

Brahms' 'Double Concerto' on Oakway's bill



Paul DiBlasi, 22-year-old cellist associated with the Detroit Symphony and a master student at Indiana University, shares the spotlight with violinist Isidor Saslav for Brahms' "Double Concerto" to be performed by Oakway Symphony.

By TIM RICHARD

Oakway Symphony Conductor Francesco DiBlasi loves double concertos—works using two soloists.

Last season he programmed the Mozart Concerto for Flute and Harp with the nationally known Eddie Drutski on harp and Charles Coltrane from the orchestra as flutist.

The year before, it was the Mozart Sinfonia Concertante (for violin and viola) with Ani and Ida Kavafian. On Sunday, Feb. 11, Oakway will tackle one of the greatest samples of all—Johannes Brahms' Double Concerto for Violin and Cello—in Southfield-Lathrup High School, Twelve Mile west of Southfield Road.

Concert time will be 3 p.m. instead of the usual 4 p.m.

THE FUNNY thing was that DiBlasi wasn't conscious of his own affinity for double concertos.

"Paul has been working on the Brahms Double, and Saslav was available," he said, referring to his son, cellist Paul DiBlasi, and violinist Isidor Saslav, Baltimore concertmaster.

But the conductor is aware the double is considered by many to be Brahms' finest works. And like many professionals, he loves the immense and complex works of the 19th century German master.

"You know, on first hearing, it's sometimes difficult to hear the continuity of Brahms' musical line," he said. "Often it's a very long phrase. Other times he takes short phrases and culminates them harmonically."

"You don't know where he's going until the end. It takes much listening to appreciate it."

"Many of us professional conductors studied with Dr. Richard Lert, who was an assistant to Richard Strauss. Dr. Lert used to say that if you really want to find out what Brahms has to say, eliminate the bar lines."

Bar lines separate measures into two or three or four beats. That's all right if you read music or listen with a score in your lap.

ALL OTHER listeners need not feel lost, however. There are ample melodies and musical technique in the Brahms Double Concerto to please nearly everyone.

The second (slow) movement is widely regarded as one of the Romantic movement's most moving.

"It's scored with the cello an octave below the violin," said DiBlasi, explaining its haunting quality.

"There are a great many arpeggios between the violin and cello. It's difficult for both instruments. Brahms (a pianist) makes the cello do what the violin does technically. He didn't stop to think of what the cello can or can't do. He just wrote it."

Often the cello takes a line ahead of the violin. It puts a lot of pressure on the cellist.

PAUL DiBlasi has 13 recordings of the Brahms Double—10 that are in the Schwann catalog, two that aren't and a tape.

His father recommends the recordings with Szeryng and Starker or Schneiderman and Starker in particular. Cellist Janos Starker is one of Paul's instructors.

How about the Heifetz-Piatogorsky? "Heifetz takes it so darn fast, you can't find the Brahms," DiBlasi answered.

He put on a recording by Zino Francescatti and Pierre Fournier. "Ah, now that's Brahms!" he said, rolling his eyes like the man in the spaghetti sauce commercial who says, "Now that's a Italian!"

Paul describes the final movement as Gypsy. His father says Hungarian. What's the difference?

"The bowing," said the senior DiBlasi. "Hungarian is down-down, up, up. Gypsy is down, up-up." By that standard, Hungarian wins.

THE ORCHESTRA? It gets a workout, too.

Unlike some composers who used reduced orchestras for concerto accompaniment (Chopin, for example), Brahms used the full orchestra.

The program will open with Beethoven's overture to the ballet

"Prometheus." Said DiBlasi: "It's very demanding on the first fiddles." He's particularly pleased with the violins this year, boasting that second violins are as strong as the first.

The orchestra gets another challenge in Dvorak's "New World" Symphony, which DiBlasi calls "a good symphony for this orchestra."

DiBlasi contends Dvorak overmarked his scores with detailed direc-

tions. If a conductor follows every direction literally, a Dvorak work can drag.

"I can keep your attention. I don't dwell too long on the ends of phrases," DiBlasi said.

Tickets are \$5 for adults and \$2 for students and senior citizens. They can be purchased at the door or in advance at Hudson's, Madonna College and Hammill Music.



