

review

Conductor Kenneth Jean shows great competence

By Avigdor Zoromp
special writer

A noteworthy phenomenon occurred during last Thursday's Detroit Symphony Orchestra performance.

It brought to mind Haydn's "Farewell Symphony," a work not included among the selections, but one that, perhaps, should have been.

In that symphony, it could be recalled, the players gradually leave the stage until there are only two left. Reverse the process. Members of the audience, rather than musicians depart. If there were only two left, they would certainly turn out to be the music critics.

Something similar took place last Thursday, even though, to be sure, the remaining audience was numerically greater, but quite small by our orchestra's standards. I would hasten to add, however, that this was no reflection on the orchestra nor its resident conductor, Kenneth Jean, who displayed superb ability and musical insight.

THE OPENING work was the premiere performance of "Cityscapes," a concerto for jazz quartet and orchestra. The composer, James Hartway, is associate professor in the music department, Wayne State University. He was also the piano soloist for the performance which features the Larry Noveck Jazz Quartet with Noveck playing the saxophone.

Other members of the quartet were Nedd Mann, double bass and Joe Paretti, drums. The composition was commissioned by Jean for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and dedicated to Robert Semple, its chairman.

This unconventional work attracted a "unconventional audience as well — distinct from the traditional, classical, ly-oriented audience. This undoubtedly accounted for the warm and enthusiastic response to this composition and the many empty seats immediately following.

ing its performance.

At the risk of incurring the wrath and condemnation of this audience, I feel compelled to state that personally I found the work shallow, uninspiring and artistically offensive. This isn't to say that it doesn't serve any need, it does as evidenced by the wide acclaim. But, its suitability for a symphonic concert performance is questionable.

THE SCOTTISH Fantasy for violin and orchestra by Bruch, the second work of the evening, is a melodic and pleasant composition, rendered very competently by German born violinist Ulf Hoelcher. His playing was expressive, also demonstrating high technical skill and avoiding the pitfalls of excessive artificial sentimentality (or schmaltz), one of the shortcomings of the composition.

The second part of the concert consisted of numerous selections from Prokofiev's music, "Romeo and Juliet." This was the most significant and inspiring music of the evening. It was here the true genius of Kenneth Jean emerged. The orchestral sound was full, rich and balanced throughout. And it was expertly controlled and directed by the conductor.

A high sense of pulse and rhythm was evidenced while at the same time the varying and complex moods were competently expressed and conveyed. The final scene, "Juliet's Death," is one that has a silent, thought-provoking ending unlike many "thunder and lightning" endings that are geared towards eliciting a greater applause. Musically, it was most rewarding.

The appearance of Kenneth Jean, his first one here in a major subscription concert, would certainly make classical music enthusiasts wish to have him back in the future — hopefully without this particular opening selection. He definitely deserves another chance with a classically enthusiastic audience.

Old soldier tells tales when Quakertown hosts its DAR Good Citizens

North Farmington High School history teacher David D. Finney will speak on "Tales of an Old Soldier" when Quakertown Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) hosts its "Good Citizens" this month.

The chapter is sponsoring eight high-school seniors who will go into competition for the title of Michigan DAR Good Citizen this spring. The luncheon is an annual event honoring the youth who are named Good Citizens and their parents.

Finney, a history teacher at North Farmington High School, will attend the luncheon dressed as a Union soldier who served in the Army of the Potomac, Company F, 7th Michigan Infantry, who was recruited in Farmington. His talk is based on a program he developed for the National Park Service at Fredericksburg, Va. It contains many anecdotes and reminiscences of the Civil War.

Finney is a graduate of Indiana University, where he received his bachelor's and master's degrees. He also holds an educational specialist's degree from Wayne State University, where he pursued advanced studies in curriculum development.

He is a member of many profes-

sional and social organizations, including Phi Delta Kappa, Phi Kappa Tau and the Michigan Regimental Civil War Round Table.

He is also a sought-after lecturer on Civil War topics who has spoken before numerous organizations throughout the United States.

As an avid collector of Civil War photographs, he has had several copies of his pictures printed in Civil War Times Illustrated and Images of War.

MRS. DON P. Fairchild, Quakertown regent, will preside at the luncheon, and Mrs. C. Harold Dolph, the chapter's Good Citizen chairman, will present each of the guests of honor with a Good Citizen Pin, a certificate and a copy of Washington Landmark.

The seniors being honored are James Keven Carey from North Farmington High School; Janet Kinzler from Harrison; Christina Looser from Farmington High; Virginia Minelli from Our Lady of Mercy; Sandra Sue Wilkewitz from Temple Christian High School; Pamela Lucas from Harry S. Truman High in Taylor; Patricia Waltaker from George C. Schaefer High in Southgate; and Jennifer Lynn Milton from Romulus High School.

Winter swim program begins Jan. 17 in Mercy

Mercy Center's winter swim program runs from Jan. 17 to Feb. 26 and offers swimming for those of all ages and all levels of expertise.

Swim passes are available which offer savings to families, college students and seniors.

The pool is turned over to the handicapped from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. These swimmers are

asked to bring their own assistant, who will not be charged.

Swimmers and non-swimmers are invited to Trim 'N' Swim, a directed exercise in the pool.

Registration and inquiries will be taken by Rosemary Pulick, the center's recreational facilities director, at 476-8010.

Thursday, January 14, 1982

(F58)



David Finney will be dressed in his Union soldier's uniform when he talks to Quakertown's DAR Good Citizens for 1982.

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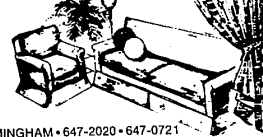
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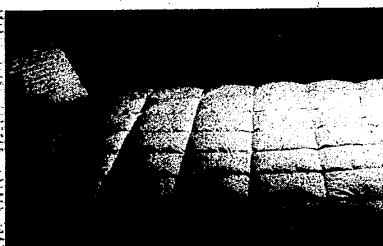
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