Staples brings out the gem quality

Last week marked Sixten Ehrling's second and last program with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra this season. When the concert was about to start, things were not quite the same. Ordinarily, concertmaster Gordon Staples would step in and direct the musiclans in the final tuning of their instruments before the conductor makes his appearance. This is one of the visible duties of the concertmaster.

review

This night assistant concertmaster, Joseph Goldman, performed this duty. The initial tendency in a situation like this is to wonder about the cause of absence of the familiar figure. But on this occasion there was a very good reason for that.

Staples had a different role that eve-

ning — that of a solo violinist in the infrequently played Violin Concerto by Samuel Barber. The opening and closing works on the program were much more familiar — the Symphony No. 2b by Haydn and the Symphony No. 2b by Dvorak.

AMONG HAYDN'S 104 symphonies, only a small portion are part of the standard repetitive and No. 88 ranks among the most popular of thees. This performance by a reduced orchestra was marked by its zesty and vigorous approach.

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In spite of the reduced size, there was a full orchestral sound, an approach that might not elicit universal agreement. I found at least three quarters of the work well within acceptable

bounds.
While Ehrling's approach differs from that of Doratt, who is considered

by many to be possibly the foremost expert on Haydn alive, this was a valid approach, which was rewarding in its vigorous enthusiam. The one exception was the second, slow movement, which sounded too heavy handed and lacked some refinement in some of the subtle phrases. But following the sweeping, capituating final movement, such flaws would be forgotten by a listency, if he doesn't he Barber Violin Concerto is a modern, musical level, that tends to be ne-

The Barber Violin Concerto is a modern, musical jewel, that tends to be neglected. It can restore one's faith in contemporary American music which, admittedly, I hold in a rather low esteem most of the Jime. Staplier rose to the occasion by providing artistic Insight and excellent tone quality to the masterful strains of this composition.



Mummenschanz mimes

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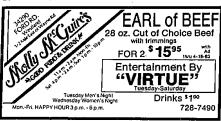
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