Isidor Saslav, concertmaster of the Baltimore Orchestra and visiting professor of violin at the Eastman School of Music, plays a rare Cremonese violin, made in 1778 by Michelangelo Bergomi. At 17 he became one of the youngest members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

Student art show set by association

Entry forms are now available for the Birmingham-Bloomfield Art Association's annual student show.

Two shows have been scheduled. The first will run from Feb. 10-March 3 and the second May 12-June 2.

The school offers classes for teen to adult students in the metropolitan area. All students in adult, teen and youth divisions are eligible if they are enrolled or were enrolled in the summer, fall, winter and spring terms.

The works must have been done during that time and reflect class experience.

Entry forms are available at the BBAA, 1516 South Cranbrook, Birmingham. The entries are due by hand delivery at the BBAA from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30

p.m. Jan. 26 to Feb. 1, except Sunday.

Media eligible will be oil, acrylic painting, drawing, sculpture, jewelry, enameling and stained glass. The second show will feature watercolor painting, fibers, ceramics, calligraphy, photography, design, printmaking and all youth work.

Adults will be charged a \$2 per entry fee. Entrants may submit a maximum of three entries per medium. There will be no charge for youth and teen students.

Prizes will be awarded at the discretion of the jury with a first prize of \$100. Additional merit awards will also be given.

For more information, call the BBAA, 644-0866.

Camp Fire Girls send some recipes

Camp Fire Girls, who are now out in force throughout the entire metropolitan area drumming up candy sales for their biggest fundraiser of the year, send along some recipes.

Main ingredient of the recipes is the Heath Toffee Miniatures and Heath Mint Truffles the girls are selling.

A favorite is Wobelo Delights. Wobelo is the highest honor a Camp Fire member can achieve, taken from the words "work, health and love," the mainstays of the Camp Fire philosophy. It takes better than two years for a Camp Fire Girl to win this award.

WOHELO DELIGHTS

3 cups sifter flour
1 teaspoon soda
1½ teaspoon salt
1½ teaspoon salt
1 cup margarine
1 cup Camp Fire Mint Truffles
1 cup white sugar
1½ cup brown sugar
2 eggs unbeaten
1 teaspoon vanilla
pecan or walnut halves

Cream butter and sugars. Add eggs and vanilla and beat well. Blend in sifted dry ingredients. Cover and chill for

at least two hours.

To shape cookie, enclose one chocolate mint in about one tablespoon of chilled dough. If dough seems sticky, roll lightly in powdered sugar or flour before pressing around mint.

Place cookies on ungreased baking sheet, two inches apart. Top each with a nut and bake in 375 degrees not more than 10 minutes.

Don't overcook. Makes about four dozen cookies.

ANOTHER WAY to use the chocolate mints is to stir one or a couple of them in a cup of hot chocolate.

Or use several to ice a warm cupcake. About 15 truffles melted in six tablespoons of undiluted evaporated milk will frost a small cake.

FRENCH STRAWBERRY DESSERT

¾ cup sugar
1½ cup whipping cream
1½ cup light corn syrup
2 tablespoons butter or margarine
1½ cup chopped Heath English Toffee candy bars
2 pints fresh strawberries, washed and hulled

Combine sugar, cream, corn syrup

and butter or margarine in saucepan. Bring to a boil. Boil 1 minute. Remove from heat and stir in chopped candy.

Cool, stirring occasionally. Serve fresh strawberries topped with sour cream and toffee sauce. Yield will be 6-8 servings.

TOFFEE COFFEE TORTE

1 envelope (2 ounces) whipped dessert topping
1½ cup sugar
1 tablespoon instant coffee
1½ cup milk
¾ cup finely chopped Heath English Toffee candy bars (about 3 of the 1½ oz. bars)
1 commercial pound cake (12 ounce) cut into three even layers.

Combine topping, sugar, coffee and milk; beat as directed on topping package. Fold in finely chopped candy and spread mixture between layers and on top and sides of cake.

Chill several hours or overnight before serving. Extra chopped bits of candy may be sprinkled on top.

Yield will be eight generous servings.

PEOPLE WHO wish to help the Camp Fire Girls in their annual candy sales who have not yet been approached by a young saleswoman are invited to call the Camp Fire Girls Detroit Area Council at 833-2676.

Callers will be contacted by a Camp Fire Girl in their neighborhood.



Meet Aurora Ruffolo

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Thursday, Feb. 8 Grosse Pointe
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