmas delights will be opened Friday, November 17 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at our Children's Christmas Party. Gather the family and watch eyes light up and hearts get happy when they join the merrymaking. That magical old fellow, Santa Claus himself, will be here in person (He wants to hear every wish!) Santa's elves and helpers' frolicsome spirits will bring a giggle and Pippin's Puppets will give performances sure to delight. So, mark the date, bring your camera to capture the merry moments and join the fun in our Children's Department.

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CLASSIFIED WORDS TO THE WISE



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 W E S K A T E S U O H T T P T O E
 A F L C R N S C H N H G U T T A R
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 C A M P E R B B O J P E E M O O E
 M T R I C Y C L E N N R A F P L P
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DIRECTIONS: A total of 54 items which are commonly bought, sold or obtained through the Classified columns of your newspaper can be found among these letters. You'll find 51 of these items by reading forward, backward, up, down or even diagonally. Circle these words as you discover them! Then the last three items will be found by the consecutive use of the letters which have not been circled.

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| antiques | chair | harp | puppy | swing set |
| apartment | clock | horse | radio | table |
| bike | condominium | house | refrigerator | television |
| boat | cornet | job | room | tent |
| camera | crib | kitty | saxophone | tools |
| camper | desk | lamp | skates | toys |
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| cat | golf clubs | phonograph | stove | washer |
| chain saw | guitar | piano | sweeper | |

A WORD TO THE WISE: It's really easier to find these items, or most anything else you're looking for, in the Classified columns of the Observer & Eccentric.

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